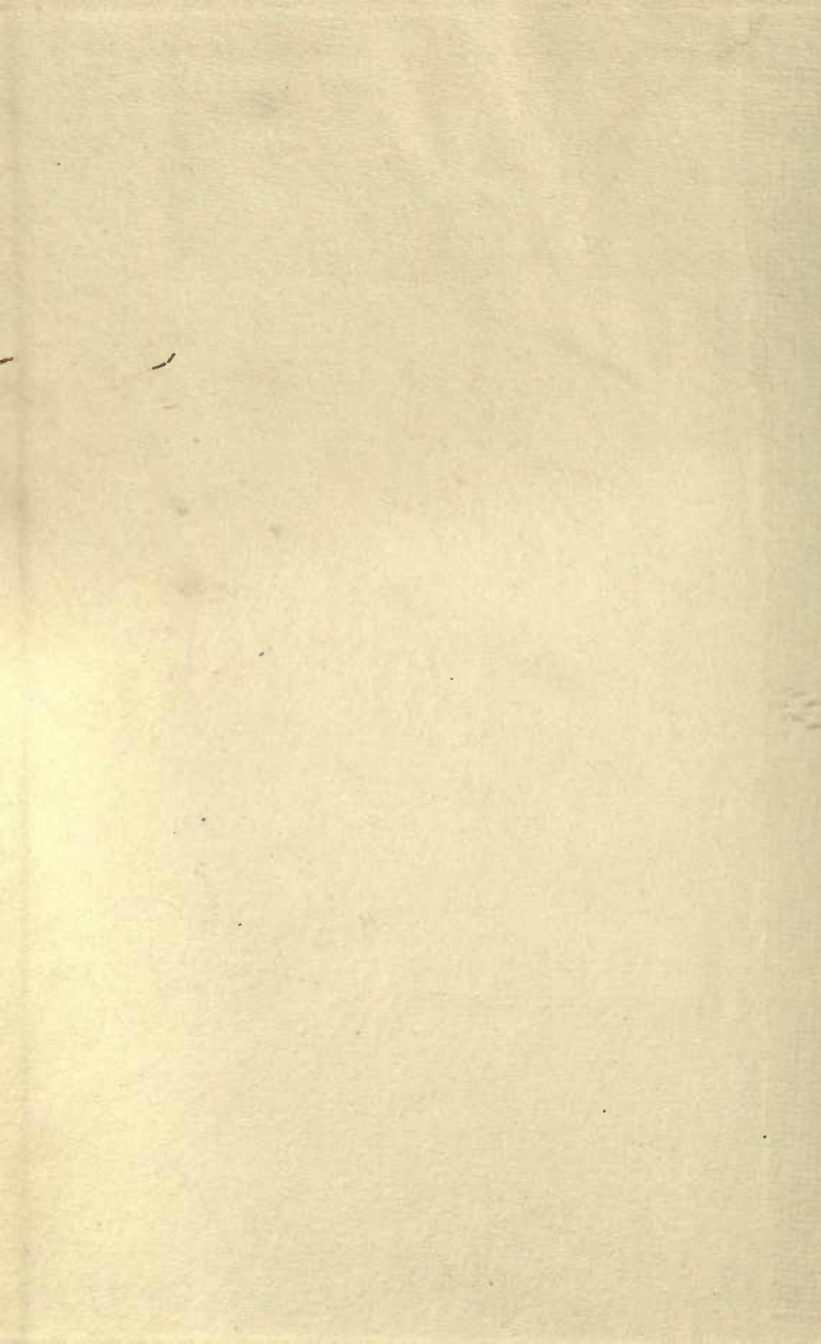


SPAIN'S LOST JEWELS

CUBA AND MEXICO

THOMAS REES

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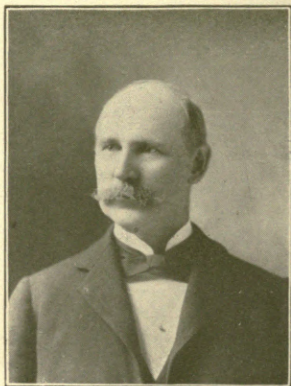
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Spain's Lost Jewels.



MRS. REES.



MR. REES.

Spain's Lost Jewels

Cuba and Mexico

BY THOMAS REES

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

Published by
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1906

DEDICATION.

To the many American Travelers
who are found in all parts
of the world,
And by their liberality and example
make the balance of mankind
richer and better,
This volume is respectfully
inscribed.

Copyright
1906
By Thomas Rees.

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THE PROVOCATION

No one can travel very far in Cuba and Mexico and observe their wonders and marvelous beauties without a desire to write home and tell his friends all about what he has seen and what he has learned on the way. They are in many respects the most interesting countries on the face of the globe.

These letters that furnish the text of this volume were originally published in the Illinois State Register, of which the writer is manager. This gave an opportunity of addressing a larger number of friends and acquaintances than is usually accorded to the average individual.

There were so many things to write about that the letters extended to a considerably greater length than was at first contemplated, and yet much more might be written and perhaps be equally interesting.

During the publication of this series they were so generally read and so many persons expressed a desire to have them in a more convenient and permanent form, it was determined to issue them in this shape.

For this purpose the letters have been carefully edited, errors corrected and some additions made, and are here presented with the hope that they will meet with as hearty a welcome at this time as they did on the occasion of their first publication.

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MORRO CASTLE.

"There it stands in all its grim magnificent glory."—Page 17.

The First Letter.

ENTRANCE TO HAVANA.

It takes forty hours to make the trip from New Orleans to Havana. You leave New Orleans at four in the afternoon, and this brings you to Havana at a little after sunrise on the second morning following.

As the ship nears Havana everybody comes on deck to get the first glimpse of Morro Castle. The two objects that every American wants to see most are Morro Castle and the wreck of the Maine. But as the latter is far up the bay the castle is the first to be seen.

There it stands in all its grim, magnificent glory. High perched on almost a mountain of grey-black rugged stone.

The waters of the gulf, ever restless, lash themselves into a seething foam far below its solid base. Its open-mouthed cannons seem ever ready to belch forth a holocaust of death, and with its strength of

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

Gibraltar and the dignity of a walled city, it presents a wonderfully impressive picture.

As you view it with intense interest, it seems to signify the very acme of strength and destruction. The waters dash again and again below its walls and tear themselves to pieces, and fall upon themselves in their fury; but the old fort stands undisturbed high above, and seems to frown with disdain at the great ocean tugging at its base. No tremor of the waves ever reaches its dim recesses. No power, it would seem, could disturb it. No foe could ever overcome it. It guards the great harbor which, at the entrance, is only a few hundred yards in width.

On the other side of the entrance to the harbor is another fort, but it is not so formidable as Morro, and is set further back.

In the foreground, opposite Morro, is a beautiful park called "La Punta." Even in winter it is all green and glorious. Lovely tropical plants are surrounded with the greenest of grass; beautiful drives bordered with white walks circle about. A music pavilion of tasty appearance and with many chairs surrounding it, presents a scene of restfulness in wonderful contrast to the grim old Morro Castle. Behind this park, further than the eye can

ENTRANCE TO HAVANA

reach, are thousands of fascinating houses with arches and colonnades; they are all plastered on the outside and painted in all the colors known to the art of fresco.

With these pictures—the castle on the one hand, the park on the other, and the harbor with its ships, beyond; the city, with its houses in so many shades and colors, the entrance to Havana harbor presents a view equal to any stage setting you may have ever seen, but a thousand times larger and so much more beautiful.

The contrast, as you look from one side to the other, is enough to start a chain of thought that would have a beginning away back in the past ages and reach far over into the rosy future.

On the one hand the old castle, the concentration of antiquity, war and bloodshed; on the other the park, with its trees of laurel and its invitation to harmony and peace. The melancholy history of war, carnage and destruction written in the one; the golden bow of promise of the future illumining the other. Such thoughts must awaken deep emotions in anyone who has any interest in historical events. The impressiveness of the surroundings, the beauty of the pictures are such that I am certain no one who has a heart that can be touched by

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

emotion or an appreciation of the beautiful can sail into Havana harbor on a bright sunny morning and then ever forget the picture that lies before him. And before one knows it he has fallen in love with the great capital of this young republic, and is thanking God that he has lived to see what he now sees. A city beautiful, a country magnificent—another nation to join the galaxy of those who believe in the liberty of mankind, a government of the people, for the people and by the people.

THE WRECK OF THE MAINE.

The steamer passes through the narrows and enters one of the finest harbors that could be desired, and soon comes up to where all the great ships, and there are many of them, lie at anchor. The wreck of the Maine, just as it is seen in the pictures, comes into view.

It is now several years since the Maine was wrecked, and it lies just as it did at that time, except that each year it sinks a little further into the bottom of the harbor.

The government at Washington has not decided as yet what to do with the Maine. In 1904 the Cuban government entered into a contract with a New Orleans firm to further wreck and remove the

THE WRECK OF THE MAINE

mass of steel and machinery, but this was abandoned, as our navy department held that that department could not abandon the ship, as the power to relinquish the rights of our government in any property or any man-of-war were vested only in Congress; and as Congress has done nothing, the wreck still remains.

February 15th is the anniversary of the disaster, and the Americans in Havana and some of the Cubans take flowers and lay them upon the rusted iron and broken bars of the old cruiser, which remains as a monument that marks the passing away of two hundred and sixty-seven of our brave seamen—a costly monument withal, for it had a value of five million dollars as it steamed into Havana harbor a trifle over eight years ago. But it is a great monument; for, besides being a memorial to our seamen who perished, it is a memorial that calls attention to the tragic act of the Spaniards which marked the death-knell of their rule of any part of the land of the western hemisphere, and gave birth to the Republic of Cuba. Long live Cuba, the Republic.

The harbor of Havana is an ideal place for boats to rest. As before stated, the entrance is only a few hundred yards wide, leading into a long channel of about the same width, which, beyond the bay,

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

is nearly the shape of a maple leaf, one and a half miles wide, the entrance representing the stem.

There is room enough to accommodate nearly all the ships in the world, and it seems to the observer that they are almost all here the greater part of the time. There are about four thousand arrivals each year. Only a few ships land at the docks, as it seems that the Cubans allow only Cuban boats that privilege; so all other boats have to be loaded and unloaded by tenders or small boats, ordinarily called lighters.

It seems that a ring of some kind controls the lighterage business and that the rates are fixed at what the traffic will bear, as it costs as much or more to take the freight from a boat to the landing, about five hundred feet, as it does to bring it from England or Spain.

Notwithstanding the foregoing rambling remarks, the reader will perhaps remember that we are still on the ship floating about or coming to anchor in the harbor, and while it may seem to the reader that we are a long time in landing, he may have some satisfaction in knowing that it takes longer in fact than it takes a long-winded man to tell about it; for it is a wonderfully slow process.

When the boat comes to a stop, various officers

THE DOCTOR

in authority must visit it and inspect it. Then the quarantine officers must come aboard, and all the passengers must line up and pass by the doctor, who has the final say whether we shall land or not.

Did you ever realize, anyhow, what a great man the doctor is? Lots of people insist that doctors do not know anything except to bleed a fellow physically and financially; lots of people intimate that they do not even take their own medicine; but if you stop to consider you must confess they are a great set, and I take off my hat to them.

When we make up our minds to come into this world, before we know it we are in the hands of the doctor. If we fall among thieves, like the gentleman who was going to Jericho, we again fall into the hands of the doctor, who sets our bones and takes what the other fellow left. And, finally, when we come to take our departure for that unknown bourne, they give us opiates to ease and hasten our journey; and after we have got beyond reclaim they chop us up to see if they knew just exactly what was the matter with us before our lamented demise. They direct the actions of kings and princes, overrule the orders of captains and generals, and it was a doctor who finally compelled the late infallible Pope of Rome to change his mind and undergo a surgical operation when he said he didn't need it.

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

So we are again in the hands of the doctor, whose consent we must have before we can land in Cuba. He gives it; having passed us, we are ready to land, and likewise are ready to sing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The tender comes alongside, carrying at least a hundred hotel representatives, who clamor to get at us like hungry cannibals after fresh missionaries. Friends who are here before come out in little row boats to greet friends who are arriving.

Tons of baggage are heaved onto the lighter or tender, and we finally start and are soon landed on the real ground of Cuba; and we are so glad to get off the boat that we can more than appreciate the feelings of Columbus and his followers who, when they arrived near here, fell upon their faces and kissed the ground on which they had landed.

THE CITY OF HAVANA.

I doubt my ability to describe to those who have never been in a Spanish city the peculiarities of this place in language that will give them a proper idea of how it looks.

The streets are very irregular and very narrow, and as there must be room for two vehicles to pass, the sidewalks are sacrificed in width so that the pass-

CITY OF HAVANA

age of the vehicles can be accomplished. The average street has a total width, between the buildings, of perhaps twenty feet; taking out the driveway of about fourteen feet, leaves the sidewalk some twenty-four to thirty-six inches wide. In some instances they are a little wider, while in other cases they are cut down sometimes to twelve inches. This walk is further encroached upon by iron railings covering all windows, which stand out ordinarily about eight inches from the building.

The street railways, of which there is a most excellent system, run entirely in loops—that is, going down one street and returning on another. In order to leave a passage for vehicles the track hugs so close to the walk on one side that it leaves room only for one person to stand between the car and the buildings, and even then the carts sometimes have to drive out to the cross street before the cars can pass.

The vehicles are also compelled to go in circles or loops, driving east on one street and west on the other, as even the passing of two vehicles is a difficult task. I am speaking now of the old business part of the city, and on such streets as I have described an immense volume of business, both wholesale and retail, is carried on.

Through the center of the city is a magnificent

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

park or boulevard, called the Prado, lined with laurel trees, which are always green, and also ornamented with statuary and pavilions, and in the new residential part the streets and avenues are laid out in generous proportions.

The houses range in height from one to three stories, usually two stories; are built of brick or stone, and plastered on the outside and painted or frescoed at the will of the artist who does the work. Many of them look as though the artists had done the work when they were badly intoxicated or had left upon the outside walls the recollections they had from a late attack of delirium tremens, while other specimens are real works of art. But taken on the whole the effect is superb and charming beyond explanation.

The houses look as though they had all been built at least a hundred years or more, and had been built for defensive or offensive warfare, as the walls are some two or three feet in thickness, the openings limited, and heavy iron bars of jail construction cover every window.

The names of streets are cast on iron plates and set in the corners of the houses and embrace all names one could imagine, among which are "Jesus Marie," "San Pedro," "Justis," "Virtudes," "General Lee,"

CITY OF HAVANA

“Jesus Peregrino,” “General Maceo,” “O’Reilly,” etc. The numbers of the houses are also cast on small iron plates set into the walls, and it appears each house has only one number, whether it be a block in length or of only ten feet frontage.

STREETS AND SEWERAGE.

In order to facilitate pedestrianism and make more room for sidewalks, it frequently occurs that the lower stories of the buildings are set back several feet, the front upper walls resting on a succession of columns connected by arches forming colonnades. This greatly facilitates foot travel and gives a more picturesque appearance. While such construction is frequent, it is not the rule, but it is a good idea and might be copied in other cities, and may be necessary in American cities if the inclination to encroach upon the streets is not curtailed.

The sewerage of the city is not good and there are no cellars, even under the largest buildings. The people here have never learned to take advantage of space above and below the ground line to the extent we have in the cities of America. All floors are of cement, stone, marble or tile, and many of the walls near the bottom are covered with tile

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

both inside and out, which adds greatly to the fanciful appearance of the structures.

While I have spoken of the residential portion of the city as apart from the business section, it is intended by that to indicate that part of the city which is composed entirely of residences. There are more people living apparently among the business houses than in the residential part. This, however, may be true of any large city, even in the United States.

There seems to be, however, a wonderful admixture and conglomeration of inhabitants and industries in the business portion here. Big wholesale stores, carpenter shops, warehouses, tenements, blacksmith shops and residences, with elaborate furnishings, with carriages in the main entries, all line up together and in outward appearance all look alike.

Cigar stores, cafes and wine joints predominate. There are no screens or doors to the saloons or drinking places and in each one of these there is a big crowd of idlers who have just had a drink or are sitting around waiting to take another. I am certain if the people of this island would devote the attention to studying statecraft that they do to

THE HOTELS

smoking cigarettes and drinking wine, they would revolutionize not only the island of Cuba, but the entire population of the earth.

The streets are well paved, some with blocks of stone about four by five inches, some with cement or fine stone that is almost as smooth as cement, and others with wooden blocks on end about two by six inches, and are nearly as smooth as a wooden floor.

THE HOTELS.

In the matter of hotels the old adage that "the best is none too good" applies with considerable force here. The best here is certainly as bad as the poorest in the states in everything except the prices.

We stayed at what is counted the leading hotel on the island. The lowest rates are ten dollars per day for two persons in an inside room.

The dining room or cafe occupies what would ordinarily be called the office or lobby in our country. The main entrance seems to be rented out to a fellow who deals in diamonds, while the narrow passage left is used for a combination entrance for guests and baggage, and is frequently so full of trunks that it is difficult to pass through, and what space there is left is occupied by an old woman who has a suit case full of embroidered chemises and laces that draws a

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

crowd of women tourists to ask the price of and be shown each and every article. After you get by the lady you strike what are called the interpreters, whose chief business seems to be to sell you tickets for excursions that you don't want to take. When the elevator is in order, which is not often, it is used in lifting baggage, and when it isn't in order you can't find out whether it is or whether it is not. The shaft in which it runs must ventilate a very foul basement, for it is rank.

The main corner of what ought to be the cafe is occupied by a cigar store with a bar room attached that is always full of men, who are about as noisy as a lot of politicians at a ward caucus.

The tables are nicely supplied with elaborate china and poorly supplied with execrable food. It takes an hour or more to get a meal, which is served in courses and which it would be a pleasure to escape.

The rooms have tile floors, no carpets except small strips before each bed, six-cent paper on the walls, and iron beds without mattresses.

Three clerks make out bills and tell people "all rooms are taken" and they can't accommodate any more.

Early breakfast is served—only rolls, coffee and

VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

fruit, 6:30 to 9:00 a. m.; regular breakfast, 10:00 a. m. to 1:00 p. m.; dinner, 6:00 to 8:00 p. m. There is no pie, and among the so-called rules on the door it is announced that regular guests may order articles extra from the cafe card that are too expensive to put on the regular bill. Now, wouldn't that jar you?—at ten dollars a day.

On the other hand, there are some neat and attractive things about the house, and cozy reading rooms and parlors. All the hotels in the city are completely overrun and are turning away the people every day during the rush season, and making very little effort to accommodate.

VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC.

There is one thing hard to understand—that is, while the streets are so narrow, why they should use carts that are so large. Most of the street traffic is carried on in carts, drawn by mules. While the mules are of fair size they seem very small, as the carts are out of all proportion to the size of the mules.

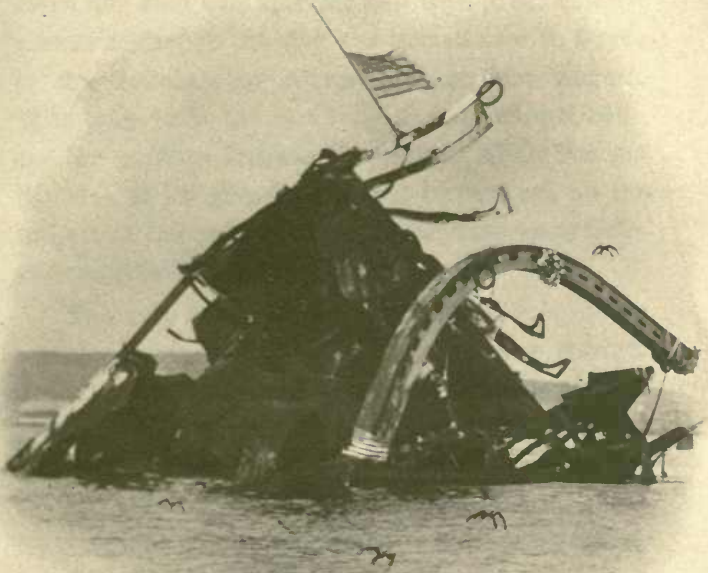
The wheels are nearly six feet in diameter with four-inch tires, they track over five feet, the bed is as large as that of an ordinary two-horse wagon, and each shaft looks like a telegraph pole. The mule

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

is dressed in a harness with a big saddle and collar. The harness is ornamented with all kinds of brass. Above the collar is a big cluster of sleighbells, while the bridle has big red tassels suspended from the blinders and the throat latch. The harness and trappings seem enough of a load for the mule, not counting the cart, and a whole ship's cargo of freight which sometimes goes with it with a "nigger" or two on top.

The rattle of the wheels over the stone-paved streets and the jingling of the bells indicate that there is something doing in Havana.

The cab service, if it may be called that, is remarkably good. There are no cabs nor hacks, but any number of one-horse Victorias—a low carriage with an ordinary cover over the back seat and with a high seat for the driver in front. They carry two people comfortably and the fares are reasonable. They will carry two persons a distance of half a mile for twenty cents Spanish, equal to about fifteen cents in American money. By the hour they go for one dollar for business or one dollar and fifty cents for pleasure—in Spanish money. I do not know the idea of this distinction unless they assume that the driving for pleasure is more continuous



WRECK OF THE MAINE.

"The wreck of the Maine just as it is seen in the pictures comes into view."—Page 20.

VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

than business trips where the rig waits for purchases to be made, or they propose to demonstrate that business is one thing and pleasure is another.

Every one of them has a gong bell, and, as they drive like mad and kick the bell with great vigor it sounds as though the city was turned over to a race of fire marshals or drivers of hoodlum wagons. With these bells, the cart bells, and the church bells, one can perhaps imagine how Edgar Allan Poe got the idea of his great poem that strings out on the subject of the bells, bells, bells and then more bells, and more bells, after that.

The only things that go slow on wheels in this country are the ox carts, and they go slow enough. Sometimes they are pulled by two oxen, sometimes by three, sometimes by six, eight or even ten; but they always go slow. Next after the ox cart, or along with it, is the automobile, and as there is no speed limit on them they go fast enough to gain out on time what the ox cart loses. The great international automobile races were held here this week and the city was full of speed cranks and they "honked" through the streets like imps of Satan in chariots of fire.

In the races one machine made 217 miles in 218

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

minutes and others did nearly as well. The purse was fifteen thousand dollars.

Wonderful contrast, isn't it? Ox cart and automobile! One with a speed limit of about two miles an hour, the other with a limit of sixty, each seemingly having its place in this old new land of Cuba.

A VISIT TO MORRO.

One of the first things every visitor does when arriving in Havana is to make a visit to Morro Castle. It is a great opportunity and can not and should not be neglected.

We went over the first afternoon to walk about its ramparts and to examine its dungeons and wander among its battlements.

There are no soldiers there now, except a small detachment, about one company of Cubans, who do garrison duty. The barracks are empty, the dungeons are deserted, the draw bridges work no more. Where once was the tread of many feet the grass grows, and birds have builded nests in the mouths of cannon.

Near where the walls are chipped and broken with bullets used in the execution of thousands of Cuban patriots, now grows a tree, and on asking the

A VISIT TO MORRO

guide what kind of tree that is he says it is a laurel, the emblem of peace and victory.

Adjoining Morro is Fort Cabanas of the same general nature of architecture—wonderful architecture, rambling, but symmetrical. Morro was built beginning in 1587, and Cabanas was built in 1763 to 1774.

But I would not weary the reader, so I will pass on to other subjects. There is one thing though I must write before leaving this interesting subject, and that is to describe in a few words the entablature in the walls of Cabanas.

Where so many patriots were executed the Cuban government has set a tablet in the wall which is chipped by the bullets of the executioners and surrounded it by an iron fence. It was the habit to stand the prisoners facing the wall and then shoot them in the back.

The picture shows a number of dead on the ground and one soldier standing in the act of turning and defying his executioners with the challenge, "You shall not shoot me in the back." Above this is the Angel of Peace extending the laurel wreath.

It is said to have cost fourteen million dollars to build Morro, and as much to build Cabanas.

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

When the king of Spain was told the cost of Morro he got up, went to the west window and looked out and said he thought from the coast that the ramparts must be so high he could see them across the ocean.

In the foreground of Morro Castle stands a huge lighthouse. It is the tower shown in all the pictures, and it bears a name in large letters on the main side that I would hardly take to be Spanish, although it might be French. It is spelled "O'Donnel." I became interested in Mr. O'Donnel, whose name was so prominent, and I found that he was governor of Cuba from 1843 to 1848, when the lighthouse was built; that he was a descendant of an Irish patriot, who left Ireland after the battle of Boyne in 1690, and after serving Cuba as governor a few years on a moderate salary, he returned to Spain with more savings than his salary would amount to in many years and so rich that the King was envious of him, and left as a monument this great lighthouse with his name upon it.

The Second Letter.

AMERICAN OCCUPATION.

The American occupation was the best thing that ever happened to Havana, and the Island of Cuba in general, and it would be a splendid thing if just such an experience could come to every American city about every so often. The American occupation was practically placing this country in the hands of a receiver, just as a railroad of the United States is placed in the hands of a receiver by the process of a United States court.

In this instance General Wood acted as the receiver, representing the United States government just the same as any other receiver represents the district court of the United States in straightening out the affairs of a railroad company.

When a railroad company becomes overburdened by watered stocks, excessive bonds, inefficient and extravagant management and general

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

grafting to such an extent that its outgo is so much in excess of its income that it cannot continue in business, then on the petition of some one the United States court steps in, takes possession of the property, appoints a receiver, whose authority is supreme, and who is answerable only to the judge of the court, who appointed him.

Then there is something doing. The grafters and plunderers are heaved overboard, stocks are wiped out, bonds and securities scaled down, the income of the road is used to operate the road, and to improve its physical condition; new machinery is purchased, new rails are laid, new rules are made, and when the general housecleaning is completed, the road is frequently turned back to the same or another gang of plunderers and the same original story is repeated.

So Cuba, that had been robbed and plundered with great regularity ever since its discovery by Columbus in 1492, found itself, by the fortunes of war, in the hands of a receiver on the first day of January, 1899. For on that day the American army entered the city of Havana and General Castellanos, the 136th and last Spanish governor, surrendered the city, and the whole country also, to the Americans.

AMERICAN OCCUPATION

Then the Americans proceeded to do more for the land of Cuba and more for the city of Havana than perhaps has ever been done in the same length of time for Cuba or even any American settlement, and more than any city in America seems to be able to do for itself, at any time, under our methods of municipal rule.

In a trifle over two years the United States receivers had made one of the dirtiest cities in the world, Havana, one of the cleanest of cities.

They paved the streets, rebuilt the roads of the country, remodeled the parks and boulevards, established an American system of police, also a system of sanitation, and organized a free school system almost equal to any in the world, throughout the entire island.

They eradicated yellow fever that had been the scourge of Cuba ever since it had been introduced here three hundred years or more before by bringing convicts from Mexico to work upon the building of the forts.

Havana was so filthy when it fell into the hands of the Americans that a description of how bad it was is hard to credit. Most all seaports seem to be dirty places, and for the four hundred years or more

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

Havana was under Spanish domain it was no exception to that rule except that it was worse than most seaports.

The horrors of war and consequent neglect of sanitary measures during the insurrection put it in a condition beyond compare. The harbor with a natural depth of water of forty feet was made a dumping ground and allowed to fill up until a large part of it was then, and is still, useless and will have to be dredged out. Many ships would not cast an anchor in the harbor because the bottom was so foul that they could not take the anchor on board until it was cleaned and disinfected.

The streets of the city were full of everything imaginable, and buzzards fattened on the filth therein. The smells were so rank that strangers were sickened by their presence, while yellow fever, small pox, consumption and other diseases raged at all times. It was a sorry place and the angels of death not only hovered over the city, but moved through all the streets, and, figuratively at least, held nightly revelries in the parks and plazas.

The number of deaths was out of all proportion to what they should have been, and in one year, when statistics were kept, before the war, exceeded the births in the city by two thousand four hundred and

AMERICAN OCCUPATION

thirty-five. The morality of the city was as bad as its sanitary condition, and all other cities on the island were the same. These were the problems the Americans had to contend with and eradicate when they came into possession of Cuba.

Now, that the good work has been done, and the country has been turned over to the Cubans, the question naturally arises, will these people live up to the advantages that have been entrusted to them? I must confess I have my serious doubts. Since the receivership is ended, will not this country and the city go back again, not to the old gang, but to a new gang, to repeat the experience of old, just as the railroads usually do in America? They may not. I hope they will not. But we will have to wait and see.

An American who has lived here several years says that he thinks they will. He told me that the magnificent sewerage system that was projected by the Americans rests where they left it; that nothing has been done, and that while the city seems clean and beautiful the sanitary conditions are deplorable and it is within its recesses a reeking bed of filth, which invites contagion at any and all times. He is sure that contagion will come before long, and come strong and furious.

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Another American here says that there was more yellow fever here last year than was reported. He looks for an epidemic next year unless conditions are improved, and he has no hope of improvement. He also says that the last elections were a farce, as the elections were carried by armed force and a voter would have done well to order his coffin if he was going to the polls determined to vote the Liberal ticket.

THE OLD CATHEDRAL.

The old Cathedral, built two centuries ago, and commonly called the Columbus Cathedral, because the remains of the great discoverer were supposed to be deposited there, is an object of much interest. Two of the bells in the tower are dated 1664 and 1668, respectively.

It is a grand old building considering its age, but its distinction as being the place of deposit of the bones of Columbus is called into question.

Columbus died in Valladolid in Spain in 1508, and was buried there; but in accordance with his will, his body was removed and buried on the island of San Domingo, having, however, lain for awhile at Seville. The body was buried in the Cathedral at San Domingo, where it rested until 1795, when San Domingo passed into possession of the French.

THE OLD CATHEDRAL

The Spaniards did not want to entrust the remains of Columbus to their enemies, so they took what was supposed to be the bones of Columbus and brought them to Havana and deposited them in this Cathedral where they rested until 1898. When Spain surrendered Cuba to the United States, the remains were again disturbed and transported to Spain and again buried in Seville.

A patch in the plaster of the Cathedral marks the spot from whence the remains were taken, and that is the only visible evidence of the resting place here of the great navigator who traveled much, both living and dead.

In the meantime the authorities of the Cathedral of San Domingo discovered what they claimed were the real bones of Columbus, declaring that those removed to Havana were those of a son of Columbus, and they have built for them a costly tomb in their Cathedral at San Domingo, and claim they have the genuine remains, and thus a serious question is raised.

THE WEATHER AND THE CLOTHES.

The weather here is absolutely delightful, the thermometer ranging in February from sixty-five to seventy-five degrees. The sun is very bright generally, but there are some showers. Men wear straw

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hats and linen suits, and the ladies wear light goods, while small children wear very little clothing and some none at all.

But here I will turn my pad over to my wife, and she will give a better description of women's dress in Havana than I can. So here it is:

“The high class wealthy ladies of Cuba dress in beautiful garments of the latest style, mostly imported. They dress no different from any lady of New York, Chicago or other American city.

“They are fond of jewelry and possess stones of great size and value. Being only tourists, we did not see much of society except at the opera and what we could observe on the street. Surprising it is to see ladies with wool tailor suits on the cooler days while we northerners are uncomfortably warm in our thinnest summer gowns. Most of the poorer classes seem to wear cotton dresses and, strange to say, they are very clean. Most of the gowns have trains or a slight sweep, sometimes held up but often not, but, withal, are usually clean.

“I have learned from residents that the Cuban women think a round skirt, such as we wear at present, very poor style. The ragged, dirty woman, white or black, is the exception on the street.

LABOR CONDITIONS

“The children of wealthy parents dress as do our girls and boys, but the poor children seem very happy with only one garment, an apron, and many have only the clothes that God gave them.

“Let me add something which I think will be of interest to northern women. An American lady who has resided here five years told me that dress-making in Havana is very cheap, that one could get an elaborate dress made for eight dollars, and a fairly good one for four dollars.”

LABOR CONDITIONS.

We visited a large cigar factory the other day. There were four hundred and seventy-five men making cigars; they sat at long tables, just as they do in the north.

One thing particularly attracted my attention. They have two rooms. In each room is erected a platform, similar to a pulpit, which is occupied by a reader who reads to the men while they are at work. The reading is alternated between the two rooms. While the reading is proceeding in a room there is respectful silence; but when the reading is not progressing there is a great chatter of conversation. The reading is in Spanish.

The men work by the piece, have a strong

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union, and earn wages, the proprietor said, from two dollars, even up to six or eight dollars, but averaging, perhaps, three dollars Spanish money per day; and they spend it, he says, just as fast as they make it.

I talked to a linotype operator about the printing business. He said they had no Typographical union here now but they didn't seem to need one very much, as American linotype operators got from thirty to thirty-five dollars per week. Cuban printers, (Spanish), receive wages from fourteen dollars up, but a job on the leading Spanish paper here was an exception and better than a job under the government, as they only worked three or four hours a day, and got about all they wanted.

He didn't know much about carpenters, but thought they earned from three dollars per day, up. He said they have lots of holidays, more than he could ever keep track of, and that the men always get paid then but do not work. If they do work they get double pay for the work, plus the wages they draw for not working, making three times the usual rate for working on a holiday.

Aside from the cigar makers, he did not know of any other union. This man came from Danville, Illinois, Uncle Joe Cannon's town.

STREETS AND STORES

A man with some experience in railroad matters told me railroad engineers receive about one hundred and twenty dollars per month and machinists get about two dollars to two dollars and a half per day, while laborers get one dollar to one dollar and twenty-five cents per day, all in Spanish money. But the machinists were machinists in name only, while they were poor blacksmiths in fact, and would not be able to hold a job any place in the states.

They say they never had but one labor strike in Cuba. That was the strike of longshoremen or boat loaders at Cienfuegos, and the people who took part in it were transferred as criminals to the Isle of Pines.

STREETS, STORES, ETC.

While there appears to be some very large wholesale and commission business institutions, the most of the retail stores are small. Some of them keep remarkably valuable stocks and choice goods. These, however, are largely purchased by tourists. The dealer in gems at the entrance of the Inglatara hotel has separate pieces of jewelry, rings, etc., running from one thousand to five thousand dollars each. Fans at twenty-five dollars and up are com-

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mon, while laces and drawn work can be had at prices that will stagger very fat pocketbooks. On the average, merchandise runs about one hundred per cent. higher than in the states although Panama hats and a few other things are sold cheaper. There are any number of souvenir stands, and all peoples and all languages are represented among the dealers. I think the best stores are usually kept by Jews, mostly from the United States.

COLON CEMETERY.

Another place that Americans always visit is the cemetery where the victims of the Maine were buried. These were afterwards removed to and buried in Arlington cemetery at Washington.

Colon cemetery is well worth a visit, not only on account of this historic incident, but also on account of the beauty of its numerous monuments and statuary, of which there are some remarkably fine specimens.

The ladies are very interested in the wonderful wax and bead flowers that are placed upon the tombs. It is the custom to place such mementoes on the graves of the departed, and some of those there deposited represent great expenditure of money as they are large combinations of flowers formed of the

COLON CEMETERY

finest beads in all the natural colors of the flowers which they represent, while the wax flowers are almost as natural as real flowers.

The tombs are of two shapes—those to fit the casket in a horizontal position and others in the square receptacles. The former are for the reception of the body at the time of burial. In after years when another death occurs in the family the bones are removed to the smaller receptacle and the tomb is used for the new body.

Cemeteries are always interesting places, but are at the same time sad and grewsome places to visit.

Just as we entered the cemetery at Matanzas the great bell sounded a knell and four men lifted from a marble bier a tiny little coffin, suspended by a netting of cords and tassels. Unattended they carried it to a remote corner of the field and dug a grave and deposited it. There were no women mourners, as it is not the custom of this country for women to attend funerals. But I think the women of our party shed the necessary number of tears as the little casket was borne away and the little body was consigned to its eternal rest.

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AN ECHO FROM HOME.

In a foreign land an echo from home is always welcome.

I was sitting in front of the hotel on the Grand Prado the second night after reaching Cuba talking to a man whom I knew to be an American, but did not know who he was.

In the conversation I said something about my home town. "So you are from that place, are you?" he said. "I want to tell you what that brings to mind:

"Many years ago I had just come over from Paris and Havre to London. It was Sunday morning and as I had nothing to do I thought I would take a ride on a London stage. As I wandered along looking for a stage or 'bus,' as they are called, I found myself in a great crowd and was borne along without any particular object until, without a knowledge of where I was going or why, I found myself in England's great church, Westminster Abbey.

"There was a very large assemblage of people and a number of priests or clergymen who took part in the service. But I paid no particular attention to the incantations or readings, as I was never par-

AN ECHO FROM HOME

ticularly interested in the Episcopal service, and having arrived there involuntarily, I was simply a 'looker on in Venice,' as it were.

"But when the sermon was to be preached, one of the clergymen took the position assigned for that purpose and delivered an address, every word of which was a gem in a chain of jewels and the whole was a masterpiece of oratory. And now, after all these long years, that sermon is as fresh in mind as though I had heard it today, and I could repeat it for you in the full text. It was by your own distinguished citizen, the Bishop of the Episcopal church of your diocese, and if you know him I congratulate you on a valuable acquaintance."

I found on further inquiry that the man to whom I was talking was one of the leading manufacturers of Illinois, employing nearly four regiments of men. He was now traveling with his family. A strong friendship grew up between us and we journeyed together to Vera Cruz and through some of Mexico. We enjoyed every minute of their companionship.

MONEY AND BUSINESS.

Railroad travel here is rather expensive and slow. The best through train from Havana to Santi-

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ago, about five hundred miles, consumes twenty-five hours, and the rate is twenty-four dollars and five cents, with five dollars added for sleeper, payable all in American money.

It is rather a vexatious problem to carry on business in two languages and two kinds of money, which is the custom here. All prices are named either in Spanish or United States, commonly called American money, and you never know which until you inquire.

For instance, postage is payable at the same rate as in America, and in American money.

No Spanish money is taken for railroad fares, while hack fares are in Spanish. Street cars call for American money. At some of the hotels the room rates are in American money while the cafe bills are in Spanish. Cigar prices in one store are in American, while in another next door they will be in Spanish. A store will make prices on hats in American, while neckties and collars are rated in Spanish. Some dealers will take either money and calculate the difference, while others demand the particular kind of money in which the price is made, so a stranger never knows whether he is on foot or horseback, and usually he is neither.

The Spanish money is practically based on the same mint as that of the United States, a five peseto

MONEY AND BUSINESS

piece corresponding to the American dollar, a peseto being twenty cents. The divisions of the dollar are uno centavo, meaning one cent, which is about the size of a United States quarter, dos centavo, dos meaning two, or two cents. This two-cent piece is about the size of a United States half dollar. Then there is the real, which is a ten-cent silver piece; uno peseto, which is twenty cents in silver; dos peseto, which is forty cents in silver; and the five peseto or one dollar piece.

All the prices seem to be in fractional cents, and by the time a few purchases are made and the change is taken in coppers, one and two-cent pieces of their enormous sizes, a person has a whole pocket full of copper junk, too heavy to carry and not enough to buy a lunch with.

The merchants or shopkeepers are alert and attentive to business and display a considerable amount of patience in dealing with the everlasting American shoppers, who always do at least ten times as much shopping as they do buying. Prices seem pretty well established and there does not seem to be much dickering on prices.

There are a great many peddlers and they carry heavy stocks of various kinds on their heads and cry out the goods in a plaintive incantation.

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Havana is destined to be a great place for tourists. Several thousand tourists are now landed here each month, and the number is increasing each season. There is a great demand for better hotel facilities.

By the way, silver is considerably higher here now than formerly. It would be a little peculiar, wouldn't it, if silver should appreciate and be worth worth a premium over gold. It seems to be going that direction now.

A BIT OF HISTORY.

Great numbers of old cannons and other evidences of war are scattered around in every direction in Havana. Cannons are used as guards or corner posts to keep wagons or carts from running over the sidewalks or to guard the corners of buildings, and are even set in the ground for hitching posts. Shot and shells are used to trim up the walks in parks and other places. I noticed that what might have been a cobble stone pavement at one place was composed of cannon balls.

The most numerous objects in the parks are cannons which have seen better days, and these silent reminders of noisy times can be found everywhere.

These are after all only a few of the decayed

A BIT OF HISTORY

teeth of dogs of war that have been turned loose over this country regularly for the last four hundred years; for ever since the discovery of Havana Harbor, there has practically been a continuous warfare here and the seasons of peace have been the exceptions.

If all the powder that has been exploded in the attack and defense of this city was exploded at one time, it would "burst" the world wide open; and if all the blood that has been sacrificed here in all years, had been shed at one time, the bay would be overrun and the whole Gulf of Mexico would be "a fountain filled with blood."

In 1508, which was two years after Columbus left this earth, Sebastian de Ocambo discovered this harbor and that was the beginning of Havana. From the first, the city was the prey of pirates and robbers of all kinds, and the number of times it was burned and plundered are too many to enumerate. The sacking and burning of the city occurred so often that the inhabitants felt disappointed if they were left in peace very long.

The people then paid tribute to all the gangs that came and the more they paid the oftener the gangs came, Captain Kidd among the rest. Then the people fought their enemies on the water and

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kept them out by a high, well-guarded wall on the land side. The place was described by a writer in 1829 as follows:

“In the center of the city is a vast mass of stone and mortar, encircled by a high wall and the wall encircled by a broad ditch of a hundred feet in width which can be filled with water at pleasure for the safe-guarding of the city. The turrets and port-holes of the excavated rock of Morro frowning over the narrow entrance of the Harbor, the long range of cannon and barracks on the city side, the powerful fortifications that crest the opposite hill, all speak one language to the stranger, and with their bay, populous with vessels from the whole commercial world, tell the importance of Havana.”

The Britons captured Havana in the eighteenth century and opened its trade to the world and within a short time slavery was introduced and within sixty years over four hundred thousand African slaves had been landed on the island, mostly in Havana harbor.

Havana has seen all the crimes against humanity that could be suggested by the whims of the devil or conceived by the iniquity of man—culminating finally in the blowing up of the *Maine*, which,

GOVERNOR TACON

while a great crime and in some respects a great calamity, was after all the best thing that ever happened for Cuba. It was like the thunderbolt that announces the storm that clears an unhealthy and stagnated atmosphere and was followed by a glorious day of brightest sunlight for the Cubans.

GOVERNOR TACON.

Of the one hundred and thirty-six governors of Cuba, appointed by the Spanish crown, whose chief business it appears was to butcher the people and enrich themselves by grafting, there were among them one or two who were shining examples of manhood. One of these was Governor Tacon, after whom the great market and theatre here are named. He was appointed in 1834 and pursued a course so radically different from that of his predecessors that his administration is still remembered.

Under his predecessors crime and lawlessness had reigned without hindrance. The streets of Havana and the country roads were infested with cut-throats and highwaymen and the people were afraid to go about at night. Merchants and others had to pay for military protection to move their goods through the country.

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Tacon changed things. He came with absolute power and adopted the most arbitrary methods to stamp out crime. He apprehended some of the robbers and displayed their heads in parrot cages on the public streets and places of concourse as an example to others.

He arrested vagrants and bearers of deadly weapons and made a chain gang of two thousand of them to improve the public highways. He put an end to robberies and murders, shut up the gambling dens and made travel safe.

He held country magistrates responsible for all robberies committed in their districts.

He seized men and without trial condemned them to dungeons or exiled them without even the knowledge of their friends.

He was an autocrat, but he purified the atmosphere and left Cuba in much better shape than he found it. He was the kind of governor needed at that time.

YELLOW FEVER.

It was in the year 1900 that the theory of the mosquito transmitting yellow fever was established here by making all kinds of experiments. This was

YELLOW FEVER

done by a commission of medical men under the direction of the surgeon general of the United States. When the theory seemed well established war was made upon the mosquito and both he and the yellow fever were driven out of the country. Now they have a bureau that has the work in charge. All the fountains have been drained and stagnant water ponds are cleaned out or treated with kerosene. If the scourge has been eradicated, as it seems is probable, there is no reason why, with ordinary precautions, Havana should not be as safe as almost any large city in the world as far as the matter of health is concerned.

The Third Letter.

IN AND AROUND MATANZAS.

My wife has always refused strenuously to write anything for the daily paper, claiming that she is not a writer and, besides, she married to get a newspaper man and not to be one. But after she had written the following letter to her mother, I thought it covered so much that might be interesting to other mothers, also fathers, sons and daughters, that I induced her to give it to her parents through the columns of this paper. It saved me the labor of writing this part of the trip myself. Here it is:

“It seems very hard to find any time to write though we are sort of resting here in Matanzas. This city of forty thousand people is located fifty-four miles from Havana, by rail. This short trip gives one an opportunity to see something of the interior of Cuba, and a very beautiful country it is. We passed through one of the richest and most productive portions of the island. The sugar plantations are especi-

AROUND MATANZAS

ally numerous, though we saw all kinds of fruits, bananas, pineapples, truck gardens, etc.

“It would seem that all kinds of fruits and vegetables should be very cheap, but they are not. We have never yet had grape fruit served at a hotel.

“Oranges are served every meal. They are peeled and a fork is stuck into them and one eats them off the fork with no further cutting. The bananas served on the table are very small, about four inches in length, though one sees larger ones in the market. Guava is the popular fruit and is served on all occasions. Guava paste, jelly, preserves and ice and it is good in all forms. Mamey (pronounced mammy) a fruit with a rough, brown skin and a red interior, is another fruit much used. A very fine ice is made from this.

“Every imaginable fruit is converted into an ice and served in every possible way. The Cubans are very fond of ices and cold drinks of all kinds. It seems that they spend half their time in indulging in refreshments.

“After this discussion, let me return to our trip to Matanzas. The railroad trains seem very crude in comparison with the luxurious palace cars run on our fast trains. This train consisted of a Rogers

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locomotive, a baggage car, a second-class car, which resembled a box-car with windows and slat seats, a first-class car like the poorest of our cars with rattan seats and a parlor car for which extra charge was made. This car had revolving rattan chairs which were very comfortable. The train which we took was a limited and only made a few stops, but when it did stop it stopped twenty minutes each time.

“At last we arrived at Matanzas and decided to cast fortunes with a guide, and I guess it is as well that we did. The party was taken in surreys and a volante. The volante fell to us, for which we were pleased.

“This is an ancient Spanish vehicle, a sort of curiosity in these days. It has two immense wheels and the body is suspended by leather straps. There are large, strong shafts in which one horse is hitched, then another horse is hitched outside the shaft on the left side. A man rides the outside horse and leads the horse in the shafts. There is a top to the vehicle and they are very comfortable indeed.

“Our guide took us through the city, which greatly resembles Havana, only not so large nor so fine. Our first stop was made at a house which used to be an old Spanish home. Once a very fine country

YUMURI VALLEY

place, but now the lower story is used as a home for fighting cocks. There is a pit in the yard and here cock fights are held. The cocks are very handsome, and we were told that some of them were famous fighters, as much as two thousand dollars being wagered on a fight.

“Proceeding on our journey after a nice drive over splendid roads, we reached the summit of Cumbre Hill. From this point we had a fine view of the famous Yumuri Valley, which Humboldt, the famous philosopher and traveler, said was the most beautiful valley in the world.

“Some persons might not agree with this opinion but certainly one does not see many more beautiful spots. It is a fertile basin, dotted with Royal Palms, through whose fields runs the winding Yumuri river. This valley is entirely surrounded by hills, except for a very small break through which flows the river.

“There is a legend connected with the names of Matanzas and Yumuri. When the Spaniards discovered this country it was peopled by Indians, designated as Aztecs. About the same melancholy warfare was carried on between the Aztecs and Spaniards as was waged in our North America between the Indians and whites.

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“In after years the Spaniards had reduced the Aztecs to a mere handful and they were all gathered here at what is now called Matanzas. The Spaniards came upon the Aztecs and massacred nearly all, a few escaping to the valley. Here the Spaniards followed them and fell upon them, and as the Indians died they threw up their hands, crying, “Yo mori”—I die. This sounded to the Spaniards like Yu-muri, and the name was ever afterwards applied to this beautiful, peaceful valley, and the city on the slope of the hill was called Matanzas, which means to slaughter, or the place of slaughter.

“On the very highest point of Cumbre Hill stands a little church built by Cuban residents, who came from Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, and named “The Monserratte,” after a church in Spain similarly located on a hill. Its altar is made of cork brought from Spain and represents the shrine in the Monastery of the Monserratte in Spain, which is one of the most popular shrines in Christendom; many miracles are said to have been performed at this shrine in Spain, and this shrine, as well, is supposed to perform wonderful cures. On the walls are hung many relics, crutches, braces, slings, etc., cast aside by the healed; also wooden and silver articles offered in fulfillment of vows.

BELLAMAR CAVES

“The altar is certainly curious—made, as I said before, of cork and representing a high mountain with houses of paper set here and there on the mountain, supposed to be exact replicas of similar buildings on the mountain in Spain. From the church yard is a beautiful view of the city of Matanzas, and the bay in the distance.

BELLAMAR CAVES.

“Returning down the mountain, passing through the city, driving along the bay, and with a long, hard pull over the worst, stony road I have ever traveled, we reached the entrance of Bellamar caves. We were again thankful that the volante had fallen again to our share, for over such terrible roads it seems as if one might be shaken to pieces in a surrey; but the volante swings on its leathern straps, which makes riding over such roads tolerable.

“Entering the cave we descended long flights of stairs. The cave is electric lighted by the use of a gasoline engine and dynamo, so we were enabled to get a fine view of the stalactite and stalagmite formations, which are very beautiful. They resemble icicles, being composed of clear and brilliant crystals. Sometimes the two parts unite and form a solid column of several feet. The formation is the same throughout the caves.

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“The air is very warm and one is in a dripping perspiration and thoroughly exhausted when one returns to the surface. It is a hard trip, the rough ride and the long walk in the sweltering atmosphere of the caves, but it repays one if one has not seen caves and such formations before.

“A heavy rain had begun while we were in the caves and we were very glad when we reached our hotel, after the jolting ride back to town.

“The hotel, “The Louvre,” is a veritable haven of rest. We were shown to a beautiful front room, ceiling eighteen or twenty feet high, a bed draped in royal blue brocade, marble floors, quaint door screens of white woodwork and glass with transparent Spanish scenes painted upon them. All this was inviting, but when we had our dinner, and for the first time in Cuba found food really palatable, we certainly did rejoice.

“We have been here three days and we have found the table good at all times.

“The Louvre was once an elegant old Spanish mansion and is more than ordinarily well finished. There is an open court in the center with fountain and flowers—the floors and stairways are all marble with marble statues in the corridor, or lobby. It

THE ROYAL PALM

must have been a very handsome home in its day. It was built in 1860.

“We took a drive into the country, through the gorge and beyond into the Yumuri valley over a very fine road which was made and is maintained by the government. The Royal Palms are found here in great rows.

“The Royal Palm, called sometimes the “Blessed Tree,” because of its manifold uses, grows straight and tall like a shaft. From the top springs a tuft of leaves and at the base of these leaves, which is about sixty feet from the ground, grow large bunches of berries which are very good for fattening pigs. The leaves are made into baskets and used to form the roofs of houses. From the trunk is made weatherboarding and furniture and certain portions are used for food and medicine purposes. While a single palm tree has little value for shade, the long avenues of palms are singularly beautiful and impressive.

“In the old Spanish days when a plat of ground was bought so much was paid for the ground and one dollar for each royal palm growing thereon.

“Young bread fruit trees have been planted all along this highway.

“We came very near to some of the country

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

houses, which are no more than huts with thatched roofs, sometimes with one or two windows, often with none.

“On this drive we also visited Matanzas cemetery—a small affair compared to Colon in Havana—with only a few good monuments or mausoleums and poorly kept.

“In the evening we strolled out primarily to visit the stores, which are of the same general nature as those in Havana, only smaller, which is only natural since Havana is several times larger than Matanzas.

“But before we had gone far we were led astray by a trio of wandering musicians. While following them we fell in with a Cuban youth who is being educated in New York.

“When he found that we were eager to hear Cuban music he immediately conducted us to the central station of the fire department. Perhaps you think that would be a queer place to go to find music. Well, so did we; but sure enough, after passing through the engine house, we came to a court or park, within which was a band stand and a band playing a most entrancing waltz.

“This park is very pretty with a large statue fountain, flowers, and many seats.

THE GOVERNMENT BUILDING

“The engine house is equipped with the very best of American apparatus and fine, large horses from the United States, and best of all a medical or surgical department, where those injured in a fire or otherwise may receive proper attention.

“On our way back to the hotel we passed the opera house where a rehearsal was going on. Having heard that anyone was permitted to witness a rehearsal free of charge, we went in and listened to the most terrible rendition of a portion of the opera, “La Mascotte,” that one ever heard. The women of the company smoked cigars or cigarettes between acts. After listening to a little solo work and one awful chorus, we left, thanking fate that we had not been inveigled into witnessing the public performance the next night.

“One morning we strolled over to the governmental building near our hotel. A man, seeing us, strolling aimlessly around, conducted us to a room and soon brought in a gentleman who spoke very good English, and who it developed was the Alcalde or mayor of the city, Sig. Isadore J. Ojeda. He is a very intelligent, polite gentleman and gave us considerable information. He told us that this building was used as a state house and a city hall. The governor of the Province of Matanzas and the state offi-

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cers have their offices in one end of the building, and the mayor and city officials are in the other end.

“The building looks hundreds of years old, but Mr. Ojeda said it was built in 1850. It is somewhat in need of repair, as are all buildings in this city. There is a beautiful park, one small block in size, in front of the government building.

“Matanzas is so much in general characteristics like Havana that it is useless to say more. All houses are built in the same general way. But Matanzas does not look so prosperous as Havana. It is worth visiting in order to get a view of the interior of Cuba, and see the famous Yumuri valley, and last of all in this nice little hotel it is nice to rest after a week of strenuous sight-seeing in Havana.”

ODD AND CURIOUS.

There are a number of things that strike a person as odd and curious in this country.

For instance, men take the place of chambermaids in all the hotels.

Oranges are served completely peeled and are eaten from the tines of a fork.

Goats are kept in considerable numbers in place of cows.

ODD AND CURIOUS

Roses grow beautifully and are sold at fairly reasonable prices.

Small pigs and goats are carried to market by tying their feet with fibres, and then carrying them back down—like a grip-sack.

Milk men carry their stock of bottles and cans on horseback, instead of wagons.

And poultry men carry their chickens the same way.

Some of the señoritas are very handsome and all powder and paint to an extraordinary degree.

There are no slot machines nor open gambling, although there are big gambling establishments.

There are good macadamized military roads through the country, others are woefully bad.

Black coffee, as it is called, is usually served about half hot milk and the other half coffee as black as tar and nearly as thick, the waiter always carrying two pots, one for coffee and one for milk, in each hand, with a long side handle.

There are plenty of fleas here, enough to fill all the dogs and have some left over for the people, although they are not very vicious.

Negroes and whites are on exceedingly friendly terms, but do not seem to intermarry to any great extent.

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

The ringing of the church bells, of which there are usually several on each church, is done in a very vigorous manner. A rope is attached to each clapper and they are jerked alternately and rapidly and sound more like a fire alarm than an invitation to peace and rest.

While there seems to be a good deal of drinking, there is not much drunkenness. I have only seen two men drunk while here, and the "drunkest" of the two was an American tourist in the hotel.

The harbors are infested with sharks, but I cannot find that they attack people even while bathing in the waters.

Cock fighting and bull fighting are prohibited by law, but cock fighting is engaged in just the same as it is in some American places.

The soil is about the color of a brown pointer-dog with a trifle redder tinge and when softened by rain becomes almost a reddish brown paint.

Electric fans, telephones, fire alarms, etc., are used here the same as in the United States.

Snakes grow in length to as much as twenty or even twenty-five feet, but are all of the boa constrictor order, there being none that are poisonous.

Policemen are dressed in blue linen or duck and carry big revolvers strapped on the outside.

ODD AND CURIOUS

Glass or crystal chandeliers are used everywhere for gas and sometimes for electric lights.

Street car men, as well as many others, dress in linen in midwinter.

The hard bed cranks should be happy in this country, as no mattresses are used. About two quilts cover a woven wire frame and every time you wake up you find yourself paralyzed on one side.

The hotels save laundry bills by hanging the towels out in the sun and after they are sufficiently dry they use them again. They are supposed to return them to the same rooms, but they usually get mixed.

The ox carts on which they haul cane are tremendous affairs and wonderfully plain. They are drawn ordinarily by three yoke of oxen, sometimes more. They have only two wheels, but these are about the size of the main drivers of a locomotive and the balance of the cart is heavy in proportion.

Everything is old and looks to be older than it is. Children are plentiful and very dark skinned. Hogs are on the "hazel splitter" or "razor back" variety. Mosquitos ripen in January and are ready to pick in February. Doors have brass knockers on the outside in place of bells. Oxen are iron shod.

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

There are few beggars except boys who "holler" for pennies. Everybody seems to have plenty of leisure and little to do. Farm lands seem to lack diligent cultivation. Cattle are raw-boned and seem poorly kept. Some wooden plows are still used. A great deal of stuff is carried on horseback. Lobsters have no claws. The meats are woefully bad. Ice is served in liberal quantities.

The Fourth Letter.

WHAT WE DID NOT SEE.

To a man engaged in active business, who hardly gets ten minutes in a month at home that he can call his own, ten days of sightseeing and lying around hotels seems an awful long time to devote to one island. So I felt extremely anxious to move on and conquer the next world.

With the knowledge which we had of Cuba when we came there and what we gained while we were here, we realized when we were ready to move on how many things there were that we could not see.

Like all other American tourists who are on a short vacation, we were going as if Satan was after us and we had to keep moving. So we went on, leaving behind us many natural and artificial beauties and such places as Santiago, Cienfuegos, Puerto Principe, Santa Clara, Guanabacoa, Batabano,

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

etc., the adjacent Isle of Pines and a whole lot of other places and things of great interest, without visiting them.

Santiago is five hundred and thirty-two miles from Havana, or within two hundred miles of the entire length of the island. Here, however, distances are counted by kilometers. There is a railway, a very good line, between the two cities, and the fare is twenty-four dollars and five cents, and five dollars extra for a sleeper. I think the fare for the trip is fixed on the basis of time rather than of distance.

In the United States one pays ordinarily about one dollar per hour for traveling on a railway train. And the people who run the railways here perhaps took that for a guide in fixing the rates, overlooking the fact that in the United States one usually gets over about one thousand miles or more in twenty-five hours, while in Cuba he only gets over a trifle above five hundred miles in the same time.

The line of railway from Havana runs down the backbone, as it were, of Cuba, with branch lines running off in either direction like legs extending out from either side of the body of a long centipede. It appears that the line is built in a very advantageous position and is destined to have almost the

SANTIAGO BATTLE

monopoly of the railroad business in the main part of the island for some time to come. It has, however, to meet the competition of the coastwise boats.

Santiago is a considerable town. It had nearly fifty thousand population at the time of the Spanish-American war and has improved since. It has a wonderful harbor, which our navy found to be almost impregnable when Admiral Cervera of the Spanish fleet sneaked in there and wouldn't come out to fight with either Sampson or Schley. The Spanish fleet did finally come out of the harbor and made an attempt to escape, on the morning of July 3, 1898.

Rear Admiral Sampson was ranking commander of the fleet and under him were Commodore Schley and the officers of the various battleships and men of war. On one bright sunny morning Sampson had sailed east to confer with Shafter, Roosevelt and others as to the best way to proceed to dislodge the Spaniards and get them out, directing Schley to keep a close watch and make battle upon the enemy should he appear. About the time that Sampson had got beyond recall the Spaniards, with all their great array of battleships, cruisers, etc., came out into the ocean either to escape or find another berth. Schley, with Phillips, Evans and

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

others, opened upon them, and, as they would have said in olden times, they smote them hip and thigh.

It was the greatest naval battle that was ever fought upon the waters of this globe—the greatest destruction of battleships and men of war the world has ever seen, and the greatest and most successful victory ever achieved, even eclipsing the brilliant victory of Dewey at Manila harbor that a short time before had dazzled the nations by its picturesque splendor and complete annihilation of the enemy's fleet.

There was not a boat disabled and scarcely a human life lost on the American side, while every boat of the Spaniards was sent to the bottom or badly damaged, and the loss of life with them was appalling, running even into the thousands.

As one of the last boats was going down, the sailors on Captain Bob Evans' boat sent up a lusty cheer, but Bob said: "Don't cheer, boys; remember the poor devils are drowning." Captain Phillips called all his men on deck to join in songs of thanksgiving and prayer.

About this time Admiral Sampson, who had heard the firing from afar, came back as fast as he could steam, and got there just as the last boat of the enemy had been pursued to its finish and had

PROCTOR KNOTT'S STORY

struck its colors. Then Sampson sent his famous dispatch: "I have destroyed the enemy, the victory is mine," or words to that effect.

A long and bitter controversy grew out of this, and after a long session of a commission it was finally decided that the victory and blood money, which is politely referred to as prize money, belonged to Sampson.

It will be remembered that the award gave great dissatisfaction throughout the country, for most everybody thought that the victory belonged to Schley, and that Schley was entitled to all the glory and the prize money.

PROCTOR KNOTT'S STORY.

The next day after the award was made, some other congressmen met old Proctor Knott of Kentucky and asked him what he thought of the decision.

He said: "The decision suits me exactly, and it has lifted off my stomach a rabbit that has lain heavy thereon for over fifty years, and for that reason I like the decision. Once when I was a big boy, I went out hunting with a little boy. We chased a rabbit into a hole, but we couldn't get him out. We tried to twist him out with a forked stick; fired

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off guns and did everything else, but the rabbit wouldn't come out. Finally I told the little boy to stand with a club and watch the hole until I went home and got some brown paper and kindling so we could smoke him out. While I was after the paper and wood the rabbit came out and the small boy knocked him in the head, and when I got back he had the rabbit skinned and ready for the pan. A controversy arose; I claimed the rabbit was all mine, as it was captured under my orders; the boy claimed that half of it belonged to him. I, however, took the rabbit, carried it home and had it cooked for our family, and I ate my share of it. That rabbit has lain heavy on my stomach ever since, but this decision has cleared my conscience and lifted the weight of that rabbit, for I know now that the rabbit was mine and I was right in claiming it. Therefore I heartily concur in the findings of the Commission and I endorse their report."

THE LATE WAR.

Some of the old warships have never been recovered, but still lie in the bottom of the Caribbean Sea where the Americans placed them in 1898, and the bones of those poor Spaniards who went down with them are still there.

ROOSEVELT'S MAD CHARGE

Those Spaniards may have been fighting in a bad cause, but they did so faithfully and yielded there and at that time the supremest evidence of their conviction of their honest adherence to duty. So I deem them worthy of all the honor that their friends would claim for them.

It was in the mouth of Santiago harbor that Hobson and his little crew made their wild venture in their attempt to bottle up the Spanish fleet. The attempt was a failure, but it made Hobson a great hero, started him on the lecture platform and placed him in a position to break the world's record in kissing idiotic women.

It was near Santiago, at El Caney, that Roosevelt with his Rough Riders made their wild charge up San Juan Hill—a charge so bold and unconventional that it had no military precedent, a charge which lacked caution, prudence and strategy, but which routed the Spaniards, ended the war and indirectly made Roosevelt president of the United States.

It was to Santiago that a shipload of prominent men and officials, and generals in the army, came while we were in Cuba, to dedicate a great monument to the fallen heroes of the Spanish-American war.

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

Santiago is a picturesque place, surrounded by mountains on three sides.

Yellow fever has been prevalent there, in past years.

Copper is mined in its vicinity, and a large business is done in coffee and all kinds of fruits and tropical vegetation.

It was surrendered to the Americans July 17, 1898, and was improved, like other parts of Cuba, by the American occupation.

VARIOUS MATTERS OF INTEREST.

Then there is Cienfuegos, with a population of fifty thousand, that must be worth a visit of considerable duration. It has a noble harbor, big enough to accommodate all the ships of the world, twenty-six square miles of water.

Cuba is remarkably well supplied with harbors. The Lord was very kind to the Island in this respect. There are good harbors at Havana, Santiago, Cienfuegos, Matanzas and Puerto Principe, and some lesser ones at other ports.

Cienfuegos is a new town for the southern countries, not being founded until 1819. It does a good export trade.

Cuba has many beauty spots and some natural

ODDS AND ENDS

wonders, one of which is the lost river—a beautiful stream that traverses a section of the country and sinks into the earth and is lost for several miles, when it bursts out and descends with beautiful cascades down the hillside into the ocean.

Then there are several caves lined with crystal in all shapes and forms.

Some rivers with lovely waterfalls, and mountains as high as seven thousand five hundred feet, bathing beaches, summer and winter resorts are many of the things that make up an interesting country.

The treatment of the aborigines of Cuba, Mexico and the United States presents a peculiar study. Columbus made his discovery of this hemisphere in 1492. By 1553, or in just sixty-one years, the natives were all killed off in Cuba. At the end of four hundred years we in America have a handful left, while in Mexico there are about as many as there were in the beginning, far outnumbering the Spaniards or their descendants.

Cuba has a population of over a million and a half. There are thirty-one towns in Cuba that have more than five thousand population, fourteen that have ten thousand or more, running up to Havana that has a quarter of a million.

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

There are five hundred and seventy small islands scattered along the north coast of Cuba, and seven hundred and thirty on the south side of the island. So it would appear that a trip around the island by boat would be exceedingly interesting, and that a person might spend a year if he were determined to see everything there is to see.

The varied industries and products of Cuba are greater than most people are aware of. Most everybody knows that large quantities of tobacco of the very best quality in the world are raised in Cuba, but do you know, my dear reader, that here copper, asphaltum, iron, manganese and salt are produced, or mined? There are over eight million dollars of American money invested in the iron industry alone.

Asphaltum, or asphalt as it is usually called, which is used in street paving, is a peculiar bituminous substance usually found in lakes in several parts of the world. A great deal of it comes from the island of Trinidad, on the north side of the coast of South America. It is also found in some of the western states of America. It is found in several places in Cuba, and ten thousand tons have been shipped in one year from one part of the island.

Near Cordenas it is found in the bottom of the

WHAT WE MISSED

bay. No one knows where it comes from, but it is there, and when it is removed more accumulates in its place. It is supposed to be deposited from subterranean rivers that empty here below the sea level.

You have, perhaps, heard the old refrain, "There is a hole in the bottom of the sea," well, that is what you need here to mine asphalt. They dig a big hole or shaft in the bottom of the bay and the asphalt runs into this, trickling down the sides. Then, when the hole has become lined with the material, which adheres to its sides, they run out a ship over the shaft and let down a heavy sharp piece of iron which breaks the asphalt loose from the sides of the shaft and it drops into the bottom and is scooped up and loaded onto the vessel. This industry has been carried on for years, and there is just as much asphalt there now as there was in the beginning.

Then, there is lots of timber of choice varieties here, mahogany, ebony, lignum vitae and others, and enough sugar is produced to sweeten the world, and bananas enough to supply all the Italian fruit stands in America.

There are some things we missed with pleasure. For instance, while we were at Matanzas, we met an American who had spent a considerable time in Cuba in railway matters. He had with him two snake

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

skins which had been cured, and he was bringing them home. One skin was from eight to ten inches in width and about twelve feet long, only the back and sides were preserved, and the head and a considerable length of the tail were removed before curing. So this serpent must have been about fifteen inches in circumference and nearly twenty feet long. The other hide was not so large, but had covered a snake ten or twelve feet long and about nine inches in circumference.

The gentleman who had this skin had captured it under peculiar circumstances. He was camping out and sleeping in a hammock between two trees. Along toward morning he felt a sort of "scrouging," which woke him up, and on investigating the matter, found that he had the original owner of this skin for a sleeping companion. He concluded the hammock wasn't big enough for both of them, so he got out and left the snake in the hammock until he got help to kill it and make it yield its hide for its unwarranted familiarity.

We also missed getting the small pox and typhoid fever, which are always easy to contract in Cuba. We also missed being robbed or shot or getting into jail, which anybody can get done to themselves in most any strange country any time on slight

OUR DEPARTURE

provocation, and especially in this country, that has had such an irregular government.

But if I should start to tell about all we missed in Cuba, this series of letters would be made up more of what we did not see than of what we did see. Cuba is so rich in her possessions, has such great possibilities, is so interesting in many respects that there is hardly a place to leave off when a description is once begun. But we will close here and advise everybody to go and see what we saw and what we missed seeing.

OUR DEPARTURE.

Ten days had elapsed since we landed in Cuba and they had been somewhat strenuous units of time. We had been the recipients of some attentions and courtesies and had to reluctantly decline some invitations.

One gentleman put at our disposal a new locomotive and special car without cost to go into the interior, and then to go further, and fight the big snakes in their lurking places. Another invitation was to go and catch sharks, but our ship was lying at anchor ready to sail for Mexico, and we could not longer remain in this delightful country.

So about sundown we were carried by the tender

CUBA THE BEAUTIFUL

to the larger vessel. The United States army transport lay in the harbor, a beautiful cream white. It had been to Santiago with a number of military men and others to dedicate the monument that had been erected there to the memory of the heroes of San Juan, El Caney and Santiago. This great ship was beautiful in contrast with the many black hulls, clustered together around it in the harbor. Lieut. General A. R. Chaffee of the United States army, who had just resigned his position of commander of all the United States forces and had retired from the army, with his wife and daughter, had left the army transport and joined our ship as passengers for Vera Cruz.

Nightfall was coming on. The lights of the harbor began to twinkle one by one, and in platoons, the lights of the city and the surrounding hills were turned on and became stars, not of the heavens, but of the earth. The outlines of the houses and the streets were almost lost to view, the ships were like palaces of fairy land with their lamps shining upon the waters. Little boats with small lanterns, like the light of fireflies, glided about the bay. The great light of Morro Castle threw its rays far out over and upon the waving waters of the Gulf.

Looking at the thousands of lights and cloth-

GOOD-BYE TO CUBA

ing the city in our imagination in all its fantastic shapes and colors, the scene was grand and glorious beyond description, and our departure from Cuba with all its recollections was more enchanting than our entry thereto.

Just as our ship headed toward the open waters the most entrancing music fell upon our ears. It was the Marine Band on the United States transport rendering a last tribute to our fellow traveler, the great military hero, on his final separation from his comrades with whom he had served so many years.

Every voice on the boat for the time was still and every soul was lifted to a higher plane as the departing tourists recognized the strains of our great National anthem, "The Stars and Stripes—Our Flag is Still There," and then as that tune died away and the band played "In the Days of Auld Lang Syne," I think there may have been some tears wiped away by the more tender hearted. Then darkness was around us, the throb of the machinery sent a tremor through our boat, we were out on the great ocean. We had bid good-bye to Cuba and were off for Mexico.

The Fifth Letter.

ACROSS THE GULF.

Our trip to Mexico was, perhaps, a greater surprise to ourselves than to anyone who may have the patience to read about it. We had intended after visiting Havana and tracking over a part of Cuba, to take a steamer to Porto Rico, Jamaica, and others of the neighboring islands.

But the steamer that made the most complete trip from Havana had left the day before our arrival and as no other boats seemed to be going just the way and the time that suited us, the question resolved itself into whether we should go to Jamaica only or Mexico, so after a council and a counting up of what cash we had left to see if we could cover the trip, we concluded that it should be Mexico. It was one thing to decide to go to Mexico and entirely another thing to get there. The steamer starts from New York city and only stops incidentally, and

EMBARKING FOR MEXICO

you cannot secure accommodations until after its arrival, and not always then. So after waiting several days for the steamer to arrive, we were told that we could not be given either rooms or even a room.

There were six of us by this time, all from Illinois, who had drifted together in the way of travel and we were determined to go.

We offered to subsidize the agent, bulldoze the captain, or buy the ship. We were so deadly in earnest and seemed to have so much money that a compromise was finally effected.

Passengers who had been assigned one room were shifted to another. New assignments were made. The captain offered to give up his quarters and sleep on a board, and we were all finally arranged for with several excellent staterooms, while the most prominent couple were assigned to the captain's headquarters, which are by far the biggest and best thing on the boat.

We were ensconced on the staunch ship the *Vigilancia*, of the Ward line, New York, four thousand, one hundred and fifteen tons burden, and in the kind care of the captain.

The captain is a jolly good fellow. He weighs about two hundred and fifty pounds and measures nearly as much from larboard to starboard as he does

ACROSS THE GULF

from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. He wears a jaunty blue uniform when he leaves New York, which he changes in this latitude to a suit of lovely white duck with brass buttons; above all sits his gold-trimmed cap of authority. He is of ruddy complexion with a sandy mustache and a countenance overrunning with good nature, covering a look of solid determination, and evidences of business ability. His hair is of light color, and placed so on his head that a barber could trim all of it very nicely without the necessity of removing his cap, which he always wears when on duty.

You might suppose that a trip across a good part of the gulf, commencing at Havana Monday evening at sundown and ending at Vera Cruz Friday morning after sunup, would be a long and tedious and tiresome trip; but when you come to make it you find the days too short to cover what you have to do and what there is to see.

It takes a good part of every day to eat. There are five meals in all. Light breakfast, 6:30 to 8:30 a. m.; regular breakfast, 11:00 a. m. to 1:00 p. m.; lunch, 3:00 to 4:00 p. m.; dinner, 5:30 to 7:30 p. m.; and supper, 9:00 to 10:00 p. m. Now, by the time you wash your hands for each one of these meals, wash your face for about every other one, and change

FLYING FISH

your clothing once or twice to appear in proper shape for the proper meal, and then eat the meals, take a little nap in the day time between meals for rest, take a few laps of promenade around the deck to be ready for the next meal, shave up to look as well as the minority and take a salt sea water bath to cool yourself off—then each day is a busy season and old glory is setting in the western sea altogether too soon after his rising from the eastern brine.

Then there are the flying fish which are always a matter of interest, although their movement could hardly be classed as flying. It appears that they have elongated fins that serve as wings. The fish dart through the water rapidly and, rising a few feet from the surface, are in the air a few seconds, going perhaps seventy-five feet, when they strike the surface as a skipping stone when hurled along the water. After making one or two skips they then disappear until the next effort.

Then there are concerts and entertainments of every sort in a free-for-all style, where any person who has the ability to entertain is welcome to come in, and usually the fellow who can entertain the least "butts in" the most often.

When the ship lay in front of Progreso, Yucatan, the crew and passengers joined in fishing for

ACROSS THE GULF

sharks, and one of the engineers caught a monster measuring twelve feet in length and weighing several hundred pounds.

There were quite a number of cattle brought from New York on the ship and unloaded at Progreso. They are raised from the hold of the vessel by placing a big band around them, to which ropes are attached with which a steam derrick lifts them from the ship and lowers them into the lighter which is bobbing up and down on the waves receiving the freight.

It seems strange to me that cattle should be brought from New York to this country, when it would appear that they could be brought from the central western states so much quicker and so much better.

There were some Mexican card players on board that always attracted attention. They played a pretty stiff game.

So with all these things to do and see the days are gone too quickly and a five days' trip is ended all too soon.

YUCATAN.

On the trip across the gulf, the steamer stops off the north shore of Yucatan, opposite a little town

YUCATAN STATE

called Progreso. There is no harbor at Progreso and the water is so shallow that boats the size of the one on which we traveled cannot come closer than three miles to the shore. This one lay at anchor all day while the freight for this country was transferred to lighters or barges and conveyed to shore. We availed ourselves of the opportunity to visit a country which is so interesting, and of which we, and we assume our readers, know so little.

We were surprised beyond measure at the richness of the country, and found a town of which we are free to confess we had hardly ever heard, that is certainly one of the most remarkable towns or cities to be found any place.

After being buffeted by the waves on a little tug we were landed on a long pier alongside of which a number of smaller craft were loading and unloading. Passing through a great warehouse we came to a very considerable railway station and a train standing ready to speed into the interior.

The train was composed of old style small passenger coaches to which was attached a parlor car of very respectable dimensions, seated with easy willow-wicker chairs. The car was about as large as a good sized interurban car and was as comfortable and as clean as could be desired.

ACROSS THE GULF

The conductor in charge was a man of gentlemanly appearance, in a neat blue uniform.

But the train man, or what we would call brakeman, who occupied the back platform, was of a type peculiar to this country, and would look very odd on any train in the United States. He was a "stocky" built Indian, probably five feet and six inches or less in height. He wore a faint blue striped linen coat, thin white trousers, a well-built broad-brimmed, high-crown felt hat, and had on his feet a pair of sandals, that is, a flat sole of leather, the great toe passing through a loop and a narrow thong passing over above the instep, his feet otherwise being perfectly bare, and you could have counted every toe he had if you cared to take the trouble; but then he was alert and attended strictly to business and that after all is the main thing in a railroad man.

We had been told that Merida, about twenty-five miles inland from Progreso, where we had landed, was a remarkably nice town and we bought tickets to that place.

For a few miles we sped along at a very fair rate of speed, through a swampy coral country, where the land is raised only a little above the water level and is a dismal waste of stone scantily covered with small brush, scattered among which are a number of

HENNEQUIN PLANTS

great cactus plants with spreading branches, veritable trees, twelve to twenty feet in height.

Then we came to the lands that have made this particular spot one of the richest places on the face of the globe.

The so-called hemp fields, which appear to be none other than great farms of what are known here as hennequin, in our country as century plants, lie before us. Not in lots or patches, nor even in acre-pieces, but in sections and townships, as far as the eye can reach, like the great fields of corn in the western states.

The fields are well cultivated. The plants are placed in straight rows about eight or ten feet apart and a great field of them presents a peculiar and beautiful sight. These farms are enclosed with well-laid stone fences, and every one has big gates with solid concrete or stone pillars, two or more feet square, on each side of the gate.

Narrow track railroads on which mules haul little cars loaded with the leaves or arms of the plants when cut off, lead out from each farm to a main line paralleling the railroad, which leads to the city.

The water supply along the way is furnished by pumps operated by windmills. They are the regu-

ACROSS THE GULF

lar American type, such as seen in the United States, and the large number of them in the country and the towns gives a lively aspect to the scene.

MERIDA, THE CITY BEAUTIFUL.

In the course of about forty minutes we arrived at Merida, and we were surprised beyond measure to find such a town as lay here before us.

It is said to be the richest town of its size on the face of the earth, having a population of sixty-five thousand. It has sixty-five men said to be worth over one million dollars each, several being multi-millionaires.

It is the best paved town I have ever seen, and I think the sidewalks are the most uniform in appearance and in the best condition of any city in any country. The streets are about forty feet wide between the buildings with about a thirty foot driveway in the center and a sidewalk of five feet in width on each side of the street.

Great arches, of which there were a dozen or more, and columns, of which there were several, made of a frame work covered with canvas and painted to represent marble, onyx, or other kind of stones stood at all the important corners, and beautiful parks and plazas with numerous tropical plants were found in many places.

MERIDA—IN YUCATAN

Every house in the city was so newly painted that they all appeared to have been finished on the day of our arrival.

There are good stores, handling all classes of goods, and a market house that occupies an entire block. One hardware store, in which we took refuge during a shower, occupies a building of sixty or eighty feet front, of modern construction, three stories high and was stocked full to overflowing with all kinds of goods in its line.

The streets were full of vehicles, the most conspicuous being the public hacks, which are a peculiar vehicle and are all exactly alike. They are sort of a cross between a station wagon and a storm buggy. The floor is of polished sheet brass, and the dash-board is also made or covered with the same material. They are painted blue or green on the outside and striped with yellow. They are intended for two persons, ordinarily, besides the driver, but they have a small folding seat that will accommodate one or two more persons if necessary. I do not know how many there are of these odd vehicles in this city. There seems to be a thousand. I noticed the one we rode in was numbered 540.

Then, there is a narrow gauge street car line on which the cars are drawn by mules.

ACROSS THE GULF

There are broad gauge carts drawn by three mules, driven side by side, and then the team is narrower than the cart itself.

There were several small automobile runabouts in motion and, finally, I was more than surprised to see a huge automobile delivery cart or truck, such as they use in Chicago, distributing boxes of merchandise around the city to the stores.

There are several kinds of men and women here, from the highest class of Spaniards to the lowest class Indians or peons, and the clothing is as varied as the people.

There are finely dressed women ornamented with sparkling gems, and there are high class dressers among the men. But the ordinary laborers and market women are more remarkable for the clothing they do not wear than for what they do wear. The men wear thin gauze undershirts and a pair of muslin or very thin linen trousers, the trousers usually rolled up above the knees; they wear no underclothes, no stockings and no shoes, and their bare legs and feet are about the color of and look as solid as bronze castings. Some of them wear an apron similar to restaurant waiters and they cover their heads with large sombreros. The lower class women and those around the markets display

PECULIAR AND WEALTHY CITY

exceedingly limited wardrobes in public. They seem to wear only two garments, one is what the ladies call a chemise and the other is about the same thing, a little shorter, the shorter one being worn on the outside with a strip of cotton cloth printed in gay colors around the bottom and a similar border around the square cut low neck.

There are a number of very fine residences, some might be called palaces, and some mud or adobe houses. The streets are of vitrified brick and asphalt. The sidewalks are of cement and all of the same pattern. It is a most remarkable city. Beside the palace stands the mud hovel, with thatched roof, but all with stone fences and all clean and newly painted.

Of course this peculiar and wealthy place naturally led to some investigation. I found that, while this town had been located here for long years, until a few years ago it had been like all other Mexican cities; muddy in wet weather, dusty in dry weather and dirty at all times; that the awakening had come about through the appointment or the election of a new governor. The governor down here is the whole thing, he is not hampered with the constitution or the laws, or if he is they sit very lightly upon him.

ACROSS THE GULF

Governor Montinio became governor of this state about six years ago, to administer the affairs of a rich and prosperous people, the great source of wealth being the hennequin or century plant farms alluded to before in this article. He found a miserable, dirty and disgraceful city full of rich people who were growing richer and with no decent surroundings to live in.

He determined that things could and should be changed. He donated two years of his salary to start the work. As hennequin, or the fibre from the century plant, was the great source of wealth, and as there was a big profit in this fibre, it should pay for the making of the city beautiful. So he laid a tax of a certain amount on every bale of fibre produced. I do not know what other methods he pursued to raise the revenue, but he secured a great amount and commenced the work of improvement.

In addition to making it one of the best paved cities in the world, he has built a great college, a large hospital, a fine municipal building, a theatre, a system of waterworks and sewers, and has added beautiful parks and drives.

Merida had just enjoyed a visit from President Diaz, and the arches alluded to above were erected in honor of his visit. The citizens raised a purse for

RECEPTION TO DIAZ

his entertainment while he was here, of the modest sum of eight hundred thousand dollars, and in addition to this, he was the recipient of lavish entertainment by private individuals—one rich planter expending on his dinner, souvenirs, etc., something over two hundred thousand dollars.

But I almost forgot about the new paint on the houses. When the president was to come to town the governor sent out word to every house owner that he must paint his house or be fined two or three hundred dollars. So every house in the city had just been painted, which gave the town the remarkable new appearance that it presented at this time.

We left Merida richer than we found it, as the ship which brought us down also brought two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in gold for this already rich city.

The Sixth Letter.

THE TRUE CROSS.

When I left off on the last instalment of this story, as I remember it, we were on the Gulf of Mexico, two or three hundred miles from shore, headed toward the city of the "True Cross," Vera Cruz; or as Cortez named the place when he laid it out, "Villa Rica de la Santa Vera Cruz," meaning The Rich City of the Holy Cross.

When a ship lands at the destination of its journey and the passengers separate, it is like the breaking up of a large family, and so it was at this time. On the arrival at Vera Cruz we all went our several ways, some to journey on together, some never to meet again, others to meet in the most unexpected places.

On the steamer there was one woman with a little boy. They were both sad faced and visibly worried. She had come on a long search for a

LANDING AT VERA CRUZ

recreant husband who had deserted her and fled to some foreign land, and she was tracking him to the ends of the earth. I doubt whether she knew where he was or where she was going or when she would stop. Others on the steamer were returning to their homes after long periods of absence and their friends were on the landing to meet them and embrace them and shed tears of joy with them, for great joys, like great sorrows, seem to let loose the floodgate of our tears.

We separated from some with reluctance. It is strange when far from home and home folks in a foreign country how strong attachments you can make with congenial spirits that you have been with only for a few days, and how afterwards, if you chance to meet these same people, you meet them as old friends.

As we neared the land shortly after daybreak there was a thick murky fog lying upon the waters so that the landing had to be made with great care. Even the outlines of the seawalls and the docks could not be distinguished except at a very short distance. But, as our steamer hauled up abreast of the stone dock, the fog lifted, the sun shone out gloriously, and the city with its light grey buildings, cathedrals, minarets and towers, showed to its best advantage.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

And it was well that it should be so, for I am certain that the fine impression one gets of Vera Cruz as he sails into the harbor is the only good impression he ever gets or has of this city, then or afterwards, and it is well to get the best impression first.

This old city is said to have the best constructed artificial harbor on the western hemisphere. There a new custom house is being constructed, which is a handsome building. I was informed that a good system of waterworks has been put in and that a system of sewerage has been commenced. I am willing to give due credit for these, but if there is any other redeeming feature left to name, I did not discover it.

I left there after a short stay, with the impression that Vera Cruz was the most dismal and melancholy place I had ever visited. I cannot account for the evidences of neglect that one encounters on every hand, or why with all the apparent advantages the place seems to possess, it should remain in its deplorable condition which has been as it now is, or with little or no change, for many years.

It has a nice location at the foot of a long slope of hills that gradually rise to snow clad mountains. It also lies on the shore above sea level. These two

VERA CRUZ

advantages make it possible to have good water and good drainage, the two greatest factors in making any place beautiful and healthy, and yet for all the years in the long past it has been a municipal ulcer, a festering place of contagion, a hot-bed of disease, and the great breeding and distributing place for the fatal yellow fever to all parts of the world.

Its streets are poorly paved with rough cobble stones or not paved at all. Its sidewalks are narrow and irregular. In place of sewers, gutters full of sickening sewage course sluggishly down through the center of the streets. It has a woeful system of street cars and no hacks or public conveyances of any kind. The streets and plazas are infested with beggars, and if there has been a new building constructed during the past one hundred years, there is little evidence of the fact in the appearance of the architecture. Everything is old, dilapidated and worn out, and to make the surroundings more dismal, thousands of buzzards fill the air. They circle over the city, rest on the houses, and even on the domes and spires of cathedrals and public buildings. They befoul the roofs and gorge themselves on the filth of the streets. They are the last overwhelming indication of neglect and decay, and give an already melancholy picture a wide, black, dismal border.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

Verily, Vera Cruz is the "True Cross" and we felt as though we were nailed thereon every hour we were in the city.

Vera Cruz was the first settlement in the new world. It has been the principal seaport of the great republic of Mexico for nearly four hundred years and should have four hundred thousand population, while it has only about thirty thousand. It is strange that any city should have so neglected its opportunities. But here it stands, a warning to all filthy and nonprogressive communities, neglected by its own people and shunned by strangers, and being left behind in the race of time.

It has had a discouraging past, but there is still a chance for it to have a better and greater future. Will it avail itself of its opportunities? Time alone will tell.

Cortez landed here in 1519 and some of the churches were founded as far back as 1568, and they look as though they were built in that year. It was controlled by Spain as was this whole country until the early years of the century just past, since which time it has been occupied by the French and Americans, and the allied forces of the French, English and Spanish. It was in 1847 that Gen. Winfield Scott of the United States came knocking at its

ORIZABA

doors and after five days' pounding with his mortars and siege guns the city capitulated. After Scott had bombarded the city from the gulf, he landed his siege guns, drew them around to the back of the city and bombarded it from the rear. When the white flag was sent up Scott compelled them to bring the keys up to him. He would not take chances on yellow fever for his army. He accepted the surrender and then marched on to the City of Mexico without ever entering Vera Cruz.

We tarried as short a time as we could in Vera Cruz and passed without reluctance up the railroad to Orizaba, a quaint old town way up in the mountains. The valley leading thereto is a rich valley, which produces in the way of agriculture and horticulture almost every plant or tree known, many of which are not known in the more northern country. We did not stop very long in Orizaba, for besides its waterfalls and beautiful scenery the greatest thing to be seen here is a big gambling den. Such things can be seen some places in the United States.

THE NUMBER THIRTEEN CLUB.

When we reached Orizaba we met a party of New York and Pennsylvania folks who were touring Mexico, under the direction of a gentleman from

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

Philadelphia. They were then going to the southern part of Mexico. They had their special coaches and were well equipped for a pleasant trip and invited us to go with them. As they were a very pleasant lot of people and were going to a part of the country which we wanted to visit, and the expense of going with them would be less than going alone, we gladly accepted the invitation and joined the party for a week.

There were eleven people in the party when we found them and the addition of the writer and his wife brought out the curious incident that was not discovered until the first table was reached that the party as now constituted numbered just thirteen. So we organized ourselves into a "number thirteen club." This perhaps sent a cold shiver down the backs of some of the superstitious, but it did not bother your humble servant very much, as he has had some experience with this so-called unlucky number and has lived through it.

It is a secret that I have long guarded, but I will confess now that this number has always been with me. I was born on the thirteenth of the month and was number thirteen of a very large family. I lived on a farm place until I was thirteen years old and then worked as an apprentice or journeyman for thir-

THE "THIRTEEN" CLUB

teen years until I secured a proprietary interest in a business.

Take this whole trip. When I went onto the steamer on the gulf I was awarded seat number forty at the table and given a napkin ring number thirteen. I asked the attendant why he gave me a napkin ring number thirteen, when I occupied seat number forty. He said: "It's this way. The ring number forty was stolen or lost, and as we never had a seat number thirteen we had that ring left over, so we use it for number forty. See?"

As stated before, our addition swelled this party to the so-called unlucky number. I then sent a telegram to the states. After much scratching to save all the words that I could, as it cost thirty-six cents a word, the operator said there were just thirteen words left to pay for. Then at the first hotel we reached the clerk assigned the rooms and gave me room number thirteen, and the railroad trip next day took us just thirteen hours.

When we reached the hotel that night the clerk could not give me room thirteen as a superstitious idiot who had been a little ahead of us would not sleep in the room until somebody got up and scratched the number off, so the scratched marks are the only thing left to designate room thirteen in that

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hotel. The next day we had a long drive into the country among the mountains, and I had the fortune of being assigned a time-worn hack that had been many years in service without any new paint any place except on each side, and that paint had been used to emblazon on that old hack the magic number "thirteen."

When we got to Mexico the first funeral car we encountered came down the track with two trailers loaded with corpses enclosed in coffins in all sizes and in several colors and the number of that car was thirteen, and the first time I took a bath in Mexico I was given room thirteen in the bath house.

And so I could go on indefinitely, but notwithstanding my experiences with thirteen I can say as did the great Daniel Webster, "I still live."

Our trip with the "thirteen club" led through the valley covered by the Mexican railway which runs between Vera Cruz and Mexico City, then down the route on the Mexican Southern Railway to the city of Oaxaca, and thence by stage to the old ruins of Mitla, and it was a very interesting trip all the way along.

FLOWERS AND SNOW.

Starting at Orizaba one warm morning, notwith-

FLOWERS AND SNOW

standing it was the 24th day of February, we were on a train where men wore linen suits and straw hats, while nearly all those, both men and women, around the depots and some on the train were bare-footed. We were surrounded with the greenest of foliage. As the conductor howled out some unknown sound, meaning all aboard, a friend we left behind hurriedly handed to us through the windows great bouquets of jessamines and violets, filling the car with happiness, beauty and fragrance.

Back of the city as a contrast to the summer scenes here mentioned stood in full view the great peak of Mount Orizaba, the highest point on the American continent, covered with its mantle of whitest snow that never departs, but is as near eternal as the mountains themselves.

As we left Orizaba we were carried upward on a piece of railway that for daring in surveying and building has few equals upon the face of the globe. It twists and curls among the mountains as might the long body of a great serpent. The train sometimes roars through deep cuts or dark tunnels and then the next instant, as it emerges into clear air, is hanging on the side of the mountain with cliffs rising far above on one side and with a sheer descent almost perpendicular to the valley below, one thou-

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

sand five hundred to two thousand feet; the road goes higher and higher at every bend and every curve until it rises four thousand one hundred feet in twenty-nine miles. The mountain scenery in Mexico is equal to any of the most sublime in America, or, in fact, in any part of the world. At Maltrata, a station on this line, one can look down the valley for a matter of thirty miles and see nicely cultivated farms way below him in all shades of green foliage and gray earth, that resemble the patches in a crazy quilt, while good sized towns at a distance of ten or twenty miles appear as little villages at less than half that distance, and fair sized mountains seem like low hills.

This road was built by Englishmen with English capital and illustrates the dogged determinedness and courage of this remarkable branch of the Caucasian family. They are never dismayed by obstacles or overawed by seeming impossibilities. They are a great people—they make the great ventures in commercial life and they usually win out where others fail.

It was on this railway that I saw the first steel railroad ties that I had ever seen used. They are simply what would be called boiler iron pressed into the form of the upper side of an ordinary railway tie

MEXICAN RAILWAY

and laid beneath the rail with the convex side up with small flanges to hold the rails. There are other novel arrangements in use on this line. The coal used is a slack pressed into blocks about eight inches square, and each block marked patented. The locomotives used are double enders, fired in the center, with steam cylinders at both the front and back ends, practically two engines in one. These are used on account of the heavy grades. The trains are run in two or three sections up the mountains and you can sit in the first section and look across the valley and see the second section on the track over which you have passed going or coming in an opposite direction. You can see a great valley from the side of the train and in another instant you swing around the circle and look from the other side of the train down into the same valley.

Along the line of the Mexican railway near Vera Cruz is a marked evidence of the great productiveness and growing qualities of the country. The posts of the fence protecting the right of way of this road are made of a crooked sort of timber, but nearly every one of them has taken root and sprouted branches and some of them have grown into considerable trees. Anything stuck into the ground in this rich valley seems to grow. Many of the tele-

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

graph poles are made of iron, and this is, perhaps, to keep them from growing so tall that the wires could not be found among the branches. Orchids grow in many of the trees and other plants of various kinds settle and grow upon the branches until some of the largest trees carry great clusters of foreign plants and vines and seem to accommodate themselves to a greater load than the white man's burden.

After we passed out upon the table lands above the mountains we came into a broad, flat valley of light, sandy soil, which was being prepared by the people for the spring planting. Everything is raised in this valley that the world seems to call for. Sugar and molasses are produced. Then comes coffee, and I think tea, wheat, pepper, allspice, all kinds of fruit, corn, all other cereals, etc. The heat was oppressive, even like summer, notwithstanding this was still in February, and columns of sand caught up by whirlwinds could be seen in every direction. But there was a pleasing contrast, for on the one side could be seen the crest or peak of Mount Orizaba, on the other the extinct crater of Popocatepetl, each with their snow caps which never depart either in summer or in winter.

A GREAT CITY

THE CITY OF PUEBLA.

After a long ride we came to the city of Puebla with its population of eighty or ninety thousand people. It is quite a city in many respects. It is called the "City of Churches," having one of the greatest cathedrals in the world, besides other cathedrals or smaller churches on every hand. The clang of the bells is heard day and night. There doesn't seem to be any let up to the bell ringing in connection with these churches. They are rung on the slightest provocation.

The great cathedral here was begun many years before, but was consecrated in the year 1649. It is one of the great cathedrals of the world and, while not so large, is in many respects finer than the cathedral at Mexico City. The tower alone cost more than one hundred thousand dollars, has eighteen bells, the largest of which weighs twenty thousand pounds, and when it is sounded the earth on which one stands vibrates with its deep tones. The altar is made of onyx and fine marbles and cost one hundred and ten thousand dollars, and the interior decorations with their many paintings and their elaborately carved frames are beyond price and are beyond description.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

Besides its churches, Puebla is noted for its onyx quarries, and many fine specimens of onyx can be seen in the churches and buildings, and for sale in the stores.

Some of the finest buildings in the republic are found here. This has always been a city, even in the days of the Aztecs before the Conquest. But it has suffered much from the effects of war. Within the last century it was captured by Iturbide in 1821, and by General Scott for the United States in 1847. It was captured by the French in 1863, and retaken from them by Diaz, now president, in 1867. There are a great number of forts in the vicinity, and most of the churches have been used as forts or barracks at times.

THE PYRAMID OF CHOLULA.

A few miles distant from Puebla is the great pyramid of Cholula. It rises one hundred and seventy-seven feet above the level of the plain on which it is located. The base lines are more than a thousand feet on each side or more than twice as large as the great pyramid of Cheops in Egypt. It covers twenty acres. The top is a square plain about a hundred and sixty feet square on which stands a quaint cathedral or church with two domes covered with tile and a tower with an interior nicely furnished

PYRAMID OF CHOLULA

It has stood many years, and before it was built the Aztecs had a temple here which was destroyed by Cortez. But if we ask who built the pyramid, no answer comes back to us. The Spanish found it here in 1529, just as it is today, and the Aztecs found it centuries before that, but no history, no legend, no hieroglyphics, have given any light as to when it was built, who built it or why it was built. Not even the most learned antiquarians have based a theory on which to make a guess as to its origin, except that it is largely constructed of adobe brick, which would indicate that it is of a later construction than some of the ruins of other structures, which are built of stone and are more elaborate. There are other similar mounds or pyramids in this vicinity, but they are not so large.

The city of Cholula has not prospered. Cortez found a great city when he came here. He said the city had twenty thousand houses, and he counted four hundred and twenty towers on the temples, and no temple had more than two towers, and many had only one. He massacred the natives, leveled the city, and destroyed the temples, and then rebuilt the city. The city has never revived and has gradually dwindled to its present small number of inhabitants. Many churches have been built in the place of the

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

temples destroyed, many houses have been rebuilt, but the city has not grown and the condition of the people cannot be much, if any, better now than before the Conquest, for we were here implored by many beggars to give alms.

From the top of the pyramid of Cholula a fine view can be had of the valley and the mountains and the beautiful fields form a magnificent prospect, but the matter of churches seems to be overdone for the size of the town. There are in this city of about five thousand people, twenty-eight churches, and from the pyramid can be counted thirty more on the plains near by.

Cortez did much havoc and slaughter in and about Cholula, but we will treat of Cortez and some of his wars later on.

The Seventh Letter.

TELLING THE TRUTH.

It is a dangerous thing to tell the truth; that is, if you expect to retain your reputation for veracity. Anyone can tell a lie and put it in such a plausible shape that most anybody will believe it. But truth is so much stranger than fiction, that when it is told in its exactness just as it should be and just as I always tell it, the narrator is liable to find himself unbelieved and utterly discredited.

A story is told of a man who went north from New Orleans one time, when artificial ice was first made, and on his return he said he had seen ice made on a hot day in summer time. He was immediately suspended from the church to which he belonged for telling such an awful untruth. But it was finally agreed that two of the brothers of the church should be sent to Cincinnati, where the factory was located, to verify or dispute the brother's story regarding the making of ice in the summer

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

time. When these two brothers returned they stated that they had seen the ice made and not only that, but that it was made by heating water in a boiler with coal and then using the steam to make the ice. These two brothers seemed to be so much bigger liars than the first brother that they were immediately suspended and the first brother was reinstated in the church as his offense was so much less than that of the other two.

So you see the danger in telling the truth.

In what I have written and what I intend to write I fully realize the danger to my usual good reputation for veracity that I am running into, for Mexico possesses so many big, wonderful and strange things that most of the people do not know about, that many people will hardly believe them when they are truly set down, and the narrator is liable to be the sufferer thereby.

Among the great and wonderful things which Mexico has, is Popocatepetl, the white-headed giant crater of the continent; Mount Orizaba, equally grand and said to be the highest point in the western world; the Cholula pyramid, which is more than twice as large as the greatest pyramid in Egypt. Her silver mines hold white metal enough to furnish the world's supply; the three largest meteorites

TELLING THE TRUTH

that have ever fallen on the earth and been recovered, rest here in the Mexico College of Mines.

There is a solid mountain of iron, the estimated value of which is nine thousand nine hundred millions of dollars. The finest and largest equestrian statue ever cast in bronze was made here and stands in Mexico City. The tree said to be of the largest girth measurement in the world; the greatest cathedrals in the western world; the largest perfect bell now in the world; and some of the most ancient ruins on the face of the globe are in Mexico. It had the first church, the first school, the first printing press and the first hospital on this hemisphere. It has the biggest bull fights and cock tournaments, some of the greatest fortunes and more beggars and pickpockets, the rarest fruits and flowers, the greatest variety of trees, vegetables and grains, of any country. Some of the most sublime scenery, waterfalls, hot springs, volcanoes and other natural wonders and many other things greater and more varied than most persons imagine, are found in Mexico. There are full grown men that have never known what it was to own a coat, a pair of suspenders or a pair of shoes, and who have lived all their lives in sight of snow-covered mountains and who have never

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

seen a snow storm or piece of ice closer than one hundred miles away. I am certain that if I should try to describe all there is in Mexico I would hardly be believed and I would lengthen this series of letters beyond the patience of my most faithful readers, so as I go along I will try to strike only the high places.

IN A SANITARIUM.

We left Puebla Sunday afternoon and went south on the Mexican Southern railway, stopping for the night at a small city called Tehuacan. When we arrived at the station there was a special street car waiting to take us to the principal hotel of the place. This hotel is about two miles out from the city in a valley between the mountains.

The hotel proved to be a sort of combination of a hotel, sanitarium and bathing institution. The structure was a large one-story house built, I believe, of adobe or sun-dried bricks. The walls are nearly two feet thick and are plastered on the inside and outside and frescoed on both sides as well. The main building and its annexes, which are the bathing establishments, are located among a grove of trees. Opposite the main entrance is a long arbor between two rows of banana trees,

IN A SANITARIUM

with seats which look very inviting, at the end of which is a small building with a sign reading "Telegrafos Federales," meaning the official government telegraph office. The main building, on account of its size, the amount of ground which it covered and the length of the corridors, reminded me somewhat of the Inside Inn at the St. Louis Fair.

The corridors are all paved with brick or tile as are also the floors of the rooms. How large the house is, or how much ground it covers, I cannot venture to say. As a matter of curiosity, I counted the steps from my room to the main office and there were one hundred and sixty good, long strides. The building reached beyond that and spread out in other directions in about the same proportion, while a force of men were building another large addition thereto. There are several courts or what are called in this country "patios," within the building, and these courts are filled with orange and banana trees, the flowering hibiscus and other flowering trees and vines, and there are large stone basins and fountains.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening when we reached this institution and the main colonnade was filled with dark-eyed señoritas and their beaux.

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They had just come down town to see what the train would bring in and they seemed very much gratified that the train had brought us to town. Each maiden carried partially concealed a well filled paper bag of about two quarts capacity.

As they seemed to be much interested in the bags and somewhat interested in us, I became somewhat interested in them and ventured to ask one of the young ladies what the bags contained. She replied in fair English that "You will find out pretty soon," and so we did, and we did not have long to wait either, for about the time our whole party had got in and were ready to be assigned to their quarters, there commenced from those bags about the greatest shower of confetti or paper snow that it has ever been my lot to encounter.

The young ladies showered us to their hearts' content as a sort of reminder that it was Mardi Gras day or some other feast day, better known to them than to us. When they let up for a while we all looked like amateur Santa Clauses, or as though we had come through a variegated snow storm, and the ladies of our party looked as though they were ornamented for a fancy ball.

The confetti was in hair, hats, feathers, clothes, down the back of my neck and down the back of

GREAT BATHING ESTABLISHMENT

the necks of everybody else that had necks and in all of our pockets. We were filled with confetti almost inside and out. I think our ladies were about two weeks in combing that confetti out of their hair and shaking it out of their clothes, and I would not be surprised to find it rattling out for six months yet to come.

In addition to the larger building there were a number of bath houses built like great mausoleums with single windows near the ceiling; the walls frescoed on the outside and the inside walls ornamented with landscape views and other paintings. Each house, of which there were several sizes, covered huge bathing tanks through which the waters ran in a rather large stream, the water entering the buildings at one side and mixing with the water in the tank and running out on the other side. By this means anyone that takes a bath, which costs about twelve cents, is supplied with enough water to give a bath to at least one hundred people.

This establishment, or the place where it is located, is called the Carlsbad of Mexico, after the famous springs designated by that name in Germany.

The waters are supposed to be very healthful

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

for either external or internal use, and they are bottled and sold at all of the restaurants in the Republic of Mexico, and are even shipped beyond the boundaries of the country.

I drank this water in many hotels and restaurants during my stay in Mexico, but I have never found out whether the people that run this establishment bottle this water before it goes through the bathhouses or afterwards.

The morning I was there, I went out to see if I could discover the source of the supply, as I am a little particular about what kind of water I bathe in, and a little more particular about where the water I drink comes from. I started in at one bath house that contained a tank, some fifteen by thirty feet, with water three or four feet deep therein. Next to that was a similar bath house with a similar tank with about one inch of water in the bottom in which a number of minnows were swimming about in a lively manner; then I passed several more bath houses of larger or smaller dimensions. Then I followed a few yards up the stream and close to one side thereof was a lonely grave. It was surrounded by an iron railing and entirely covered by a well built marble tomb and was decorated with a number of large floral pieces, made of del-

TEHUACAN WATER

icate colored beads, which represent flowers almost natural as life. Leaving the grave, I followed up the stream and came to a small Indian village where some of the natives were doing the family washing in the water, rubbing the clothes on a flat stone after soaping them and then rinsing them in the stream. But this did not indicate the source of supply, so I followed on a little further when I was attacked by a savage dog. The dog being called off, I went a little further and came to a yoke of oxen tied to a tree. They looked up at me to see if I was going to give them the usual beating which they expect to get about so often, and seemed to be relieved when I passed by. At the next house a lean hungry pig with a very high forehead was tied by a hind leg to a tree. In its most forcible language, it asked for something to eat, which reminded me of the fact that I had not yet had my own breakfast. I gave up the stream and returned to the hotel where one of the guests insisted that I had been following the wrong branch altogether. An argument ensued on this point which was not ended when breakfast was called, and as the car was waiting to take us to the train, I never found the source of supply and I felt like Ponce de Leon, who was always searching for the fountain of youth,

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and never found it. But as I could get no better water in Mexico than that from Tehuacan, I contented myself to drink it as long as I stayed in the country.

STREET CAR SERVICE IN MEXICO.

After breakfast we started for the train in the street car. Owing to the rough streets usual in this country, everybody uses street cars in preference to hacks in the smaller towns.

It was down grade most of the way. The car was drawn by two small mules and the villain who did the driving had no regard either for the comfort or the safety of his team, but lashed them with a good, strong, heavy whip every jump of the way. The mules went down the road on a full run like a pair of jack rabbits, and everybody shuddered to think what would become of the mules, the car, or the balance of us, if one or both of the mules should chance to stumble and fall. If such a mishap should have occurred, the poor mules would certainly have been ground to mince meat beneath the car and nobody could have told what would have happened to the passengers.

In Mexico City they have a very good system of trolley electric street cars, but in every other

STREET CAR SERVICE

town they still depend on the mule for motive power in the street car service. The abuse they heap upon these animals and the rate at which they drive them, is something furious. The driver, who is usually a muscular fellow, devotes his entire energy to the whipping of the mules, and many of the animals have the hair completely whipped off their flanks. A mule is not naturally a fast animal, but they are compelled by these drivers in this country to make a speed which is hardly conceivable, considering the ordinary nature of the mule.

Each driver carries in his belt or some other convenient place, a horn, similar to the horn carried on an automobile, only of a smaller size. I suppose it might be designated a fish horn. At every corner or about so often, he takes out the horn and blows on it a shrill blast that can be heard at a considerable distance. These horns are used in place of bells and the sound of a horn is a notice for everybody to get off the track for the street car is coming.

It must be thoroughly understood that the street car brooks no let or hindrance, but has the right of way at all times, and everything else must get off the track.

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CANONS AND CACTI.

After leaving Tehuacan we were soon speeding down the Mexican Southern railway among great mountains and through canons.

Excepting a few miles in the Royal Gorge in Colorado, this road passes through canons which are equal to anything we have in America.

The railroad is of narrow gauge construction, and winds its way between walls so high that it seems there is danger of stones falling from the top that would crush the train out of existence. Some very remarkable scenery is found in Mexico.

There are several varieties of cacti, which I believe is the correct plural of cactus, growing along this road. Some varieties grow with branches like trees and attain a height as great as twenty-five feet. There is another variety in the smaller sizes, which in the north is sometimes called "cat-tail". It grows perfectly straight and almost as tall as telegraph poles. There is another variety with flat leaves which is quite common in the warm and sandy parts of Illinois, usually called the "prickly pear."

One variety grows like a sort of eight corner straight pole about five inches through, with no branches, and grows ten or twelve feet high. When

INSPIRING SCENERY

planted in straight rows it makes a hedge like a solid wall. It is much used for fences here. There are a number of other varieties, most of which can be seen in any ordinary greenhouse north, but while in northern countries they usually grow from six to ten inches in height, they attain in Mexico a tremendous size, as indicated above.

At this season of the year a number of these plants are in blossom and some of them have very pretty flowers.

But to return to the train which is carrying us down through the valley. It leads on through a country that requires the greatest ingenuity of the engineer to construct a railway. In a number of places the road is protected from the ravages of the river by heavy stone walls, and in other places it has encroached upon the river until it was necessary to change the course of the river, which was done by tunneling through spurs of mountains, turning the course of the river through these tunnels which gives the appearance of natural bridges through which the little river runs while the track takes the original bed of the stream. Sometimes the railroad goes through the tunnels and the river occupies the open valleys, and other times the river goes through the tunnels and the railroad occupies the

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place of the river. The building of such a railroad as this and the many difficulties which are surmounted in putting it into operation is an inspiration to me. I have a very high regard for the men who have the brains, the energy and the push to carry such enterprises through, and I could write pages on the subject, but I realize that there are not many persons who are so deeply interested in such works, so I will pass along, and in the next instalment will give our experience in riding through a country beyond the railroads where the steel rails have never been laid, where the sound of an engine whistle has never been heard, and the commerce in that part of the world is carried on on legs instead of wheels.

The Eighth Letter.

THE ROAD TO MITLA.

“An I should live a thousand years, I never shall forget it.”—

Our object in coming so far south as we were now was to visit the ruins of Mitla, and to see the primitive parts of Mexico. And we will never forget the road or the ride to Mitla.

The road leads from Oaxaca in a southeasterly direction, a distance, so they say, of about twenty-eight miles. To us it seemed at least a hundred and twenty-eight.

The trip is made in dilapidated coaches, called diligences, to each of which five slow mules are attached, hitched up one on each side of the pole and three in front abreast. Every one of these mules, it seems, is determined to go slower than the other four. Consequently, it takes about six hours to cover the stretch, notwithstanding the picturesque driver, with

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a whip twelve feet long, lashes the mules every foot of the way and yells imprecations at them with every breath.

It is a great ride, though, and is well worth all the time that it takes and all the discomforts that it entails.

We made a start a little after noon and reached our destination about sundown, and every mile of the way was an active panorama and gives one as vivid an impression of the southern interior of Mexico as it is possible to get.

You are beyond the railroads, beyond the cities with their modern ways, and you see the people as they live and move in their own way in their own country.

The most of the people who live in Mexico, and in fact nearly all the rural population, are real Indians, the actual pure blooded descendants of the Aztecs or other Indians, who inhabited this country before it was discovered by the Spaniards.

Somehow the war of extermination that we of the United States have waged against the Indian for the last four hundred years, until he is practically eliminated and does not figure in the affairs of this country, was not carried to the same extremes in Mexico. It is true that the Spaniards at the early

THE ROAD TO MITLA

invasion of this land slaughtered a large number of Indians who inhabited it at that time. But there must have been either a difference in the Spaniards of this country and the white men of the United States, or between the Indians of this country and the Indians of the United States. For while it has been an impossibility to conquer the American Indian, north of the Mexican line, and he has stood in the war of independence until he has been practically exterminated, the Spaniards of this country conquered the Aztecs or Indians, and both races have lived in a sort of harmony ever since.

They have had many wars, but they have not been race wars, but have been based upon other questions. So the Indians or Aztecs are living here today, just as they did five hundred, or perhaps one thousand years ago, except at that time they worshiped idols and had a jargon of their own, while now they have adopted the religion of the Cross, and most of them talk Spanish, if not correctly, at least fluently, and these are the people you see on the road to Mitla.

The road the entire distance leads up a broad valley, between the mountain ranges, which is well cultivated in small farms which present, in their growing condition, beautiful pictures to the eye.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

The farming is done ordinarily in small patches, but it seems that the people do not live on the grounds which they cultivate, but dwell in villages or cities several miles apart along the road. They go out to their farms in the morning and come back to their homes at night. They go in to market at early daylight, carrying their various products, coming back the same road all hours of the day, and they carry goods from one town to another on the road, and this is the road to Mitla.

And as they go miles and miles to work, and miles and miles to their homes, and many miles to market, and miles and miles back again, it keeps a constant procession all the time. Sometimes the wave of travel is in one direction and sometimes in the other, but as long as there is daylight, and even during the night, the procession is ever moving.

No such procession can be seen anywhere in the United States, and can hardly be imagined by one who has never encountered it. It could only be seen in some primitive country like this.

As we pass this great procession, and this great procession passes us, and we mingle with the people who make it up, it seems to turn back the calendar of time two thousand years, and we might imagine that we are in the midst of caravans that were on

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the road from Joppa to Jerusalem, long ago, or are passing over the road that led to Bethlehem of Judea, at that time, and yet we are not so far in the long past nor so far from home, but are only on the road to Mitla.

The coach is lumbering along. Our legs are twisted up with those belonging to other passengers, like angle worms in a fisherman's can. Minutes have lengthened into hours and hours seem as long as days, and the far off mountains with their shrubbery are so far away that they seem like moss covered mole hills. Great cactus plants along the roadside display their weird arms against the bright sunlit sky. The road is rough, the dust is intolerable, the heat is oppressive, the yell and slash of the drivers are unabated, and we are still on the road to Mitla.

There are three coaches of our party drawn by an army of fifteen mules. The location of each coach can be told by the cloud of dust it stirs up, and by the crack of the whip and the imploring voice of the driver to his team. We are wrapped in sandy dust, we are feeling dust, breathing dust, and shortening our teeth by chewing the same thing. We have been out three hours, and it seems three weeks.

The mountain ranges look just the same as at first, the clouds of dust look just the same, the lum-

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bering coaches jolt just the same, and the wheels rattle on the stone road just the same. The big boulders which the wheels strike seem just the same except that they seem a little bit bigger every time they are struck. We are rocking like a ship at sea, going up and down on waves of stone, and swaying from one side of the road to the other, to dodge the elements of the procession, and we are still on the road to Mitla.

The great procession is in motion. There are ox carts with solid wheels, chopped out of wood, with axles six inches in diameter, and the driver is either goading the oxen as he walks, or lying in the wagon punching his oxen as they proceed so lazily.

There are men driving cattle in droves; there are men, boys and women driving burros or donkeys of all sizes and carrying all kinds of market stuff; sometimes melons, sometimes potatoes, sometimes chickens in coops and sometimes chickens of various colors tied up in bunches that look like poultry bouquets, and sometimes a dozen things all at once.

There are men, women and children carrying bundles of all kinds of products on their heads, in their arms and on their backs. There are people

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driving goats in flocks and in pairs. There are people driving flocks of sheep and people leading sheep. There are droves of oxen unyoked and there are yokes of oxen unhitched. There are oxen taking the plows out to the farms and other oxen bringing plows back from the farms. There are whole families of men, women, donkeys, oxen, pigs, sheep and goats and dogs, mixed together.

There are women on foot with babies strapped on their backs and there are other women on donkeys with children before and behind them. There are some women carrying sleeping children in their arms and other babies feeding at their mothers' breasts as they proceed. There are men carrying fighting cocks and fat turkeys; there are people carrying sheep skins full of goat's milk. There are people carrying goat skins full of cow's milk, and pig skins full of liquor.

There are people carrying big stone pots or jugs full of various kinds of liquids. There are donkeys loaded with fodder, straw, wood, charcoal, bricks, beams and building stone, and there is everything else in these lines that can be imagined or that cannot be imagined, on the road to Mitla.

There are people dwelling in the villages by the roadside and they all have dogs and the dogs

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all bark, and the people wear all kinds of clothes, and big sombreros, and some of the little fellows scarcely wear any clothes at all, and some are comfortably dressed, and some are ragged and some are more ragged than others. In one place three small boys stood side by side to see us go by and one had trousers on and one had not, and the one between compromised the situation by having ragged trousers with only one leg, and they were all on the road to Mitla.

We go over bridges, ford streams, cross irrigating ditches and go on through the beds of dry rivers, our teams walk, trot and gallop but the coaches drag heavily. Sometimes, however, all the coaches come abreast on a straight piece of road and the monotony is broken by getting the mules into motion and a great race is had with all the coaches in a whirl. The groups of mules with their clattering hoofs, the wheels rattling on the stones, the drivers lashing their mules harder than ever, and all the passengers yelling like wild hyenas, a chariot race in the circus is more than out-done.

And this increases the interest in the ride and it also increases the dust until it is well nigh unbearable, but it hastens the end and lends added excite-

THE ROAD TO MITLA

ment to the few exciting attractions that are found on the road to Mitla.

But everything has an end, and so has the road to Mitla.

Just as the sun is sinking behind a great mountain to the west and the red glow is resting on the eastern slope, you come to a small river. The coach makes a plunge down the steep embankment, the wheels grit in the sands and rattle on the boulders in the bottom of the stream, the water comes up to the rims and drops from the spokes like pearls, then another crack of the whip, a tug and a pull; it is a hard tug and a strong pull and the coach comes over the opposite bank, then there is a great rush, a sudden halt, and we draw up before the hacienda of Don Felix Quero, the modern feudal lord, the polite "Poohbah" and prevailing spirit of the antique and ancient city of Mitla, so old and so ancient that it was perhaps a middle-aged town when Christ walked the waters of Galilee, or even when Alexander marched at the head of his armies.

It once had a population of thousands, but it is now reduced to hundreds.

A HACIENDA.

A visit to the hacienda of Don Felix Quero,

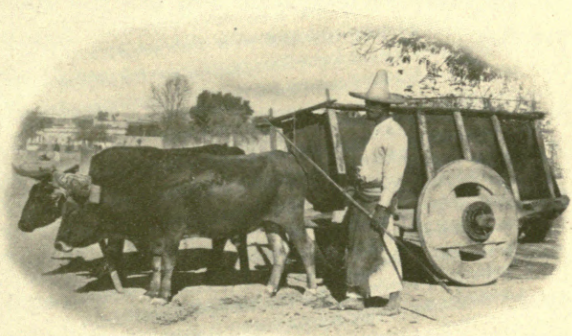
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where you lodge over night in order to see the ruins of Mitla, is worth the long and tedious ride to get there. It is more than an oasis in the desert. It is a walled fortress surrounding a flowered corner of heaven.

The main building is a one-story affair, white as marble, and with a great arch over the main entrance. Don Felix, a little gray Spaniard who runs a small general store in front, welcomes you to his hospitable home. You pass through the great arch and come within the "patio," a garden overcrowded with tropical vines, trees and plants. A tall poplar stands in the center, at least fifty feet high, entwined by a bright flowering vine that clothes the tree from top to bottom in a garment of magenta colored blossoms. There is a fountain that furnishes the pure waters from the mountain. There are orange and lemon trees with their ripened globes like spheres of gold. And there are flowers of every hue and shade. If the garden of Eden was more beautiful than Don Felix's patio, it must have been a lovely place.

The house itself is as wonderful in its construction and furnishings as the garden in the center.

On every side of the court or patio, as it is called, are large white columns supporting a tile



ON THE ROAD TO MITLA.

"The great procession is in motion. There are ox carts with solid wheels chopped out of wood,"—Page 140.

A HACIENDA

roof which forms a grand colonnade paved with stone, into which all of the rooms of the house open. The grand parlors are twenty by forty feet and Don Felix's coat of arms embroidered with golden thread occupies a conspicuous place on the walls, and his pedigree tree is a work of art. There are some frescoed walls, rich furnishings and fine pictures. The walls are two feet thick and the windows are grated and the doors are six inches thick and are like the doors to a castle.

The meals are served in the open under flowering vines and among the orange trees. There is no orchestra, but there is the melody of the winds in the trees and the music of singing birds.

The feast served is in keeping with all the surroundings and in addition to clusters of flowers on the tables, each guest is presented with a cute boutonniere, the stem wrapped in tin foil and with a pin to attach it to the garment. Not a single detail is neglected.

Every surrounding is charming and the tired guest, when nightfall comes, retires to the stronghold of the castle, shuts and locks the great doors to his room and by the light of a tallow dip removes his dusty garments, then he "wraps the drapery of his couch around him and lays him down to pleasant

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dreams," and in his dreams he is carried back two score or more of years and two thousand miles away to the scenes of his childhood, to the old homestead, to the green fields of long ago and the happiness of youth.

THE RUINS OF MITLA.

These evidences of a past and forgotten race are among the most interesting objects in Mexico, and bespeak a considerable civilization of ancient times that is nearly equal to that of later years. There is nothing to indicate how long ago were erected the temples of which these ruins remain, and they seem to antedate the time of all races known to history. Five hundred years ago the Spaniards found these ruins here as they are today, except that in recent years some additional excavation and cleaning up has been done; some new passages have been opened, some crumbling walls have been restored, and some steel beams have been supplied to sustain old stone lintels that after perhaps two thousand years or more were finally giving away. The government has recently taken these ruins in hand, has located a custodian and guards and has stopped the vandalism of relic hunters.

Among other writers who have visited this lo-

THE RUINS OF MITLA

cality was one Fra Martin de Valencia, who in 1533-4 came here and wrote of these ruins as follows: "We passed through a pueblo which is called 'Mictlan,' signifying 'hell,' in the native tongue, where were found some edifices more worth seeing than anything else in new Spain. Among them was a temple of the demon, and the dwelling of his attendants—particularly one hall made of something like lattice work. The fabric was of stone, with many figures and shapes; it had many doorways, each one built of three great stones, two at the sides and one at the top, all very thick and wide. In these quarters there was another hall containing round pillars, each one of a single piece, and so thick that two men could hardly embrace them; their height must be five fathoms."

This description is very good for today, except the columns at this time are not so high as stated.

Charnay, a historian of more recent date, 1860, wrote as follows: "These ruins are reduced to three pyramids and six palaces. The best preserved group consists of three buildings surmounting low mounds of earth and stone, and forming three sides of a square court. The opposing structures on the east and west are nearly obliterated, but that on the north is well preserved. This building has a T-

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shaped plan, and was entered from the court by three doorways. The entrance into the court is thirty-six feet wide and one hundred and thirty feet in length, along the middle of which is a row of tapering porphyry columns, six in number, that once supported the roof. The walls are faced outside with neatly cut stone in large blocks, laid to form sunken panels of varying size, in which by means of stucco, a series of tasteful geometric decorative patterns have been worked. The floor is paved with flat stones, and the inner surface of the walls is of unhewn stone; both were originally plastered.

That here was a great city, built by a race prior to those inhabiting the land when Cortez came, there is no doubt. Not one city alone, for all over this valley of Oaxaca are found the remains of walls, columns thrown down, and huge monoliths like those at Mitla, as, for instance, in the ruins of Monte Alban, near Oaxaca City. About three miles west of Mitla is a high rock called the "fuerte" or "Citadel of Mitla," and in the neighborhood are the ruins of Xaga, resembling those of a great city. The "fuerte" or, as the Zapotecos call it, "Jio," is a rock five hundred feet high.

There are also other ruins of prehistoric struc-

PREHISTORIC STRUCTURES

tures scattered all over Mexico and beyond from Chihuahua on the north, to the Honduras line on the south, and many have been destroyed within the last four or five hundred years.

Near the City of Mexico they are now excavating about two pyramids called the pyramids of the Sun and Moon. The pyramid of the Sun is over two hundred feet high and the base is seven hundred and fifty feet square, and the pyramid of the Moon is nearly as large.

The National Museum at Mexico City is replete with statues, carvings and images made from stone that have been found in all parts of Mexico, of much the same appearance as those found in Egypt and other localities in the eastern hemisphere. It would appear that there might have been some relationship between these people and the early inhabitants of Egypt or Syria, also, as in some of the tombs or temples are found beads or jewels made of a very rare stone called jade, which is next to a diamond in hardness and which is not found in the quality here mentioned any place except China.

Queer old world, this, older than we usually reckon. What has become of the people who inhabited it when these temples were built? And where are the descendants of the people who chiseled

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out these old images in stone, which with the ruins of their temples are the only evidence of their existence? But they indicate that they were of a different race than those who have lived within any term covered by history or tradition that is now accessible to us.

And what changes may take place in the years to come? Perhaps the present civilization may be overrun by a new race of barbarians and a new era of barbarism. Earthquakes and upheavals may destroy the present proud evidences of our handiwork. The knowledge of how to construct machinery, to build houses, make steam and convert electricity, may go with the lost arts.

And then, perhaps, in a thousand, two thousand, or even five thousand years, a new civilization may develop. A new race of people eight, ten or twelve feet tall, who will consider us mere pigmies, may come and uncover the remnants of our homes, the foundations and columns of our buildings, dig up our graves, scatter or collect our bones, dig the gold out of our teeth, wire our skeletons, and, as we do now to others, set up our grinning skulls in their public museums for gaping crowds to examine the caverns that once enclosed our brains, or leer into the hollow sockets that now contain our eyes.

The Ninth Letter.

EVERYTHING IS CARRIED.

In this land of Mexico wagons are a luxury. In the large cities there are more used now than there were several years ago, but in the smaller towns and in the country districts, a limited amount of transportation is done by ox teams, but everything else is carried either on the backs of men and women or on the backs of burros or donkeys, and it is truly a wonder what loads these people and donkeys do carry.

It is also peculiar how well, by long practice, these folks can attach things to a donkey's back. If the writer of this article, or perhaps the reader, was given a dozen blocks of stone a foot square or of irregular shape and size, a few feet of rope, some burlap and two or three donkeys about three feet high, and told to fasten those rocks onto those donkeys so they would ride safely a score of miles, perhaps he would be in trouble.

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But what would you do if you were given an assortment of stone jugs of all sizes, from a gallon to five gallons, full of milk or other liquids, a dozen or two of chickens, a few blocks of stone, a barrel or two of melons, a lot of tomatoes, a half cord of charcoal, a cord of stove wood, two or three shocks of fodder, some twenty-foot joists, two or three women, four or five children and two or three fresh babies, and a lot of the long-eared animals, and told to assemble them so you could account for all of them after a day's journey? Would you know just how to tackle the job? We doubt it, and yet lots of these people consider such a problem but a small undertaking, and go through with it day after day.

The loads the men carry are out of all proportion to the size of the men. All Mexicans are on the average much smaller than the men of our country. I do not think they will average much over five feet or five feet and two or three inches, and they are not very heavy, either, but they can carry immense loads.

In every city or town there are lots of common carriers who are licensed and who display brass tablets showing the number of their licenses, who clamor for your baggage. One of these will take a

EVERYTHING IS CARRIED

big trunk on his back and carry it to the hotel, a half mile or more, with pleasure.

We were met at the station in Oaxaca by the proprietor of the hotel, and a little Indian who measured less than five feet in height, who had a piece of rope. The Indian insisted on being loaded with all the suit cases of the party, some thirteen in number, besides a number of valises and other articles, and was tying them onto himself with the rope, when we relieved him of half a dozen or so and he walked off with the rest, looking sort of disappointed.

Some of them have a sort of harness with a broad strap over the forehead, the harness hanging between their shoulders. They require help to be loaded, but when the load is put in place, they are off with it. The landlord at Oaxaca said that the little fellow who carried the suit cases, carried a trunk to the station a few days previous that was so heavy that he himself could scarcely lift one end. At Cuernavaca I was told that one of these carriers walked along with a big sample trunk that required eight men to place it on his back. I do not vouch for these stories, and yet they seem probable when you see the loads they carry.

The strongest story I heard in this line was that

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a mining company way up in the mountains bought an iron safe—a good sized one, too. It came, there was no wagon road to the mine, and they tried to strap it to poles or rails so that a dozen men could carry it, but this was abandoned, as that also required a road. After much figuring one of the carriers said he would take it up the hill if they would put it on his back. They loaded him with the safe and he went off up the mountain, some three quarters of a mile, without making a halt.

I never have seen one of these fellows carry an iron safe, but I have seen them carry loads that made my back ache to see them go by.

The distance these people travel and the speed at which they go is as remarkable as the loads they carry. I have been told that they will cover seventy-five miles a day, but I seriously doubt that they could keep this up, but they will get over thirty or forty miles a day with a good load, and keep it up several days.

A man who operates a mine said one of these fellows would take bags with seventy-five pounds of ore in them up a notched ladder three or four hundred feet and keep going all day long.

On the railway between Vera Cruz and Mexico City there is a remarkable example of the “get

HEADING OFF A TRAIN

there'' of these people and the energy they display in peddling.

Maltrata, a station ninety-four miles west of Vera Cruz, is situated at an altitude of five thousand five hundred and fifty-one feet, while Boca del Monte, the next station, has an altitude of seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-two feet, being a difference in the altitude of the two towns of two thousand three hundred and seventy-one feet, or a trifle less than half a mile, if measured straight up. In order to reach this elevation, the railway makes a considerable detour, requiring a measurement by rail between these two stations of thirteen miles, while the distance by rail or foot path is considerably less.

In the valley several thousand feet below Maltrata fine oranges and fruits are raised, which are sold to the passengers of the trains. Something like a hundred men, women and children meet the train at Maltrata with home-made baskets full of oranges and other fruits. If they sell out they return to their homes in the valley for a new stock, but those who do not sell out at Maltrata when the train leaves, strike out up the trail and meet the train several miles away and a half mile higher in the air, as it pulls into del Monte.

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Then after this train has pulled out for the west these persistent sales-people tackle the next train going east at del Monte, then as it leaves they run down the hill and head the same train off at Maltrata, and then they are ready for the next going west.

They keep this up all day, working each train two times, making the distance between the two stations, up and down the mountain, in less time than the train does by its more circuitous route.

How is this for persistency and "git up and git?"

The loads the little burros or donkeys carry are just as remarkable as the loads carried by the men. They walk along under a load of wood or even building stone, almost as large as the donkey itself. Several of us went up in the mountains near Cuernavaca on these little animals. Three of us weighed over two hundred pounds each, and one man, who stood six feet four inches in height, and who weighed two hundred and sixty pounds, rode a donkey that looked smaller than he did himself, and the owner of the donkey said that the animal would carry two more like him at a single load, if necessary.

This man's feet came so near the ground that I thought the burro might step on his corns, but they

WOODEN PLOWS

seemed to understand each other and they got along all right, except that the man made more complaint than the donkey did.

WOODEN PLOWS.

All down these valleys of Southern Mexico are little farms well tilled where many of the people who do the work have never seen anything in the shape of a plow except a wooden plow, which is used altogether in this locality. Farm wagons are unknown luxuries in this country, and oxen and donkeys are used to do the work in the absence of horses.

Speaking of the wooden plow of Mexico, which is referred to so often with so much disdain, it is not so bad an affair after all. From the form of its construction it would be immediately condemned by any first-class farmer of the United States, and yet you would be surprised to see what powers of execution it possesses in the hands of the people who understand it. It is simply a sapling which forms a tongue usually with a hooked root, which serves for a share, to which another piece of wood is attached which serves as the handle or the guide. The hook which digs into the ground is covered with a shield of iron or steel. The plow is drawn through the field by a yoke of oxen and when the day's work is done it is turned

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

the other end to and hung on the yoke and hauled home to where its owner lives.

In the hands of the people who use it, and for the purposes for which it is used, I do not know that a modern steel plow would do any better. The ground is a loose sandy soil and ordinarily is full of stones of all sizes and shapes.

The best modern steel plow would soon be cut to pieces and be unfit for use, while it takes a long time to do much harm to one of these plows. Of course, a modern plow would cut deeper and turn a wider furrow and it would be perhaps easier for the men who do the plowing to sit upon a seat and drive three horses across the field than it is to walk behind and goad a yoke of oxen into motion by punching them with a pole, but in this fertile country deep plowing is not required and one of these natives could not earn money enough in a lifetime to buy a first-class outfit.

All they have to do is to scratch the surface of the earth, plant their seed, open the irrigating ditch, turn on the water and let the crops grow, and the plowing is not a very important part.

However, when one of these natives finishes a field with his wooden plow, it is very well done and looks very nice, and is just exactly what they want

A SHAKING UP

for the kind of farming done here. And, while it takes a little bit longer, the matter of time is a very little factor in their affairs. They do not count on saving time down here as we do in the northern states, nor do they try very hard to save labor.

A SHAKING UP.

After a good night's sleep at the Hacienda of Don Felix Quero, the sun rose bright and was throwing a few sly glances through the one grated window of our room.

It was about 6:45; and I was listlessly examining the big double jail door of our establishment which opened out into the colonnade surrounding the court. The doors were locked with an antiquated iron key seven inches long, which weighed about a half pound. The doors were further secured by a brace about six feet long, reaching from the floor to a crossbar on one of the doors near the top.

All at once there commenced a peculiar vibration which I could not account for. It seemed as if a heavy wagon or truck was going by close to the building. Then a shaking of the walls took place, and my wife said: "someone is trying to break in the window," and she stepped to the window to see what the difficulty was. She looked out and reported nothing on the outside.

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The motion became more violent by this time, and I was certain someone was trying to tear the house down. Then the vibration became so severe that the tiling with which the roofs were covered rattled together as though someone was upsetting a carload of empty jugs on top of the house.

In the meantime the beds and all the other furniture appeared to dance on their legs and were swaying backward and forward, and the plaster on the walls, for the ceiling was made of wooden beams, began to loosen in patches and fall to the floor.

After about one minute or more of violent vibration, it forced itself onto our dull comprehension that there was an earthquake in operation and that we were in it.

The first thoughts that struck me were what would become of us if those big Queen Anne rafters in the ceiling should slip off their bearings, or if those big doors should get cramped in their openings. I thought it behooved us to seek a place of safety, and quicker than it takes to tell it, I was tugging at the big lock and the big doors, to get them open, and I did not wait to make an extensive toilet before doing so, either, and my wife was not far in the wake.

As I got the doors open I found all the Indian employes of the house, and most of the guests, in the

A SHAKING UP

center of the great court, about ready for prayers, and one woman who had gone on the housetop to see the sun rise, was holding on to a chimney and screaming for dear life.

Before I could join the motley assembly in my state of undress, the earthquake had ceased much more suddenly than it had commenced, and no serious damage at this place had been done.

The shake, however, was so violent that the water in the large stone basin in the center of the court, that rested several inches from the top of the rim, was waved over the rim and spilled in the court. The shock was felt all over this section of the country, and even beyond Orizaba, some three or four hundred miles, and a new house just finished by the American consul in Oaxaca was completely wrecked and some other houses in the locality were more or less injured.

Earthquakes are common in this part of the country, but this was the severest shock that had been experienced in several years, and we were told that it had been precipitated especially as a compliment to us and to make our visit more interesting. No wonder, however, there are ruins in this country. It is a wonder that there are not more of them.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

BIG TREE OF TULE.

Near the road on the way to Mitla is the big tree of Tule. It is in the village of Tule in the church yard of a little chapel called Santa Maria del Tule. While this is not so tall as the biggest trees of California, it is pretty well up and it measures more around the trunk than most any other tree in the world, viz: one hundred and fifty-four feet two inches, six feet from the ground. In its trunk is a tablet inserted by the great German traveler, Humboldt. It was placed there one hundred years ago, but is now nearly grown over by the bark which is encroaching upon it.

Near the roots of the tree were two circular tablets on the ground, about eight feet in diameter. They were made of cement and served to set forth, in letters of considerable size, the name and date of some illustrious persons who had visited here or who had died some other place and were buried here.

The formation of the letters struck me as peculiar, as each letter looked as though it was composed of a number of small white stones, set in the mortar before it had crystallized. On closer examination, I discovered that what appeared to be stones were asses' teeth, standing upright and inserted in the mortar, as they had once stood in the jawbones

BIG TREE OF TULE

of this wonderful animal that is famous in song and holy writ.

I now could readily believe the story about Balaam, for his animal, it is recorded, spoke to him in life, while these animals of the same nature convey information even in death. It may have been that these natives thought they would put their speech in a manner that would appeal to and be familiar to the American tourist.

How old this tree is, of course, nobody knows. It was nearly as large as now when the Conquest of Mexico was made four hundred years ago. It is estimated that some of the great trees of California are ten thousand years old, and this tree may be as old as they are, so we must look to the trees of the forest, next to the Creator, for the greatest span of life on earth. This tree was a large pillar when Christopher Columbus discovered America. It must have been well in the air when the pyramids of Egypt were built, and at least a good sized sapling when Moses led the children through the wilderness.

It has stood through some of the ancient and all of the modern turbulent history of Mexico, and if it could talk, it might be able to tell who built the temples round about Mitla, whose ruins indi-

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cate perhaps the most ancient civilization the world has ever known.

It is of the variety called by the natives "Ahuehuetl," a species of cypress. It was clothed with a thick foliage of green this hot winter day, which was so warm that we accepted with pleasure a drink of cool water from a stone cup, offered us by a sweet faced Indian girl, beneath the shade of its branches.

OAXACA.

Before going to Mitla we came to Oaxaca (pronounced o-ah-hack-ah) not a new city by any means, for it stands to-day and its streets are just where they were when Cortez invaded the country and completed his Conquest nearly five hundred years ago. It was counted a great city then and it is counted by many a great city now; not so great in population, as it has only about thirty-five thousand people, but for several other reasons.

It has been called "Morado de Heros en el Jardin de los Dioses," meaning the dwelling place of heroes in the Garden of the Gods. If Oaxaca had no other distinction, its citizens could be proud of it on account of it being the birth place of some of the strongest characters and some of the greatest

O A X A C A

statesmen and generals that this land of Mexico ever produced, and who stand well up in the ranks of the world's greatest heroes. It was the birth place of Benito Juarez, a full-blooded Indian, who was born here in 1806, who did much to bring about the independence of Mexico, was elevated to the position of president, defeated and executed Maximilian, and was called the George Washington of Mexico.

It is also the birthplace of Porfirio Diaz, another Indian, who was born here in 1830, who fought in the wars for freedom of the Republic, who has been president of Mexico for nearly thirty years, and who is acknowledged as one of the greatest statesmen of this age.

There is no record of when the city was founded nor how long it has existed. It has had several names, but the present name was adopted October, 1872. In fact, the real name now is "Oaxaca de Juarez," in honor of the illustrious statesman.

This town, like all other cities of Mexico, has suffered from the various wars, and has been captured and recaptured on several occasions.

There are a number of new houses being built here at the present time, and some of them are very fine specimens of Mexican and Spanish architecture.

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There are evidences of prosperity here. The city has a number of fine stores, a number of churches, two very fine cathedrals, the state library, several schools, a bad street car system, several beautiful parks or plazas, and a good sized brewery.

The streets are irregularly paved in a most uneven manner with stones of all sizes, and a ride over its streets in one of its hacks, with stiff springs and hard cushions, is an experience long to be remembered. The city has no sewers, but has the gutters that are peculiar to Mexican cities, that convey the sewage down the middle of the streets.

Two cathedrals, which are counted among the finest in Mexico, are located in this city. The cost of the more modern of the two is stated to have been two million dollars, and it is a very graceful and well-constructed edifice. The older of the two is said to have cost thirteen million dollars.

Its carvings, its paintings, and its statues and images, so completely covered with gold leaf or sheet gold that they appear to be made of pure gold, are among the wonders of the republic. However, all of this building gives an appearance of being overdone in its elaborateness, and on that account is hardly so pleasing to persons of a more

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cultivated taste as the other cathedral that is the more modern and did not cost nearly so much.

It is really wonderful the amount of money that has been invested in church property in this country, especially when the poverty of the people is considered, but in former years the church and state went hand in hand, and taxes were collected to support the government and to build churches and support the clergy.

In the many years during which this arrangement existed, these fine structures were erected. About all the people can do now or all they are willing to do since there has been a division of church and state, is to support these institutions in their present grandeur.

They are open, however, to all classes of the people, and the poor seem to be just as welcome as anybody else. Prayers are being offered continually in these cathedrals. Services progress at all times, and lots of women and men kneel on the marble floors who have never known what it was to own a pair of shoes or to have a respectable garment.

There is whole lots of history in connection with this town, but as we did not come here to study history nor to write it, we will pass over that, at least for the time being.

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Oaxaca is the center of a rich mining district and there are all kinds of rumors of rich strikes that are always current about a mining center. Most of the mines are operated by Americans and there seems to be considerable activity in the mining business here at this time. Gold, silver and lead are found in generous quantities.

So far, however, mining has not been extremely profitable, as there has been no smelting works except those reached by a long railroad haul and, as usual, the railroads have fixed their tariff at all the traffic would bear and getting the ore to the smelter has been very expensive.

There is a movement on foot now, however, to put up a smelting works here at an expense of something like five million dollars, which, if done, will give an added impetus to the mining industry and will add greatly to the welfare of the city.

There is a good hotel here, which is conducted by an American family, and the good service which they extend and the excellence of their table makes this one of the most agreeable places to stop in the entire republic.

We returned to Oaxaca by the same long road from Mitla, and in the market we bought beautiful roses, almost like American beauties, for six cents a

ALSO A BREWERY

dozen, and our women folks raved over the well-made but odd-shaped pottery which is peculiar to this locality, and which can be bought in the markets for a song. We went out to see the sad havoc that had been wrought upon the American consul's house by the earthquake. On the way we saw many new buildings in the course of construction. We passed a lovely park, or plaza, with a bronze statue therein of Benito Juarez. Then we came to a brewery, operated by a Scotchman, which we mistook for a hotel. Think of that combination: a bonnie Scotchman running a German brewery in the hot country of Mexico, in a building fronting on the great plaza in the shade of Juarez' statue and in a house that looks more like a hotel than a brewery, and advertising "the Beer That Made Milwaukee Jealous."

But his beer was cool and like the waters of salvation was given freely and without price, and several of our party partook of his hospitality and drank to Juarez, to Porfirio Diaz, to the greatness of Mexico, George Washington and the United States, and finally a libation to the misfortune that had overtaken our representative in the destruction of his new home and the hope that it would soon be restored.

The Tenth Letter.

THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

Most everyone has heard of the Southern Cross, a constellation of stars which to the mariner in the southern seas is what the North Star is to the pilot while traversing the waters of the northern half of the globe.

We were now far enough south, being at Oaxaca, although not south of the equator, to see the Southern Cross, under certain circumstances, but not where it could be seen every hour of the night, as it may be south of the equator. It can only be observed between two and four o'clock in the morning, and best at the exact hour of three o'clock, and from the housetop then.

The proprietor of the hotel kindly offered to wake us at that time. So we put our names on the "wake-up" list for the Southern Cross at three o'clock, and were promptly awakened at that melan-

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choly hour with the cheering announcement that the sky was too cloudy to see the constellation.

This was such valuable information that the landlord thought we ought to be awakened to learn it. Having been aroused, we concluded to go upon the roof and wait until the clouds rolled by.

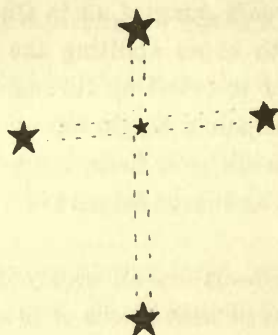
People who live in the states in frame houses with gabled roofs shingled, or in Queen Anne houses with saw-tooth edges splitting the sky, and where it is necessary to crawl up through a clothes closet and open a trap-door to get out on the roof only to fall off and break your neck, can hardly understand what a handy and essential part of a house the roof is here.

Here the roofs are all nearly flat, and they are frequently paved with bricks or blocks of stone, laid in cement, or made of cement like sidewalks or streets in the United States, and besides being used to keep the water off, are also used for various purposes as Americans use their door yards.

In this case a substantial cement stairway led up to the first roof and then a pair of wooden stairs to a higher elevation. After dodging a clothesline or two, our view was cut off by an arrangement that loomed up before us that I could not very well discern in the darkness. It seemed to be another house

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in a small door yard with a picket fence around it. The landlord explained that it was the chicken yard and hen coop, where they kept the chickens for the hotel. The explanation and the arrangement being entirely satisfactory, we worked our way around the encumbrance and waited for clear weather.



We hadn't long to wait, for the southern sky soon cleared and the renowned Southern Cross stood out before us. The cross is composed of five stars, two bright stars representing what would be the terminals of the upright of the cross and two other bright stars representing what would be the terminals of the arms of the cross, if lines were drawn between them (all of these stars are of the second magnitude), and there is one indistinct star which cannot always

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

be seen, where the arms would cross the upright, and where they would naturally be secured thereto. The two stars representing the bar are shifted some, so that lines drawn between the four terminal stars would indicate a cross with the arms shifted one end a trifle higher than the other. The Southern Cross is not a startling thing to see, and some people are disappointed when it is pointed out to them, but having heard of it so many times for so many years, I felt repaid for the exertion, trouble and inconvenience that had been necessary to get a glimpse of it.

You know it is a greater thing to be able to say that you have seen the Southern Cross than it really is to see it, because there are so few people who have had that privilege. Of the fifty thousand people living in any ordinary community in the middle west, if there is one out of each two thousand, or a total of twenty-five out of the whole fifty thousand, who have seen this constellation, I would like to have them stand up and be counted.

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TLAXCALA.

“Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The Devil always builds a chapel there;
And 'twill be found upon examination,
The latter has the largest congregation.”

“Vamanos” in Spanish is equivalent to “all aboard” in English, so at 6:15 a. m., after a short night’s sleep, following several days in and about Oaxaca, we were on the train headed north and ready to start. The conductor waved his hand and cried out “Vamanos,” and the train was off for another thirteen hours’ run to Puebla, where we were to rest over night before starting on a visit to Tlaxcala.

Arriving at Puebla we met a distinguished gentleman and an old friend of ours in the person of a newspaper man who has the distinction of owning or operating three daily papers in an adjoining state. He was traveling through Mexico with his wife and daughter, writing letters for publication in his various newspapers at home.

As we were also engaged in the same sort of work, we recognized in him a compatriot in crime, and, with the consent of the members of the “thirteen club,” we invited him to go with us to the city of Tlaxcala, one of the most interesting points in this country.

Tlaxcala is reached by an inter-urban or street

THE OLDEST CHURCH

railway line, some six or eight miles from the village of Santa Anna, which is on the line of the railway. As there was nothing very good in the line of hotel accommodations, at either Santa Anna or Tlaxcala, we concluded to take our noonday lunch with us from Puebla and to eat it in our special car, which was to lay over between trains at Santa Anna.

Tlaxcala (pronounced Tlazcala) is the capital of the State of Tlaxcala and has a population of four thousand. It is located at an altitude of seven thousand five hundred and six feet, or a trifle higher than the City of Mexico. At the time of the Conquest it boasted of a population of three hundred thousand inhabitants, so it would appear that instead of having met with a boom, it seems to have suffered from a boomerang.

Notwithstanding it is so far above the sea level, it is surrounded on all sides by high hills. The name indicates the "Land of Bread."

It is the location of the oldest Christian church in the western world, the structure still standing as it was originally built, but with some later additions thereto.

From the front door of this old church, and in close proximity to the same, there can be seen one of the oldest bull rings in the republic, while next door

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to the church is a prison, and in the floor of and about the church are many graves. This appeared to me to assemble a remarkable collection of ideas:

The church to teach the love of God; the bull ring to pander to the brutality of man; the priest to tell men to do better; the officers of the law to restrain them from being worse; and finally the grave to cover all their faults and foibles and hold their bodies for the final day of resurrection, and the life to come.

Most every tourist to Mexico visits this little city, more particularly to see this first Christian church. The city abounds in interesting relics of ancient time, and much of the history of Mexico has its initial point at this place.

The state capitol building, which dates from the Conquest, is located in this city, is well furnished, and we had the pleasure of going through it and of meeting and shaking hands with the governor. Our interview, however, was not very interesting, as he did not talk English and we could not understand Spanish, and from the further fact that he had no time to devote to us, and we had no time to waste on a governor.

The church, which bears the name of San Francisco, was erected here, having been commenced in

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1521 and completed in the year 1544. It is of peculiar and original architecture. It contains a pulpit from which the gospel was first preached, on this side of the world, which is a wonderful example of filigree work and carvings. It also contains beautiful embroidered gold vestments which were brought over from Spain for the solemnization of service in this church centuries ago. The baptismal font still remains, where four Indian senators were baptized at the time of the Conquest.

This old temple is more than worth a visit at any time. It is a marvelous curiosity on account of its architectural richness and is a masterpiece of skillful work. One-half of the sanctuary is of an architecture of the remote time at which it was built. The walls are completely covered with fine chiseling of the most exquisite nature. The other half of the temple, being an enlargement of the original and built many years later, is of a more modern style of architecture. It has, however, some evidence of artistic workmanship.

In the floors of this old church, as stated above, are the graves of a number of distinguished clergymen or statesmen, who have been buried here in times long past. This is a custom that prevails in

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many of the older countries and has been followed to some extent even in the United States.

Of course we all know there are the remains of a number of distinguished people resting in Westminster Abbey in London, and beneath the floors of the Cathedral St. Louis, in New Orleans, there are the remains of a number of persons; also, in other cathedrals or churches in other states.

This old church contains a number of crucifixes and life-size recumbent figures of the Saviour, which have evidently been here many years, as well as the figures of saints and martyrs, which, with their representations of wounds and blood, are so grim and realistic that they give, in connection with the tombs, a very grewsome effect.

After spending some time in the church it was a considerable relief to stand again in the open air away from crucifixes and graves and view the beautiful valley surrounding the eminence on which the church is located.

In connection with the church was formerly an old monastery or nunnery which, several years ago, when the differences between the government and the church party occurred, was confiscated, and is now used as barracks for soldiers and a prison for a number of persons who are incarcerated therein.

TLAXCALA MUSEUM

We called on the prisoners, but did not recognize any of our friends, which we might have done in similar institutions nearer home.

Among other historic relics of merit either in this church or the state museum here, are a number of old paintings of great value, portraits of principal people of old times, etc., and the cloak of an Indian who belonged to the nobility at the time of the Conquest and who was the first of his race to be baptized in this country.

The museum also contains the city charter given to this city by Philip II, King of Spain, in the sixteenth century, and interesting plans and maps of various things and genealogical trees representing ancient Indian nobility. There are a number of genuine idols in the museum which were worshiped by the former inhabitants of this country. In connection with the museum was a modern school in operation, which seemed to differ but very little from any other small school. The rooms were well equipped with wall charts, maps, etc., and the teachers were neatly dressed and appeared to be intelligent young women. The pupils were dressed somewhat better than the average run of Mexican children.

After a few hours spent in the town we again

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took the street car, which carried us back to the main line of railway. The line led down through the valley up which Cortez marched his troops to capture this capital of the Tlaxcalans, four centuries ago.

History records that he fought five great battles with these people and that they were finally forced to surrender and from that time forward they were allies of Cortez and assisted him in the overthrow of the Cholulans and in his wars on the forces of Montezuma.

It was by their aid that Cortez finally made a success of his Conquest instead of being completely exterminated, as he would have been except for the assistance of the Tlaxcalans.

As we moved down through the valleys from the city in a tram car, we were followed by about all the ragged small boys in the settlement, who kept pretty good pace with the galloping mules, with a continual cry of "uno centavo," which means "one cent," or "give me one cent!" It was amusing to see them join in a free-for-all "scrabble" for the coppers as they were thrown to them.

At every town or railway station in Mexico you are besieged by a lot of urchins, who continually cry "uno centavo," and this has been encouraged for

AFTER DINNER SPEECHES

several years by the tourists, who throw them pennies for the amusement in seeing them contest for the coveted prize.

When we had arrived at our car on the main track we found that our picnic dinner, which consisted of roast chicken, boiled ham, roast beef, bread and butter, pie, cake, oranges and bananas and nice yellow pineapples, that we had bought while passing through the country, together with iced tea and lemonade made a very enjoyable repast. The dinner was one of the most pleasing incidents of the whole trip.

As this was the last day that our party was to be together, we held a sort of reunion, passed resolutions, inflicted after dinner speeches on each other that at least in our own imagination bristled with oratory and sparkled with gems of learning and wit. I would like to repeat, if I had room, some of the good old stories that were told on that occasion, because some of them were so old that I am sure you would agree with me that they would fit in extremely well with the ancient architecture that we had come here to look up.

IN THE PALACE OF AN EMPEROR.

We arrived in the City of Mexico about seven

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o'clock in the evening, and it seemed as though all the carriages in the western world were assembled at the station to meet us. We selected one and were conveyed to the Hotel Iturbide, which was formerly the palace of the unfortunate emperor of that name.

We stopped at this house for two reasons: one, that it is still the leading hotel in Mexico, and the other, the sentiment attached to the old structure. When you transact business on a sentimental basis, you usually pay something for the sentimental part of the transaction, and this is the case when stopping within the confines of this ancient pile of stuff which by courtesy is designated as a hotel.

Iturbide, who occupied this palace, was one of the first men in Mexico to take up the fight for independence, which was started by Hidalgo in 1810. Iturbide thought that Mexico should have an independent government—independent of Spain or any other nation, and also that he should be emperor of Mexico. He proclaimed himself, or was proclaimed, emperor, on July 21, 1822, but occupied the position for only nine months, at the end of which time, by arrangement with the more superior organization which was formed against him, he abdicated the throne and agreed to get off the earth or go to England or some other place.

IN AN EMPEROR'S PALACE

The government of Mexico, in consideration of this arrangement, made an allowance in his favor of \$25,000 per year for his past services, with the distinct understanding that he should remain out of the country.

While in England he wrote a letter back to Mexico, accusing the clergy of conspiring against the state. On this account, the church party having the "pull," he was declared a traitor by the Mexican congress that governed Mexico at that time, with a decree that should he return to Mexico he would be shot.

There being no telegraph or Atlantic cables at that time, Iturbide did not learn of the edict, but concluded to return to Mexico, which he did. He landed at Sota la Marina, a little town on the gulf coast north of Tampico. Immediately on his arrival he was arrested, taken before the legislature of the state of Tamaulipas, then in session, condemned to death, and was shot July 19, 1824; and this was the end of the first empire and the first emperor of Mexico, except that the government voted his family a pension of eight thousand dollars per year.

To Iturbide must be accorded the distinction of having established the final independence of Mexico.

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His conversion to the cause was almost as remarkable as the conversion of St. Paul. He was a rank Royalist and on February 3, 1814, as the representative of the Crown, caused the execution of Matamoros, the patriot, but in seven days thereafter announced his own adherence to the cause and took up the fight which finally led to his own execution.

Iturbide left a son, who was educated in the United States in a college near Washington, D. C. He married an American lady named Green, a daughter of the distinguished General Green, of Washington, D. C. He returned to Mexico at the time Maximilian reigned as emperor. Maximilian and Carlotta, having no children of their own, adopted his son, Iturbide III., as their heir, with the intention of having him succeed Maximilian as emperor. On the collapse of the second empire and the execution of Maximilian, young Iturbide was restored to his parents, and I think is still living in Mexico.

I was told that the palace now operated as a hotel is still the property of the Iturbide family. The building is in the shape of a Maltese cross in the center of a very large block, three arms or wings opening out on three streets, and the fourth extend-

IN AN EMPEROR'S PALACE

ing well back to the rear side of the block; the four corners of the block being filled in with store buildings and other hotels. The structure embraces several courts, surrounded by colonnades, as is the custom in Mexico. The cafe, which has a good orchestra, is located in one of the courts, and presents a pleasant appearance, being embellished with palms, flowers and a fountain with gold fish.

The hotel is kept in a very peculiar manner, as most hotels in Mexico are. It is run on the European plan, that is, you pay for your room, then eat when and where you please at your own expense. When the guest registers, he is assigned to a room and his name written on a large blackboard on one side of the office. From that time forth he is turned over to the tender mercies of the porter, who has charge of the particular floor on which he chances to be located, and has no further business in the office, except to go down every day and fight for his mail, until he is ready to pay his bill and depart.

The office, mostly of glass, is located between two of the main courts. At ten o'clock in the evening wooden shutters are put up entirely around the office to protect the glass, the key is turned in the door, and the business part of the hotel is closed until the next morning.

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The man who has charge of the general management of the hotel is a gray-bearded gentleman, who, for some reason or other, never takes off his hat while on duty. He is very polite, very slow and apparently never worries himself about anything, not even the comfort of his guests, and does not have much to do except to say, "sorry, I cannot accommodate you, all our rooms are engaged," which is usually the truth during the busy season of the year.

If the senior Iturbide did not run the empire any more satisfactorily than his successors appear to run the hotel business, it is hardly to be wondered at that he came to such an untimely end.

There are a number of other hotels in Mexico City, and some hotels very well kept, but they are not up to the size of the city nor the demands of travelers. It appears to me that the City of Mexico presents the best opening for a grand big hotel that could be found most anywhere, unless it be Havana, in Cuba. It would require, however, a very large amount of capital to put up in Mexico such a hotel as the conditions would seem to warrant.

After all, there is an air of aristocracy and sundry evidences of past grandeur about the old palace which are very fascinating. Nearly every great traveler of the whole world and nearly all the great

IN AN EMPEROR'S PALACE

and rich men of many countries who have visited Mexico, have stopped and rested within these walls.

As you tread through the stone paved courts and pass through the dingy corridors and observe the coat of arms of the one time emperor carved in stone over the door, and remember how his short reign and occupancy of this old building was but a gilded nightmare, which finally led to a tragic end, you forget how much it lacks of being a strictly up-to-date hotel.

Then when you see millionaires dropping their arrogance, crowding into the little office, begging and besieging the gray-bearded Chesterfield for rooms, and then see him politely but irrevocably turn them down, and then have them cast envious eyes at you and your big airy room, you imagine that it was your own particular smartness that enabled you to get here just as somebody else had vacated a room which you chanced to get.

You then congratulate yourself that you are not like other men, who have no rooms at all, nor any place to lay their heads in this way-off strange city.

Then when you realize that you are in the grand old City of Mexico, with all its wonders, with all its treasures, its beauty, its arts, its history and its tra-

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ditions, which you have heard so much of, and have so longed to see, you go to rest anxious for the coming of the early day, fully determined to go forth and see in that one day more than can possibly be seen in a good long month. And then you go to bed, and no doubt you sleep better than poor old Iturbide did when he was here.

The Eleventh Letter.

MEXICO CITY TO CUERNAVACA.

We remained several days in Mexico City. Then we made a visit of a few days in Cuernavaca and then returned to the city. I have concluded that it would be best to tell first of our trip to Cuernavaca, and later undertake the more extensive work of attempting to describe the capital.

Cuernavaca is a trifle west of south of the City of Mexico, a distance by rail of seventy-four miles; by air line it is a little more than half that distance. It is on the line of railway that now ends at Balsas, but it is the intention to continue this line eventually to the Pacific coast, thus connecting the City of Mexico with the coast in this direction. This is, comparatively speaking, a new railway, but is far from being a new route. Hundreds of years ago this same route was used between the capital and the Pacific ocean and a great part thereof, if not all, was connected by a solid stone military road.

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Before the Suez Canal was opened this was part of the old route from Spain to the Orient, coming by the Atlantic to Vera Cruz through Mexico to the Pacific and then by the waters of that ocean to Bombay or Calcutta. That part beginning at Vera Cruz passing through Mexico City and then going to the Pacific was up and down through these same valleys that are now occupied by the railway and traversed by its trains.

In those days the trip was made in oxcarts or by foot and required weeks and months, where now it is made in palatial cars and is accomplished in hours, requiring hardly a single day to make the distance from Vera Cruz to the west end of the railway.

The trip from Mexico City to Cuernavaca is remarkable in many respects.

After leaving the station you pass Chapultepec Castle, and the battlefields where the old hero, Hidálgó, won a great victory for independence before he lost his head in that same good work, and where our United States troops fought and won a great battle from the Mexicans in 1847, under Gen. Scott.

Did you ever hear of the Yankee's prayer on that occasion? I looked for the tree but could not

TO CUERNAVACA

distinguish which one it was, under the branches of which one of the Yankee soldiers delivered his well answered prayer. It was somewhat as follows:

“Dear Lord, please listen to to me now. You know I don’t bother you very often—very seldom indeed—but I want to ask of you a special favor at this time. We are going in to battle tomorrow. There is only a handful of us Yankees and a whole big army of greasers. If you can help us, I wish you would, but if you can’t help us, why, then, for the Lord’s sake, don’t help the greasers, but just stand off with your hands in your pockets and you will see the hottest and most active fight you ever saw in your life, and you will see the greasers licked to a finish. Yours respectfully, Amen.”

In traveling by railroad from Mexico to Cuernavaca, the first thirty-six miles is up grade to a small station called Cima, which has an elevation of ten thousand feet, or two thousand six hundred and fifty-one feet higher than Mexico City, where you start. This being the summit, you commence a descent to Cuernavaca, the grade in thirty-eight miles amounting to five thousand feet, and the next station beyond that is nearly two thousand feet still lower.

On one side of the divide you have a beautiful

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view of the valley and City of Mexico. On the other side of the divide you can see the city of Cuernavaca in the valley below, nearly one hour and a half before you arrive there.

As the train passes over the divide the air brakes, which have been carefully examined, are set tight on the rims of the wheels to prevent too rapid a run down the long incline, and by the time half of the distance between Cima and Cuernavaca is passed, the wheels are smoking hot. A stop of ten minutes is then made to let the overheated wheels cool down.

Then a start is made for Cuernavaca and as the train rolls into that station, the oil on the wheels is sizzling like frying ham and water thrown upon them will dance off as though poured on a very hot iron. The friction on the brake shoes is so great that they must be renewed every day on the cars that run on this line, and the curves are so sharp that the flanges on the wheels wear the rails to such an extent that after the rails have been used one way for a certain length of time they are taken up and the sides that have been worn away are placed on the outside of the track and the heretofore unused side comes in contact with the wheel flanges, until

TO CUERNAVACA

the rails are unfit for track use. After this they are taken up and used as telegraph poles.

The Aztec name of this place was "Cuauh-nahuac," meaning near the mountain or near the trees, but this was too long for the Spaniards, who shortened the name to "Cuernavaca," which, while sounding better, has hardly so poetic a meaning. The latter name when translated means a cow's horn.

Cuernavaca is another one of the old quaint towns that are found in Mexico. It is remarkable for its oddities and for its beautiful surroundings. While from the top of the high mountains it appears to be in the valley, when you reach the station you find you must go up through a series of considerable hills to reach the town.

Our entry into this sleepy little town was, I imagine, almost as picturesque as the old town itself. By previous arrangement we were accorded the distinction of being transferred from the station to the hotel, a distance of a mile or more, in a special coach.

This was an old style stage, built very much in the shape of the celebrated dead-wood coach in which so many people were held up and robbed by highwaymen, on the road to the mining camps of

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Dakota, and which stage was afterwards made more famous by its appearance in the battle scene in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

The running gear is heavy and the wheels are large; the body is suspended on leather straps which serve as springs, and the whole contrivance is painted a bright scarlet. It is calculated to hold eleven persons besides the driver, and there were just that number in our party at that time.

Some of them were remarkably heavy men, and each one had with him a full allowance of baggage, so the coach was pretty well loaded when we were all aboard. In this instance the women were enclosed inside the coach, while four men, whose combined weight was nearly one thousand pounds, with a large number of valises and suit cases, were loaded on top. In addition to this two other heavy men were roosting on a little seat suspended well up in the air between the upper rims of the two hind wheels.

As the men and the baggage on top were so much heavier than the ladies who were bundled inside, the combination, when completed, was quite top heavy, and careened and rolled along the road like a ship in mid ocean, with little or no ballast. On at least one occasion, as the team rounded the cor-

TO CUERNAVACA

ner at a furious rate, this top-heavy load came very near bringing the long expedition to a disastrous ending.

In addition to the driver who sat on the box and held the lines, there were two outrunners whose business it was to run along, one on each side of the four-mule team, and yell and belabor the animals vigorously with whips, and thus keep them in rapid motion.

As we came down over the rough cobblestones, with the usual accompaniment of boys and dogs, and with a roar which could be heard blocks away, our arrival was certainly known all over the city. Yea, verily, we came into Cuernavaca in a blaze of glory.

I have never been in old Jerusalem, but I should judge from the pictures of the holy city, that Cuernavaca is much like it in appearance. The streets are up and down, there practically being no level ground, while the houses are old and solid, all appearing to have been built many years ago.

The city lies on a mountain ridge with deep gulches or canons on each side. The one between the station and the hotel is spanned by a bridge, which is somewhat different from any bridge that has ever come under my observation. It is a very

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solid and heavy piece of architecture, built of stone, with a high, wide arch. The roadway is broad and smooth and at each end is widened into circular form, in the center of which is a stone basin or reservoir some fifteen or twenty feet in diameter, supplied with water from the mountain streams for the use of the animals passing over the bridge, or to supply the people who come there and carry it away. The roads leading out of Cuernavaca are well built, are well taken care of and are guarded along the side of the steep hills with substantial stone walls.

On the farther side of the town there is a road protected by a stone wall, which zigzags three or four hundred feet down one side of the hill and up the other, and is connected with a short but high stone arch over the little stream at the bottom of the gulch. An aqueduct with high arches carries water over each of these deep gulches or canons, which, added to the other peculiarities of the place, gives the town an ancient, fascinating appearance.

One of these gulches furnishes a basis for a remarkable chapter of early Mexican history. In April, 1521, Cortez marched over the mountains to capture everything in sight; when he came to Cuernavaca he met with a stubborn resistance. In order

CORTEZ' STRATEGY

to capture the town he had to cross over one of these gulches.

History records that Cortez approached this city with a band of thirty cavalry, three hundred Spanish infantry, and a large body of Tlaxcalan Indians as allies.

When he reached this deep gulch, the baranca of Almanca, his further entrance to the town was prevented. The gulch or baranca was not very wide, but it was very deep, and the Spaniards were woefully harassed by the shower of arrows from the defenders of the city who were entrenched on the opposite side of the gulch and safe from the fire of the Spanish guns, but did great execution with their more primitive arms.

Cortez sent a detachment up and down the baranca to find a crossing, but the baranca was long and deep and there was no place apparently where a successful crossing could be made. Finally a Tlaxcalan Indian noticed two gigantic trees on opposite sides but close to the gulch with the trunks inclined to the center and their branches intertwined, forming a sort of natural bridge, over which the Tlaxcalan quietly passed and was followed by many others, among whom were Castillo, a Spanish

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officer, and a number of his men. The Spanish wore heavy armor, and some of them fell into the gulf in making the passage.

The defenders were taken entirely by surprise, not having noticed that the enemy were crossing by means of the trees, and Cortez, having restored one of the previously destroyed bridges, crossed over with his little band of cavalry and infantry.

Speedy victory followed the unexpected coup and Cuernavaca fell into the hands of the Spaniards to be ruled by them for more than three hundred years, until the yoke was finally thrown off by the modern Mexicans, many of them the descendants of those who surrendered centuries before.

Cortez left Cuernavaca to complete the investment and finally captured the City of Mexico, and when this bloody and destructive business was accomplished he returned to Cuernavaca and made it his home for some time. He then constructed a great palace here which has stood for nearly four hundred years and is used as the capital of the State of Morelos today.

Cuernavaca has been the summer home of many distinguished Mexicans and Maximilian spent a great deal of his time here, but he learned that a conspiracy had been formed to assassinate him on the

OF CUERNAVACA

road and he then discontinued his visits. His house is still near here, and is one of the objective points visited by tourists.

It is said that Cortez murdered one of his wives here. But the more charitable say this is a mistake, she only fell in a cistern and was drowned after he choked her to death.

There are some beautiful waterfalls near Cuernavaca, and one of those old primitive pottery establishments where they turn out the odd pottery which everybody brings from Mexico. It is made better here than in most places in Mexico. Each locality has its own peculiar style of pottery. The Cuernavaca pottery is the most artistic of any we saw and is distinguished by pictures or figures inlaid with broken pieces of pearl.

There is a great street car system here. It has tracks on nearly all the streets, but the cars make only one trip a day from the center of the city to the railway station and return. It takes four mules to start the passenger car and four mules and six men to start the baggage trailer up the hill from the hotel. We came into the city with much glory on the red coach, but we went out with more comfort on the daily street car.

In the plaza in the foreground of the state house

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is a bronze statue of a noted man, who stands in the attitude of addressing an assembly, and attracts special attention because the figure has only one leg and is supported by a crutch which is part of the bronze casting.

This is the statue of General Santa Anna, the agitator, soldier, patriot, president, usurper and dictator of Mexico, whose wooden leg was captured at the battle of Cerro Gordo, and is now displayed in a glass case in the Memorial hall in the State house in Springfield, Illinois. General Santa Anna came on or near to the battlefield of Cerro Gordo in a carriage drawn by six mules.

While riding in the carriage he had removed his wooden leg to rest his injured member. Being surprised by the American soldiers, one or more of his mules were killed in harness and the general narrowly escaped being captured.

With the assistance of his men, one of the live mules was cut loose from the harness and Santa Anna escaped on the mule, leaving his wooden leg behind, which was captured by an Illinois soldier, and afterwards turned in to the Memorial hall at Springfield.

Several years ago a request came from the descendants of Santa Anna through the Mexican

SANTA ANNA'S LEG

government to the governor or secretary of state of Illinois, for the return of the wooden leg.

Quite a diplomatic correspondence was carried on in the matter but as the leg has become the property of the state of Illinois, the officers of the state had no right to relinquish the same without a special act or resolution of the legislature. As the legislature never acted in the matter, the leg is still, as above stated, in the Memorial hall.

It is an ordinary wooden leg, hollowed out for the knee to rest in the top, with a wing extending further up to attach to the real leg above the knee. The foot is encased in a small size well-fitting boot, square across the toe.

Santa Anna lost his sure enough leg at Vera Cruz on the 5th of December, 1838, while resisting an attack by the French. And, under the circumstances it was about the best thing that could have happened to him, for having previously granted the independence of Texas, he was in great disfavor at that time. His gallant defense and loss of leg restored him to the hearts of the Mexican people and led him along until he became ruler of the nation.

Again in the latter days of his life, when he had organized an insurrection against the government and was sentenced to be executed, his great sacrifice

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to his country was recognized and he was pardoned, and so the loss of his leg was the saving of his neck.

I was told that the state building contained a prison and that a charge of twenty-five cents was made for admittance. Most people are willing to pay to get out of prison, and I objected to paying to get into one, so I stayed out. There is a clock on top of the state house which Charles V of Spain presented to Cortez early in the sixteenth century, and it still marks the hours of the day, now, after measuring time's movements for four hundred years.

There are a number of interesting ruins in the vicinity of Cuernavaca, but I think the most remarkable ruin is the one designated as the Borda Garden, which is counted as the chief attraction of the city.

Jose de la Borda was a wealthy miner who lived here about two hundred years ago. He made a fortune said to be as high as fifty million dollars, and built a large house here with the most beautiful garden that could be imagined. It is said to have cost two million dollars.

It occupies a large square piece of ground and is surrounded by a high white wall. I think the garden is now the property of the city or state, and a fee is charged those who visit it. But the income is not sufficient to take care of the property as it should be

BORDA GARDEN

cared for. It is a magnificent place, yet, and has been more so in former days, when in its glory.

It would be hard to describe it. There are two artificial lakes with fountains, and stone terraces leading down to them, and the mansion and the whole place is as odd and as picturesque as an elaborate drop-curtain of a theatre, where the artist has had full sway and could place upon the canvas a two million dollar establishment with the same expense for paint as he could a two hundred dollar shanty. Whoever laid out this place was just as extravagant as an artist might be under those circumstances.

There are two battlements or lookouts from which a beautiful view of the valleys between the mountains can be seen, and it is said that one of these was the favorite haunt of Carlotta, where she would wait and watch for the coming of Maximilian, as he came down from the capital, full of worry and woe. Now the grand old place is overgrown with trees, vines and flowers of all kinds. The walls and walks show evidence of decay and neglect, and there is a general air of decadence on every hand.

As I walked among its lonely lanes and through its overhanging arbors, and contemplated its past grandeur and thought of the days when soft music floated over its waters, and when it was filled with

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chivalry and romance, I could not but call to mind those soul touching lines of Thomas Moore, which always find our tears so close to the overflowing point:

“I feel like one who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed.”

STORM AND SUNSET.

It is not often that a heavy rain and a beautiful sunset are presented at the same time, but this was one of the pleasures we enjoyed at Cuernavaca. Another writer referring to the place says: “The two most beautiful natural prospects I have ever gazed upon are Lake Louise and the encircling mountains in the Canadian Rockies and the sunset view from the roof of our hotel in Cuernavaca.” This is the opinion of a man who has traveled much and has seen considerable of the world, and it is not too much to say.

Cuernavaca is a place where travelers rest and every evening they go up on the flat stone-paved roof of the hotel, where there are comfortable seats, to enjoy the spectacle of the sunset, for it is always beautiful here. One evening while we were there we enjoyed the novelty of seeing at the same time a

STORM AND SUNSET

severe storm on one side and a glorious sunset on the other.

It does not often rain here in winter time, but it does sometimes, and this was one of those times. The clouds were very dark and the storm came down the valleys and over the mountains like a moving army.

You could as plainly discern the alignment of its advance column as you could see the front rank of soldiers on a march. The lightning flashed like the fire from guns and the thunder roared and hammered like heavy artillery.

The storm finally reached us and it was like a mad charge of cavalry, artillery and infantry, all at one and the same time, and we, like old, tried and experienced soldiers, who had seen many battles and battlefields, and lived through all of them, took to shelter until the charge had passed.

Then we came out again and went up on the house top to see the finish of the battle. Away to the east we could see the rear guard of the passing column and hear the rumble of the heavenly artillery as it advanced to the next stand. In the west the sun shone out in radiant glory and the scattered clouds were like huge fragments of flame rolling through the sky.

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The sun, as a ball of fire, was apparently sinking into an old deserted crater for the night, while for miles and miles the green and lately refreshed mountains, their tips in various shades, seemed to be assembled to guard the slumbers of the sun and to await its resurrection on the morrow.

The sky shaded from a bright red in the west to a light purple overhead and to a deep indigo in the east, where the driving rain was plainly visible—no colors an artist would use could be more intense than the various colors spread before us during this sunset and storm, nor could any artist place his colors in so perfect accord.

From mountain ridge to mountain ridge, spanning the heavens, was a double rainbow of the brightest colors as true and perfect as a segment of the rings of Saturn and seeming to form a broad path of gold to the dwelling place of the angels. Just as the sun was sinking from our sight, from the old moss-covered Cathedral, where Cortez attended Mass, and where Carlotta prayed, there came the sound of bells. They were the vesper bells and they were ringing the knell of the now departing day.

The Twelfth Letter.

IN MEXICO CITY.

This was my first visit to Mexico City since 1897, nine years ago, and I was forcibly impressed with the great improvement that has been made during that time. The cobblestone paving of the streets has been replaced by beautiful asphalt surfaces. The mule has given way to the trolley on the tramways. New buildings with steel frames and of modern cut stone have replaced old plastered habitations, plate glass fronts that were then a novelty are now the rule, and in the residence portions the change has been still greater. There are new houses everywhere and palatial residences now line up on grand boulevards where swamps and bogs were the breeding place of bacteria then.

It is hardly necessary to say, even as an introduction, that Mexico City is the capital of our sister republic, the seat of government, the location of the national palace, the home of the president, etc.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

It now has a population of nearly four hundred thousand, a gain of nearly fifty thousand in ten years. There is an American population estimated at about ten thousand.

THE LOCATION OF THE CITY.

Tradition says that Mexico City was established by the Aztecs in the year 1521, and that it was named Tenochtitlan, but that the people or the city were sometimes called "Mexitl," which the Spanish changed or corrupted into "Mexico," which is much more euphonious, and entitles the Spaniards to a vote of thanks for making the change in the name.

Mexico City is seven thousand three hundred and fifty feet above sea level, and this fact has been published so often that most people imagine that it is high and dry. It is true that it is high, but it is not or has not always been dry, but on the contrary it has suffered greatly from too much water.

It appears that when the Aztecs came here they found in this part of the country a race known as the Toltecs, who were already in possession of the country and who were a much more hardy and warlike race than the Aztecs.

The Aztecs were a very peaceable set of people when they came, and not many in number, but they afterwards became more numerous and more warlike

LOCATION OF THE CITY

and were practically the rulers of the whole country when Cortez arrived.

No one seems to know where the Aztecs formerly resided, but wherever they came from, they must have been licked, and left on that account, for they were a rather subdued sort of people at the time they came into the valley of Mexico.

They found in a lake called Texcoco, the lowest lake in the valley, an island, or rather a marshy foothold, that it would appear that nobody else wanted, and they calculated that by settling thereon they would not offend anybody, and besides, the waters and swamps around them would serve as a sort of moat to protect them from their more powerful enemies.

And so they settled in the lake and in the very lowest place in the valley, and that was the start of the present great City of Mexico.

One legend is that when they came they were directed by some prophet, oracle or other fraudulent person, to go on until they saw a sign which would be an eagle holding a serpent in its beak. So when they came to this place they found an eagle standing on a cactus plant with the snake as described, which it appears to me might have been a common sight in this country at that time. In any event, they set-

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

tled here, and this picture, the eagle with the coiling serpent, is now the national emblem of the republic.

The selection of this place for the building of the city was a most unfortunate decision, for the location was altogether better suited for the laying out of a great frog farm than it was for the site of a great city.

The so-called valley of Mexico is about thirty-five by fifty miles in extent, and while it is called a valley, it is in reality a basin.

I have not looked up the definition of the word "valley," but a valley to my mind carries with it the idea of a low place between hills that leads and drains into some other place, and I think this is the general idea. This valley of Mexico does not lead to any place. It is a great basin, pure and simple, with no outlet. And no matter from what direction you come into Mexico, you must first get up on the rim of the basin and then come down into the city.

There are six lakes in this so-called valley surrounding the City of Mexico, and the water at all times, in at least five of these lakes, is higher than the grounds of the city. As in all tropical countries, there is a dry season and a rainy season here and when the rainy season commences and continues, month after month, no one knows how much water

THE GREAT CANAL

there will be in these lakes nor how much will spill over.

The water in the lakes is restrained only by slight natural barriers and artificial dykes, and in the last seven hundred years the city has suffered from many and long-continued inundations.

The city is built on marshy, flat ground, so wet and damp that cellars are not practicable, and the lack of a good drainage system and the lack of a good water supply has made Mexico City one of the most unhealthy cities in the world. Intestinal disorders and typhus fever epidemics are prevalent and the death rate runs very high.

The fight to overcome the serious mistake of the original location of the city has been a long and pathetic story.

Cortez destroyed the city at the time of his Conquest, but made an egregious blunder in rebuilding on the same grounds, for he might at that time have abandoned the old site altogether and built on the higher ground near by.

THE GREAT CANAL.

Then came the great canal experiments. We, in Illinois, lay considerable stress on the building of the great drainage canal of Chicago, and yet Mexico City has a great canal that was commenced in 1607

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

(nearly three hundred years ago), and completed in 1789, and is now abandoned.

It was a failure from the start, just as the Chicago drainage canal will be a failure in the end.

When we are dead and gone, and maybe before that time, when the Chicago canal has failed to drain Chicago, and has scattered contagion and death all down the valley of the Illinois river, it will be abandoned, at least for the purpose for which it is intended, just as the Mexican canal has been now.

Twenty thousand men at one time labored many years on this great Mexican canal. It was first built as a tunnel, but in 1629, in the rainy season, there was a great inundation which seemed to come in a single night, but the waters remained five years.

The tunnel caved in in many places, and the overflow in the city was tremendous. The streets were turned into canals and boats were used for all comings and goings. Houses weakened on their foundations and fell in the streets and collapsed within themselves.

The condition of the city was indescribable and the suffering of the people was terrific. The engineer who constructed the tunnel was cast into prison.

Finally a royal order came from Spain to

ANOTHER CANAL

abandon the old site and move the city to a nearby suburb on higher ground, called Tacubaya. But this order was never carried out.

There came a dry season and an earthquake that cracked the ground and the water disappeared. Anyway, a city in a bad location seems to have wonderful staying qualities and vitality when it once has taken root.

And so it remained, and when the waters receded the city was rebuilt for the third time in the same place. Then it was concluded to make of the tunnel a canal, but this was not completed until 1789, and during all the intervening time and afterwards, the inundations and floods continued. The canal is about thirteen miles long, is one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet deep and is from three hundred to five hundred feet wide at the top, sloping to the bottom. The whole work is now used only as a railroad embankment.

ANOTHER GREATER CANAL.

The drainage conditions have been materially improved of late.

Maximilian initiated a good work while he was emperor, that was completed in 1894, nearly thirty years after his death, which has done much to alleviate conditions in Mexico City.

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It consists of a canal thirty miles long connecting with a tunnel seven miles long through the mountain, which in a large measure has solved the drainage problem for this city.

But the lakes and marshes in the vicinity of the city are not drained, and being considerably higher than the city, during the rainy season or in times of freshets, threaten great danger.

I do not think though that there has been a serious flood since the tunnel was completed, and it is to be hoped that the floods are a thing of the past. A water indicator stands on the great plaza or square directly in front of the National Palace, that shows the height of the water in the lakes at all times.

Now, if I should stop here to tell of the many times the city has suffered from earthquakes innumerable and severe, and from invasions by different armies, and has been damaged by internal riots and disorders, from plagues and epidemics, you certainly would realize that this place has had a stormy and tempestuous existence. But we will pass over that at this time.

THE NATIONAL PALACE.

We visited the National Palace on Sunday, which is the usual day for visitors. It is located on the east side of the "Plaza Mayor," which is a square

THE NATIONAL PALACE

about as large as four ordinary city blocks. The plaza is a well kept park, full of flowers, trees, palms, etc., and has some fountains and statues. The Cathedral fronts on the north side of the same plaza.

The "Palacio Nacional," as it is put down in Spanish, is a large old-style building. It is built in the shape of a square covering a large block. It is of plain architecture, is only three stories high, but it measures six hundred and seventy-five feet across the front and as much or nearly so on each of the four sides, and contains a number of courts, some of which are paved, while others are ornamented with grass, trees and flowers, and one in particular, the President's garden, is a magnificent retreat.

Soldiers guard all the entrances, and nobody is allowed to enter unless supplied with a pass. American visitors can get passes from the American embassy or from the American consul. The embassy supplied me generously with a pass for myself and four additional friends, so the guard at the great entrance thought I must be a person of considerable importance and bowed very low as we passed by, and placed at our disposal a very polite attendant to show us through the building.

The palace stands on the grounds occupied formerly by the palace of Montezuma at the time of

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

the Conquest, which palace was destroyed by Cortez. When that illustrious gentleman and his companions had murdered untold thousands and had conquered and had captured everything in the name of the Holy Cross, and were dividing up the steal, in the drawing of lots, Cortez stacked the cards and drew this choice ground.

The ownership was conceded by the King of Spain in 1529. Cortez put up an elegant palace with elaborate towers. It was purchased by Spain from the heirs in 1562 for a home for the viceroys, who governed Mexico. Cortez' building was destroyed in the riots of 1692 and the present building was commenced that year. So, like most everything in Mexico, it is pretty old.

We visited all the public rooms of the National Palace and some of them, notably the great hall of the ambassadors, are magnificently furnished, and some remarkably fine paintings adorn the walls. Among the many portraits is a heroic size picture of George Washington, the presence of which illustrates the friendly feeling of Mexico for the United States.

We were shown through the state kitchen and into the state dining room, which are wonderfully well equipped for cooking, eating and drinking. The large tables in the dining room are ornamented

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

with four pieces of Maximilian's silver set. There are five pieces in the set, exquisitely designed and excellently made. The great central piece, which is in the museum, is ten feet in length. The four smaller pieces, which are in the state or national dining hall, are each at least five feet in length and each of them exhibits wonderful display of work.

The art palace in connection with the National Palace has a magnificent display of paintings. It is conceded to be the greatest collection of art on the western hemisphere.

There is also a great library with two hundred thousand volumes and a number of lesser ones in the city.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

The National Museum is located in the National building, and nobody visits Mexico without going to the museum. The two great wonders, so considered, in the museum are the Aztec calendar stone and the sacrificial stone.

The calendar stone is about seven or eight feet in diameter and would weigh several tons. Originally it must have been brought from some distance, as no stone of this nature can be found in this immediate vicinity. It was in the great Tenochtitlan temple, which stood near where now the Cathedral

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stands, and which was destroyed by Cortez. After the destruction of the temple, the calendar stone was buried for many years in the plaza, was later deposited in the cathedral and then removed to the National Museum in 1886. Its wonderful carvings and hieroglyphics make it an interesting object for the study of archaeologists.

THE SACRIFICIAL STONE.

Next to the calendar stone in the National Museum is the sacrificial stone.

The Aztecs were sun-worshippers, and practiced human sacrifice, and it is said that more than three million people were sacrificed in their great temple in the City of Mexico. I could not verify the exactness of this number.

This stone is about eight feet in diameter and about three feet thick. The surface is completely covered with pictures carved in the stone, representing victims being dragged by the hair to the place of execution, etc., and clearly indicating the purpose for which it was intended. In the center a basin is chipped out and a gutter leads down and off the edge of the stone. This basin was evidently intended to catch the blood as the victims were laid upon the stone with their heads in the centre, their throats cut, and then the gutter conveyed the blood away.

MAXIMILIAN'S CARRIAGE

It would appear that in the dragging of the victims to the place of sacrifice by the hair, as usual, the bald-headed men would have considerable advantage, as they couldn't drag them that way.

This stone was lost track of after the destruction of the old temple, and lay buried in the ground until 1791, when, in making an excavation, it was found. As it seemed too heavy to be moved, it was about to be broken into paving stone for the streets, when somebody interfered. It was then taken in hand, turned over to the government and, somewhat similar to the case of the rejected stone, has become one of the most famous relics of the western world.

There are lots of other wonders in the National Museum, including figures in stone that have been unearthed in many parts of this strange country, showing the existence of prehistoric races.

Coming down to later days, there are the skeletons of cliff dwellers and unknown tribes, while coming down still further to more modern times, there are many mementoes of Juarez and Maximilian and other rulers.

MAXIMILIAN'S CARRIAGE.

Side by side in the Museum stand two coaches. One is the coach of the late President Juarez and

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the other is the coach of the late Emperor Maximilian. The coach of Juarez is a plain, black, weather-beaten, old-style carriage such as might be seen among the second-hand assortment around most any repair shop. Maximilian's coach is a counterpart of the coach of Napoleon. It is a gorgeous chariot, made to be drawn by six horses. It is as elaborate and as ornamental in its carvings as it possibly could have been made. Every inch of its surface, except the glass, is covered with gold leaf or plate gold, and it looks as though it were made of solid gold. It is magnificently upholstered and ornamented with gold lace. It is said to have been built in Italy at a cost of forty thousand dollars.

I remarked to the guide, "There is quite a difference in those two carriages." "Yes," he said, "just the difference between a democrat and an aristocrat"—and that explained it all.

Think of Maximilian coming in this carriage and bringing with him a fifty thousand dollar set of silverware, expecting to govern a people, three-fourths of whom had never possessed enough money to enjoy a square meal and who had never had a respectable suit of clothes, and the skin of whose heels was cracked in ridges from never having been encumbered with shoes.

MAXIMILIAN'S CARRIAGE

It is in this carriage, for they had no railway then, that Maximilian and Carlotta rode from Vera Cruz to be crowned Emperor and Empress of Mexico, in the old Cathedral.

They came with pomp and glory. Their gilded chariot was escorted by the grandest military pageant that ever marched through any country in the western hemisphere. There were glittering uniforms, shining arms, silken banners and waving plumes. There was the blare of trumpets, the melody of music and the clattering of many horses' hoofs on the old stone military road.

It was a grand procession, representing everything it should not,—usurpation, despotism and a vainglorious display of splendor, and the turning backward of the hands of time to make them point to the darkest ages of the history of mankind.

But its grandeur was unparalleled in the world's more modern movements and everybody on the way hailed it as the forerunner of a new era, and this golden chariot was the central figure of this great cavalcade.

There was another Maximilian procession back over the same road in 1867, but there was a great contrast between the two, a greater contrast than the world has often seen.

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Maximilian had closed his drama with the tragic denouement of his execution and the procession was on its return to Vera Cruz with his dead body, to be shipped to his mother in Austria.

The waving banners were not there, the golden trappings were not there, the brilliant uniforms were not there, the bands were not in the procession. Carlotta was not there, she had gone before for help. The gilded chariot was not there. It was in Mexico City, and in its place was a military wagon on which lay the body of the late emperor.

It was surrounded by a little band of ragged soldiers of the Republic, nearly half of whom were ex-members of the Confederate army of the United States, and there was no one so lowly as to do honor to the dead emperor, except the straggling peon on the road might lift his hat and trace upon his breast the sign of the cross in the presence of death.

And this was the return of Maximilian, with all that was left of his worldly ambitions, and this is the story that this golden chariot reads to the visitor to the Mexican museum today.

The Thirteenth Letter.

THE GUADELUPE CATHEDRAL.

Although hardly so large, the Cathedral of "Our Lady of Guadalupe," situated about four miles from the center of the city, is in some respects a more remarkable structure than even the great Cathedral of the City of Mexico, and is counted the holiest shrine in all the republic.

It contains the sacred "Tilma," which is a mantle or cloak of an Indian, made of the fibre of maguey, or what we would call century plant, on which is the picture of the Virgin Mary.

The picture represents the Virgin standing on a crescent supported by an angel, with a golden crown upon her head, set with precious stones, while from behind the figure are rays of light in every direction, giving the picture a remarkably beautiful and awe-inspiring setting.

In connection with this picture is a legend on

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which the Cathedral was founded and which has made it the Mecca of all the faithful in Mexico.

The first bishop of Mexico, the illustrious Senor Fr. Don Juan de Zumarrago, was in charge of church matters in Mexico at that time. It was in the year 1531, the tenth year of Spanish occupation.

A poor peon, Juan Diego, was on his way to Mass. When near the hill of Tepeyac he was surrounded by a great light and told that he was in the presence of the Virgin Mary, and that he should go to the Bishop of Mexico and tell him that it was her desire that a temple should be erected on that particular spot wherein she could bestow her pitying love on those who sought her protection. "Go thou to the city and tell the bishop all thou hast seen and heard."

Within the hour Juan was at the bishop's door, but it was not opened unto him, and the bishop's servants derided him for having the assurance and presumption to try to effect an entrance to the presence of so great and so holy a personage. Finally, being admitted, he trembled in fear and embarrassment before the high dignitary. When he had told his story, the bishop pitied him, but said, "take the poor man away, he has been dreaming."

And the next morning the Virgin again met Juan, who told her of his failure to interest the

THE GUADELUPE CATHEDRAL

bishop. The Virgin sent him again to the bishop, who gave him no encouragement, but asked him for a sign from the Virgin. He was followed secretly by two of the bishop's men, who lost track of him on the way and came back and reported him as an imposter, and recommended that he be flogged should he return again. But the Virgin said (when Juan again reported his failure to enlist the bishop's attention), "Come tomorrow and thou shalt receive the sign." Juan promised to return the next day, but did not do so.

He was discouraged and passed on the other side of the hill on the road to bring a confessor, as his uncle was supposed to be dying. But the Virgin intercepted him on that side of the hill and told him his uncle was restored. And then the Virgin told him to go to the top of the hill, cut the roses he would find there and fold them in his tilma and bring them to her. Juan knew roses had never grown upon this barren hill, but he did as commanded and he found the hill blooming with fragrant flowers.

He selected a great quantity, placed them in his mantle or tilma, and returned with them to the waiting Virgin, who blessed them and replaced them in Juan's mantle and told him to take them to the bishop, and that would be a sign to him. And Juan

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carried the roses to the bishop's palace, but when he arrived there he had to fight his way through the mocking guards and only obtained an audience with the bishop after a great struggle.

He opened his mantle and emptied his roses at the bishop's feet. But lo, as the roses fell from the coarse garment there was emblazoned thereon the most beautiful picture mortal eyes had ever gazed upon; a picture no mortal could have originated and no artist could ever exactly copy. It was the beautiful picture of the Virgin as described above. Juan fell upon his face before the bishop. The sign was unmistakable, the bishop was convinced. He raised Juan to his feet and accepted him as the true messenger of the Holy Mother.

That day, Juan, the poor barefooted peon, led a long procession of the great men of the church to the foot of Tepeyac hill and they found everything as he had said, and the temple was erected forthwith and called "Santa Maria de Guadalupe," as the Virgin had wished.

And this is the legend on which this great Cathedral was commenced in the year 1531, and finally completed in 1896, nearly four hundred years after Juan had been laid beneath its original altar, and the tilma rests over the altar at the present time.

THE GUADELUPE CATHEDRAL

The pope, centuries ago, declared the legend authentic, and Our Lady of Guadalupe became the orthodox patroness of Mexico.

Notwithstanding that services were progressing, our party practically took possession of the altar to look upon the sacred picture which is displayed high up above where the priest stands while officiating.

We were not molested, as so many others have been equally rude, and the services proceeded without interruption.

The magnificence of the interior of the edifice is beyond the power of words to express. This Cathedral, besides the contributions of labor, and material in its buildings, cost upward of three million dollars. The rails of the stairway leading up to the altar are of pure silver and cost forty thousand dollars, and there is a golden crown set with diamonds and gems contributed by the ladies of Mexico, which is of very great value, and which, in addition to the priceless gems, cost thirty thousand dollars, for the gold and the setting of the stones in the crown. 'It is said that it contains more precious gems than the sky does stars.

Next to the Cathedral is a neat little chapel with a dome of colored tile. It is built over a bubbling spring which throws up enough water to supply a

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good sized village. It is said that this is where the Virgin met Juan and that the spring burst forth as a further sign. It is a clear mineral water.

On the top of the hill where it is said Juan gathered the roses, is another chapel called the "Chapel of the Hill." It is reached by a winding stone road very steep. Back of it is a little cemetery, every available foot of which seems to be occupied by mausoleums or tombs of marble covering the graves of many of the wealthiest and most illustrious people of Mexico. Among the graves we stood at the foot of the one holding the remains of Santa Anna, whose body rests here, after a long and stormy life on earth. His wife lies in the same grave, her body being buried above the General's. A neat but not very extensive structure covers the remains, surmounted by a cross.

From this cemetery a good view of the city and valley of Mexico, with its gardens and lakes, can be had.

About half way up the hill are the celebrated stone sails of Guadalupe. They are perched on the hillside and are as large as the sails of a fair sized yacht.

There are several stories in regard to these sails. One is that a great storm raged either in the gulf or

THE STONE SAILS

the Pacific ocean, and that in the midst of the storm was a ship that had lost its rudder and it seemed could never ride the storm. The crew made a vow to the Virgin that if the ship was saved they would carry the sails overland and set them up on the hill at Guadelupe. The ship was saved and the sailors did as they vowed to do, and when they set the sails up they were turned into solid stone.

Another story and more probable one is that the sails when brought were set up and then encased in cement, with a foundation of brick. I accepted this story with more faith, for at some places the cement had peeled off and exposed the bricks. Nobody seems to know how long these sails have been here, nor who placed them here.

On the road to Guadelupe are a number of shrines where pilgrims worship as they proceed. There is an old shrine on the road to Chapultepec. It was built into the aqueduct that brought the water from Chapultepec hill over two hundred years ago; when that old wonder of engineering was superseded a few years ago by all iron water pipes and was torn down the workmen came to this old shrine and left it and then went beyond and continued the work of destruction; so it stands there today like

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some ancient ruin, with the great arches broken away on either side.

STATUE OF CHARLES IV.

Taking a carriage in the center of the city, going down San Francisco street, passing the Alameda Park, you come to what is called the "Man on the Iron Horse." This is the bronze statue of Charles IV of Spain, who reigned as King of that country from 1798 to 1808, and is the largest single bronze casting in the world.

It was made in the city of Mexico in 1802. It represents the king on horseback with a laurel wreath upon his brow. It is a very impressive figure on a stone base; the base is twelve to fifteen feet in height, and in addition to the base the statue is fifteen feet six inches more, and weighs sixty thousand pounds.

There is one marked peculiarity of the figure that has been much criticized. While the king is riding apparently with military dignity, he has no stirrups to his saddle, and if his feet were in the flesh instead of rigid bronze, they would be hanging loose at the sides of the horse.

This does not please the Mexicans. But I could hardly see why anybody should object, for, as both the king and the horse are cast in one solid piece and

STATUE OF CHARLES VI

are immovable, the king is not likely to be thrown even if he lacks stirrups.

This statue has a considerable history and it is a wonder that it is here to-day to tell its own story. It was erected in 1803 in the Plaza Mayor in front of the National Palace. But before that time a model in wood covered with gold leaf occupied the same position. The bronze statue, when it replaced the wooden model, remained in that position until 1813.

In the meantime, the war for independence having broken out, there was a great prejudice against the king and the destruction of the statue was threatened. To protect it, the authorities enclosed it in a great wooden globe and it so remained in eclipse until 1822. The feeling of antipathy growing stronger, the statue was, for its safer keeping, then removed to the interior of a university. It remained in the university until 1852. In the meantime, Mexican independence having been established and the feeling of prejudice having to some extent subsided, the statue was brought from its hiding place and set up in its present location, with an entablature on the base in Spanish, reading that this statue is not here to do honor to Charles IV, but is retained here merely as a great work of art.

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PASEO DE LA REFORMA.

The Paseo de La Reforma is the name given to one of the greatest driveways or boulevards in the world, and Mexico has the honor of possessing it. This grand paseo is a beautiful memorial of the late Empress Carlotta, as it is said to have been constructed at her suggestion and by her influence.

When Maximilian and Carlotta became rulers of Mexico, the city extended but little, if any, further than to the Charles statue. It was two miles further to the Castle Chapultepec, at an angle to the general lay of the street of the city. It is said Carlotta conceived the idea of this drive, which was a magnificent idea, and that it was laid out as she directed, but has been improved since then.

The paseo connects with the streets of the city at the Charles statue. It is magnificently wide, one hundred and seventy feet in all. In the center is a park of grass, then two broad roadways for carriages and then there are roadways for automobiles and bicycles and walks for people on foot, all separated by expanses of grass which is green summer and winter.

Along the margins of the paseo are stone bases surmounted with statues of all the prominent men of the several states, which were contributed by the

PASEO DE LA REFORMA

states, and they are interspersed with great bronze urns filled with growing flowers and vines.

At frequent intervals the street widens into circles, called "gloritas," four hundred feet in diameter, in which are great monuments and gigantic statues.

When the paseo reaches the Chapultepec hill, which lies with its narrowest, highest and most picturesque prominence toward the city, and is surmounted by the castle, the roadway divides and passes in a circle on either side, and going among the great cypress trees that are famed in history and song, meets on the further side, where it winds and leads up to the castle.

These great trees have evidently been planted where they now stand by the hands of somebody, but it was a long while ago and nobody knows who did the good work. They were nearly as large as they are now when the Spanish came here and they are estimated as being at least fifteen hundred years old. The largest is called the tree of Montezuma. It is forty-six feet in circumference and is a giant among its fellows. Their life connects the present with the prehistoric and makes a human being with his limited span of life seem like an insect of a day.

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THE COMPACT OF DEATH.

Chapultepec means grasshopper, and Chapultepec castle is located on the hill of that name. It is a combination of the president's summer home, a fortress and has a military academy adjoining, similar to our institution at West Point in New York state.

It has been the home of the rulers of Mexico through all the years of history, commencing with the Montezumas, then taken by Cortez, then the Spanish viceroys, then the presidents and emperors, and down to the present time when it is the summer home of President Diaz. It has been rebuilt and added to by each and all of them until it is now a truly wonderful structure.

The stranger's attention is called to a monument at the base of the hill called the "Cadet's Monument," with which is connected one of the most pathetic stories of Mexico and unfortunately the American soldiers were the unwilling force that made the story possible.

The most stunning blow and greatest humiliation Mexico ever endured was when the American troops under General Scott in 1847 battered down the Mexican defences and took possession of Chapultepec castle and the City of Mexico.

THE COMPACT OF DEATH

The Mexicans knew that Taylor had defeated their forces at Buena Vista and that the Americans had routed the forces of the Mexicans at Vera Cruz and were marching on toward Mexico City. But they could not realize that they could be defeated at the capital. They determined that the Americans should never enter Mexico City and that they should never take Chapultepec castle.

As showing how intense their feeling was and how they felt their humiliation, a little story illustrates: An old man was asked by an American a few years ago, "How old are you?" He answered, "I am eleven years old," and in explanation he said: "I was a little boy when the American troops entered Mexico City, at that time my heart stopped beating and existence with me ceased, and years are no more counted by me."

But my preliminary is long. There were forty-eight cadets attending the Chapultepec school when the American army made its famous assault upon the castle. The cadets ranged in age from fourteen to eighteen years, and before the battle they entered into a solemn compact, each with each and all with all, to surrender only in death. The battle of Chapultepec was a picturesque battle. Part of the American troops fought the Mexicans from the front while the

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main force scaled the hill in the rear of the castle with ladders, and charged forward over the hill. This movement was in the immediate command of General Pillow and was a terrific onslaught.

As the American army came on with their invincible charge and were mowing down the ranks of the Mexicans with musket, with bayonet, with canister and with grape, the fierceness of the charge was too much for the old soldiers. They fell like wheat before the scythe.

It was as though the mouth of hell had opened on them. They could not withstand the oncoming of the irresistible avalanche. Their ranks wavered, the survivors fell back, their solid phalanx was broken and they fled precipitously down the east side of the rugged hill and the cadets were left to their fate.

The cadets would not seek shelter, retreat nor surrender. They were a brave and valorous band, but they could not stand before the American guns. A quick charge, a last volley and the colors of Mexico and the last of the cadets went down together. Not one of the boys was left to tell the story of their valor. The compact of death was completed and the battle of Chapultepec was over.

The monument simply says it is erected to the

THE COMPACT OF DEATH

cadets who fell in the American invasion of 1847. That is sufficient and the sad story which made the reason for its erection has brought sorrow not only to the hearts of the Mexicans but to many an American heart as well. The cannon captured from the cadets of Mexico at that time now stands in the grounds of our own military academy at West Point and should teach a lesson of undaunted bravery to our boys, who are to fight the battles of the future.

A peculiar thing in reference to this great battle is the fact that there was no good reason for it ever having been fought. The Americans went out of their way to the extreme further side of the city to engage in a fight that was not necessary.

U. S. Grant at that time was a lieutenant in the regular army. He crossed the Mexican border from Texas with General Taylor and marched with him to Monterey. He then returned to the Rio Grande river, shipped by the gulf to Vera Cruz, where he joined Scott on his memorable march from that place to Mexico City, in the enemy's country, and was with the American army at the time of this battle. In his memoirs written just before his death he said: "In late years, if not at the time, the battles of Molino del Rey and Chapultepec have seemed to me wholly un-

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necessary." The battle of Molino del Rey was fought near Chapultepec.

"Molino del Rey" means the mill of the king, and Grant explains how the troops could have moved south of the mill and entered the city without fighting either of the battles and have compelled the enemy to evacuate those two posts without the firing of a gun.

It is easier to see such things thirty or forty years after, and this is not the first nor the last battle to be fought without cause. But this view of the matter adds further cause for regret that the slaughter ever occurred. This unfortunate incident of a war which General Grant further said "was a most unholy war and the most glaring example of a great nation crushing a lesser nation without just cause," did much to embitter the hearts of the Mexicans against the Americans, even to the present day.

There is a post of the Grand Army of the Republic at Mexico City at this time made up of survivors of the American civil war, who are now living here. They are a grizzled set of old fellows. I met them all one night at the St. Francis hotel, when they came down to pay their respects to General Chaffee.

They go each year on the thirtieth day of May

BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD

and decorate the graves of their comrades who have died and who are buried here.

This last year they asked the government here to be allowed to decorate the monument erected to the cadets. The privilege was granted and they marched to the little monument, for it is not a great shaft, and there the old soldiers placed their tribute of love to the valor of the cadets who had died in battle at the hands of the United States soldiers fifty-eight years before. It was a touching scene and a gracious act of the grizzled veterans, and has done much to eliminate the feeling of bitterness that has existed all these years.

As we passed this place there were about a dozen of the cadets of to-day sitting on a circular stone bench, surrounding the monument. I took off my hat to them and they all responded by rising to their feet and returning the salute. They were a manly set of young fellows and my heart went out to them and I felt as though I would like to stop and take each one by the hand and shed tears with them.

THE BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD.

Out of this same Mexican war came indirectly one of the most sublime poems ever written in the

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English language. It is familiar, I assume, to most of my readers:

“The muffled drum’s sad roll has beat
The soldiers’ last tattoo;
No more on life’s parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few;
On fame’s eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And glory guards with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead.”

* * * * *

“The neighing troop, the flashing blade,
The bugle’s stirring blast,
The charge, the dreadful cannonade,
The din and shout are past;
Nor war’s wild notes, nor glory’s peal
Shall thrill with fierce delight
Those breasts that never more shall feel
The rapture of the fight.”

There are several verses in all, every one of which is a complete poem within itself. This masterpiece was written by Theodore O’Hara, a newspaper man of Louisville, Kentucky. He had been a soldier in the Mexican campaign with Taylor.

After the war was over the bodies of the Kentucky soldiers were brought home from the battlefields of Mexico and were buried in the cemetery at Louisville, and O’Hara prepared this poem for that occasion. Scarcely anything more beautiful or forceful has ever been written.



CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO.

"In this cathedral the great Bishops and Archbishops of Mexico have been ordained, and the only two emperors Mexico ever had were crowned here and started on the road to death."
—Page 249.

BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD

O'Hara afterwards joined with the revolutionists and fought for the independence of Cuba, and then joined the Confederates in the Civil war and rose to the rank of colonel in that service.

Notwithstanding he had fought in the rebel army, the government of the United States immortalized his great effort by having it cast on solid iron tablets and it can be found to-day in that shape, paying its tribute to the dead in every national cemetery in the United States. The last four lines of the first verse are also engraved on a tablet on one of the battlefields of the Crimean war, away off across the ocean.

The Fourteenth Letter.

THE SUNDAY DRIVE.

The drive Sunday afternoon in the Chapultepec park is one of the most interesting experiences you can enjoy while in Mexico. There are more carriages in this city than in any other place of its size that I know of, and the people here seem to have the best horses in the world.

Somebody says why shouldn't they? for they get them from Illinois, Kentucky and Missouri, which produce the best horses on the face of the globe. They buy them in the St. Louis market and pay the highest prices, and insist upon having the best.

It is said that every family in Mexico of any pretensions will keep a nice carriage and a good carriage team even if they have to suffer for the necessaries of life, and they usually keep them right in their houses. They live in the center of the city, that is, a great many of them do, among the business houses.

THE SUNDAY DRIVE

An archway leads from the street into the court and the horses and carriages and the servants occupy the ground floor, while the family live upstairs, so you can see there is nothing too good for the horses.

Notwithstanding the great number of public carriages, if you have not engaged one in advance, you are extremely lucky if you get one Sunday afternoon at all; notwithstanding the rates are higher Sunday afternoon than at other times. It is the one time that you cannot step out at any place and select one of a dozen carriages in sight.

On Sunday afternoon they are all on the go and headed for Castle Chapultepec, and when you get to the drive, you find not only all the public carriages and hacks in the city, but all of the private equipages as well. The Paseo de La Reforma is lined up with conveyances, and when you reach the Chapultepec park or drive, a wonderful sight is presented.

The drive is broad and smooth and winds through the old trees as described in my last letter, and as far as you can see there are two double processions of carriages, one double procession going west and the other east, the two double rows divided by many mounted policemen. The carriages are not in a rapid trot as you will find them in the ordinary park in the United States, but are so crowded to-

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gether that there can be nothing in the way of speed beyond the walking of the horses. The mounted police, of whom there are a hundred or more, keep the four lines separated and in motion, and in order. The horses champ on their bits, prance on their feet, pull on the lines and strive to hasten the procession. But society, the drivers and the police won't have it that way, and the horses must conform to the custom, so they go slowly side by side up to one end of the drive, make the turn and come down the other with all the solemn decorum of a funeral procession, and then they make the turn and go again.

Sometimes one carriage forges ahead a little perhaps, and then again may fall back, or someone may get a little farther ahead like a fast walker on a crowded sidewalk, but there is no chance to make any great speed, a walk governing at all times. It is a sort of grand party or sociable on wheels. Men greet their friends and women visit with their neighbors in the next carriage. There are many people in the procession, including all the "four hundred" of the Mexican capital.

There is a magnificent display of rich gowns, expensive hats, valuable jewelry, of powdered faces and of painted cheeks, for the women of Mexico excel in facial fresco foolishness. The fine teams, the

THE SUNDAY DRIVE

shiny carriages are superb, and the drivers and footmen with their well-fitting suits of tan trousers and blue or dark green coats give the occasion an aristocratic air.

The great drive begins at about four o'clock in the afternoon and when darkness comes on and the lamps are lighted in all the carriages, it looks like a city moving with all its street lamps in motion. But soon after the lamps are lighted they all go over the great paseo to their homes in the city and the crowd disperses as suddenly as though ordered off the track.

There are two or three bands that are located at convenient points in the park and the thousands of people on foot make the occasion a grand and gala time.

There is a large refreshment pavilion near the castle, owned by the government but operated by private parties, and seats here on every Sunday evening are at a premium. The rattle of glasses and the popping of wine and champagne bottles on Sunday evenings seems like a continuous echo of the many battles that have been fought in this neighborhood.

A similar drive takes place up town on the main business street called San Francisco street, one night or more each week, when the street is occupied its

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entire distance by carriages. But on Sunday afternoon occurs the great event in driving or visiting on wheels.

THE CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO.

The Cathedral of Mexico, although not the most expensive, is the greatest church edifice in the new world, when its size, history and everything else is considered. It is four hundred feet from north to south. It is nearly two hundred feet in width, and from the marble floor to the vaulted ceiling overhead it is one hundred and seventy-nine feet. The main towers, of which there are two, are two hundred and four feet high. The ceiling is made of arches of brick and cement and is supported by twenty immense fluted columns. The ceiling is beautifully frescoed and embellished with pictures by great artists, representing various religious scenes.

The Cathedral contains, in addition to the great central chamber, fourteen chapels, an equal number on each side, dedicated to fourteen saints, after whom the chapels are named. The most noted of these chapels is that dedicated to San Felipe de Jesus, in which repose certain relics of that saint and the font where he was baptized. All the chapels contain figures of the saints to whom they are dedicated, and the furnishings of all are magnificent.

CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO

This great cathedral was built on the plans of an architect by the name of Alonzo Perez Castenada, which name I would assume to be Spanish. It is built on part of the site of the great Aztec temple of Tenochtitlan, which Cortez destroyed when he entered Mexico City, and the foundation is said to be constructed of idols that had found places in the old temple.

The Spaniards, in order to wipe out everything that pertained to the religion of the Aztecs, made a ruthless destruction of works of aboriginal art and idolatry, which as relics to-day would be of inestimable value and might do much to clear up the pre-historic era of Mexico.

When the Aztec temple was destroyed a church was built here on the ruins. That was replaced by a cathedral, which was finally removed or torn down to make room for the present edifice. So this is at least the fourth house of worship that has occupied this site.

The corner stone was laid in 1573 and the structure was completed in 1667, while the towers were not completed until 1791, so it is not likely that anyone who witnessed the laying of the corner stone was there to attend the final dedication. The cost was estimated at two million dollars, but this was at

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wages of a few cents a day and did not include a great many contributions of labor and material of which no account was kept. The towers alone cost about two hundred thousand dollars, and one bell with the sacred name of Santa Maria de Guadalupe, measuring nearly twenty feet from top to bottom, cost ten thousand dollars. There is another bell in the other tower called "Donna Maria," almost as large, and which cost nearly as much.

There are great and celebrated paintings in every niche and corner, the value of which can not be estimated, and which could not be purchased at any price.

There are five altars, the chief one being erected as late as 1850, which in itself cost a fortune. There is another altar reaching to the high ceiling. There are several organs of most remarkable design and great volume. The railing leading to the choir loft is of great value and is composed of gold, silver and copper.

The remains of many distinguished statesmen and churchmen are buried within the confines of this old structure. The tomb of Iturbide is here. His remains rest beside those of the man who caused his execution. Beneath one altar, called the altar of the kings, are buried the heads of old Father Hidalgo

CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO

and his companions, which were cut from their bodies by order of the King of Spain and displayed upon spears at Guanajuato as a warning to all patriots who would take up arms for independence.

These heads were brought here a few years ago, after the independence of Mexico had been established, and were buried with great ceremony; so the altar that had been erected to honor kings now does honor to those who defied the king and died in the cause of the common people.

The Mexican man of the iron mask, of whom no one knows anything, is also buried here in this edifice. There are many old parchments and books of antiquity and music books, with notes almost as large as hen eggs so they can be set up and several people sing from the same book at long distance without interfering with or crowding each other.

In this cathedral all of the great bishops and archbishops of Mexico have been ordained, and the only two emperors Mexico has ever had were crowned here and started on the road to death.

Notwithstanding the magnificence and grandeur of this great edifice there is no aristocracy among the people who worship therein.

Services proceed in one or more of the chapels at all times and there is no dividing line that I could

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perceive between the rich and the poor, the great and the lowly, the richly dressed and the ragged. The poor peon is just as welcome and enters with as much assurance as the merchant or the prince. And next to the lady in silks and satins, who kneels upon the marble, is the poor woman in tatters and rags.

The peddler will enter, lay down a pack of vegetables or a bundle of live chickens and say his prayers, or the woman with a baby strapped upon her back will enter into the devotion and be treated with the same respect as is accorded any other worshiper. And this illustrates the character of the great Catholic church in all countries and why the name "Church Universal" is so well applied to this great organization.

A MAP OF THE CITY.

When going to a strange city there is not often a better way of getting started right than to secure a good reliable map of the city. So when I was met upon the street by a "peddler" who displayed a bundle of maps printed in several colors, with all the blocks and parks laid off in emerald green, with crosses to represent churches and rows of small spots to show street car lines, etc., I eagerly bought one and congratulated myself that I had secured a prize.

MAP OF THE CITY

But the more I studied that map the more I got mixed, and as it lies before me now with its expanse of green, it seems to twist itself over itself and becomes more complex. Everything in Mexico City centers at the Plaza Mayor, the great square on which the National palace and the Cathedral are located, so I thought the street passing the National palace north and south would be a good one to learn first. I would fix the name of that street firmly in my mind and the rest would then come easy.

By the map the street was twenty-two blocks long, and here are the names that that one street has and which I would have to crystallize in my memory in order to know that one street properly: "1 a Rastro," "2 a Rastro," "3 a Rastro," "P Jesus," "II Jesus," "I Jesus," "Portuca," "Flamencos," "Palacio," "Seminario," "1 a Relox," "2 a Relox," "Santa Cantilino," "3 a Relox," "4 a Relox," "Ptelequizmo," "5 a Relox," "Zapoteros," "7 a Relox," "1 a Puente Blanco," "2 a Puente Blanco," and "Puente Chiciviles."

I could hardly grasp this, so I took up the next street, which I found still worse, so I gave up the idea of learning the streets, relegated the map and started out without much method to see what I could.

It appears that each street has a different name

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for each block of its length. If it happens to have the same name for two or more blocks, then it is designated 1a, 2a, 3a, etc., meaning first, second and third, corresponding to the number of blocks that it happens to pass without changing its original name. This may be convenient to the people who understand it, and who know the city, but it is very confusing to a stranger.

An effort was made by the government a short time ago to change to the ordinary method of giving each street a single name, no matter how many blocks long it happened to be, but the people would not hear to it; they do not like changes, so the present method continued.

While the city is not laid out on exactly straight lines, it is more nearly so than Boston, Mass., or the lower part of New York and several other cities in the United States, and the streets are on the average wider than the streets of lower New York or the older part of St. Louis. The blocks in the best business center are about as large or perhaps a trifle larger on the average than the blocks of an ordinary American city, while a little further out they are about twice as large by the omission of cross streets here and there. In the newer part of the city there are several magnificent, broad, smooth, and well

MAP OF THE CITY

paved streets and boulevards. On the whole the city is fairly well laid out. A great many of the streets are the same as the Aztecs planned them before the Conquest.

There is a new section of the city laid out near the great Paseo de Reforma, mostly occupied by Americans, which is called the American colony. It is a dream in civic beauty, and semi-modern or northern architecture. Many of the houses could almost be called castles and they front on beautiful boulevards and would seem to indicate that the Americans who live here are certainly prosperous and are not spending their time here simply for the betterment of their health. The houses are usually surrounded by stone or brick walls.

Along the paseo there are large tracts of vacant property that would make the most beautiful sites for residences in the city. There are open ditches running through these grounds in which there are always women washing clothing on stones and drying them by spreading them on the grass in the sun, and that is about all this fine property is used for now. I was told that all of this ground was owned by the Bank of London, and that it could not be bought at any price, but was being held for a further increase, so it remains vacant.

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All prices on grounds in the city are named by the square metre, about 39 inches square, not by the front foot as is the usual custom in the United States. The residence property in the locality of the American colony has advanced in fifteen or twenty years about fifteen or twenty fold in price. That is to say, lots that sold at \$1.00 per metre fifteen years ago will sell at \$15.00 per metre now and the limit of price, it seems, has not yet been reached. Building prices are not very high and good ornamental stone work done by stonecutters who do not know how to read or write, is quite common in the construction of houses.

THE MARKETS OF MEXICO.

The markets are the center of the business whirl of every Mexican city, and their size and character are somewhat surprising to a person who has lived the greater part of his life in good sized cities in the central west that never had a market house or, even if they did, have not used them within the present generation.

In this country, aside from the churches, the markets are always the biggest thing in the city. The dealers not only handle vegetables, meat and fish, which anybody might expect to find in a market, but they keep everything else that can be imagined.

MEXICAN MARKETS

They are like a New York or Chicago department store, except, instead of being operated by a big corporation, the business is carried on by several hundred individual owners.

While the markets are kept as clean as it would seem possible, they have with all their conglomeration of goods, the butchering of chickens, cleaning of fish, cooking of liver and garlic, very distinctive odors. In fact, all markets in all countries smell bad enough, but I think they moderate as you go north and intensify as you go south. I would estimate that a good nose could locate a Mexican market at about three miles, while the market in New Orleans would probably fall to two and a half miles, and the distance would shorten at Washington, D. C., to about two miles, and then lowering the record a little as it passes through New York, the Boston market, under old Faneuil hall, the cradle of liberty, would taper down to about a mile and a half smell.

But to return to the Mexican markets where the scent leads us, you can find dry goods, notions, jewelry, onyx goods, hardware, groceries, saddles, trunks and always earthenware and flowers. But why enumerate? You can find everything. Usually

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each dealer handles only one line of goods. Handkerchiefs, if that is the line; sombreros, if that is the line; fish or oranges or pies or cakes. Each one devoting all of his limited energy to his particular class of goods.

Most of the stands are kept by women, and it seems to be the rule that the women who have the most babies are oftenest represented in the markets. The babies are as numerous in the public markets as you would expect to find them in a foundling hospital or at a country fair on baby day. They are all brown, dark eyed and dirty. They are every place and in every possible position and among the thousands of articles you will find them mixed with the onions, potatoes, dry goods, etc., and in all the passage ways and under everybody's feet. With all the people that are always coming and going in the big markets, it is strange that a score or so of babies are not trampled to death every day in these places.

Mexico City has one of the largest if not the very largest, market in the Republic. It is near the National palace. We went there Sunday morning about half past nine o'clock and the rush was fully on at that time, the streets in every direction being crowded with people coming and going.



Photo by Thomas Rees.

SUNDAY MORNING NEAR THE MARKET.

"The markets are the centre of the business whirl in every Mexican city."—Page 254.

MEXICAN MARKETS

Goods are usually delivered without wrappers and departing purchasers with arms full of vegetables and hands full of meat, frequently present an uncouth appearance. A good many people carry baskets to and from the market, but they do not all do so. The exceptions are numerous. I would like to rave over the beauty of the women of Mexico, but I would not choose for the subject of admiration an Indian woman coming home from market Sunday morning with her fingers clutched into a three pound chunk of liver (which can sometimes be seen), or dangling a full size beef heart at the end of the main artery to which it is by nature attached.

There is another market in Mexico different from most any market which I have ever encountered, and yet not so much different from a second-hand tool store in any large city. It is called the thieves' market, and offers a variety of goods. Mexicans are great pilferers and most of the goods offered in the thieves' market are supposed to be stolen. The most numerous articles presented for sale are tools of all kinds, pipe nippers, chisels, planes, monkey wrenches and saws, predominating. The people who purloin these small articles bring them here and sell them to dealers who sometimes sell them back to the same

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people from whom they were stolen. It is easier to buy them back than to find out who stole them.

But while tools are the leading articles for sale, there is everything else, including shawls, sombreros, and shirts, candlesticks, crucifixes and coffin plates. It is a sad looking place on a piece of ground between buildings, reached by an alley. It looks as though every fellow had built his own house and they are usually made of scrap lumber and worn out matting, sheet iron or tin. The stands are kept by a dilapidated looking set of fellows and altogether it is more interesting in reputation and name than in fact. But everybody goes there and you have to follow the crowd, to say that you have seen Mexico. Some people think they can find rare bargains here in stolen articles but they don't often do so, and sometimes get their pockets picked while looking for a bargain in stolen goods.

THE NATIONAL PAWNSHOP.

The National pawnshop is a large structure built upon the location of one of the Montezuma palaces. The pawnshop was founded by a wealthy Spanish miner in 1774, who endowed it with three hundred thousand dollars in cash. It first loaned money on articles of most all kinds without interest, and when

THE NATIONAL PAWNSHOP

the article was redeemed, the owner was supposed to make a gift for charity. It was founded to prevent the regular pawnbroker from taking advantage of the needy. A small percentage is now charged on loans. It is low as compared with ordinary pawnbrokers' rates.

If any article is not redeemed it is placed on sale with a fair selling price attached. If it sells the first month, the difference between the price at which it is sold and the amount at which it is pledged, is paid to the owner. If it is not sold, the price is marked down about ten per cent and it is exposed for sale for another month, and so it is marked down each month until it reaches the amount of the pledge, and then if not redeemed or sold, it is sold at a regular auction sale which is held each month, to dispose of such articles.

I don't think even then everything sells, for I noticed several tomb stones and a "grasshopper" country cylinder newspaper press built in Madison, Wisconsin, that looked as though they had been there a long while with no bidders. There are many articles here that perhaps never will sell.

There are flatirons, candlesticks and other small articles and there are old style fine furniture and long mirrors, whose presence here their tale of ruin

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tells. The American tourist who is always looking for something for nothing always comes here for the goods, and frequently goes away well pleased with nothing for something.

The Fifteenth Letter.

OUR AMBASSADOR.

Just around the corner from the Iturbide hotel in Mexico City, is a rather extensive book store kept by a man named Blake. I had the honor of meeting in his store the new ambassador to Mexico, Mr. Thompson, of Nebraska. He is a man of great dignity and of good appearance, and seems to be an excellent gentleman.

Mr. Thompson, when at home, lives at Lincoln, which is also the home of Hon. W. J. Bryan. On telling him that I was a friend of Mr. Bryan, he intimated in a polite manner that he and Mr. Bryan were of quite opposite views on several very important questions. This I might have imagined. I thought though that he might be glad to know that I was acquainted with some one from his home town, but I do not think now that my reference to America's most illustrious private citizen did much to advance me in the cordial esteem of our ambassador to Mexico.

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DISCOVERED BOB BURDETTE.

Mr. Blake, who keeps this store, has the distinction of being the first man to fully appreciate, at his true worth, R. J. Burdette, the newspaper man, humorist, author, lecturer and preacher.

Way back in the seventies Mr. Blake was running the Hawkeye, a republican newspaper, at Burlington, Ia., while Mr. Clendenin, the present editor of the Illinois State Register, and the writer of these lines were trying to run a democratic paper in Keokuk, the next town below Burlington in the same state. The late Enoch Emery, of Peoria, was publishing the Transcript in Peoria, near Springfield, Illinois.

None of us were doing any too well, but like the man playing the organ, we were all doing the best we knew how. Bob Burdette at that time was a "harum scarum" young reporter on Mr. Emery's paper, and insisted on filling the local columns with more fun than news. Mr. Emery was a man who thought a glint of humor was an invention of the devil and that everything in life, and especially in journalism, should only pertain to or be based on stern facts. He was one of those fellows who had as a text, "Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal," etc. As Bob continued to write humorous articles

DISCOVERED BURDETTE

for the Transcript, Emery called him in one day and told him that he wanted it stopped, that hereafter when he wanted anything funny in the Transcript, he would write it himself. This was a rare piece of humor that Bob appreciated, but Emery did not even see the humor in his own suggestion. Bob was suppressed temporarily, and things ran along smoothly in the Transcript office for a while.

The steamboats used to come from St. Louis up to Peoria those days, but outside of that Peoria was just as dull then as it is now, so one day there was nothing going on except a dog fight, and as that was all Bob had to work upon, he worked it to a finish. Not only as to the dog fight, but also to his own finish, as well.

There was three columns of it, about five per cent of it fact, five per cent actual dog fight, and ninety per cent of it made up from Burdette's humorous imagination. It was a great article on dog fighting, a great article as far as humor went, but it didn't suit Emery at all.

When he arose in the morning and got his paper, and discovered the article, he was horrified; the marrow was congealed in his bones and the words froze in his throat, but his brain was on fire.

He hurried to the office to get the offender's

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scalp and discharged Burdette peremptorily, then and there, so Bob was out of a job.

Mr. Blake, as soon as he heard that Burdette was at liberty, took the first train for Peoria, hired Burdette, took him back to Burlington with him, and put him to work on the Hawkeye, giving him full swing, and in less than a year the Burlington Hawkeye was the most quoted and best known paper in the United States.

Burdette grew with the paper. After awhile he wrote a lecture called the "Rise and Fall of the Mustache," and came down to Keokuk to try it on us. He wanted to try it on somebody that was easy at first, so he came to Keokuk. We all went on complimentary tickets to help him out. Then we laughed at the right places, shed tears at the pathetic places, and applauded vigorously at the close. Burdette concluded it was a success and forthwith became a lecturer, made all kinds of money and is now a preacher in a fine big church in Los Angeles, California. He went to Los Angeles because they wanted preaching there and wanted it bad.

The Hawkeye prospered. The Transcript, none too prosperous before, started down hill. Emery finally had to give it up and he died a poor man. Blake, by hard work and too much confinement in a

AUTOMOBILE RIDE

newspaper office, appeared to be heading toward a consumptive's grave, so he gave up the newspaper business, went to rough it in Colorado, helped to survey the Denver & Rio Grande railroad, went into the mining business, drifted down into Mexico, and is now a man of perhaps sixty years of age, and looks hale and hearty, and is deserving of a vote of thanks for having introduced to the world one of America's most charming characters, our old friend, Bob Burdette.

AN AUTOMOBILE RIDE.

Mexico is up in most everything. In fact, a stranger would be surprised to see how our southern neighbors have taken to modern inventions. There are automobiles to take you about the city, there are agencies for the horseless carriages, where very fine displays are kept on exhibition. There are sewing machine agencies, there are stores full of typewriters, other stores full of big stocks of bicycles, phonographs, plumbing goods, telephones, cash registers, road rollers, stone crushers, and nearly, if not all, the things you will find in any great American city. All American manufacturers of such things are pushing their goods vigorously in Mexico, and many are getting substantial returns.

As the automobile is ready, we take it for a ride

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and there is no better way to see the city. The man who runs it knows all the interesting places and explains the history connected with a good many of them. On the ride you are impressed with the fact that the Mexicans have been so much kinder to the Indians than we have that we must commend them on that account.

They not only have allowed them to live, but they have honored them in many ways. Their two greatest statesmen elected to the office of president have both been Indians. There are several statues erected to Indians in Mexico City, the one of Cuauhtemoc on the Paseo Reforma, being one of the greatest in the republic. Cuauhtemoc was the last of the Aztec emperors.

Did you ever see the statue of an Indian in any city in America? I think not, unless it was a wooden one being overworked in front of a cigar store.

You pass in your ride the house where lived Marshal Bazaine, the French general who commanded the French troops, who partly sustained Maximilian. You swing by the Alameda, a beautiful park. You come by an old church on the corner where a tablet says, this chapel was erected to commemorate the death of many Spaniards who were killed by the Aztecs at the time of the Conquest. It is encouraging to

HACKS AND STREET CARS

find one place where Aztecs had the best of it. You go by an old, but modern looking house, completely covered by colored tiles on the outside. You pass the great new postoffice that is a magnificent example of stone work done by the most ignorant of stone-cutters. You go by the National School of Mineralogy, said to be the greatest school devoted to the study of minerals in the world. You pass the leaning tower, which is a relic of an earthquake that happened many years ago. You are shown many interesting objects and places, but we cannot enumerate them all, nor will we try to. Taken all through, a ride in an automobile through the streets of the old capital that have resounded to the tread of historic armies, is an interesting experience and one which I shall long remember.

HACKS AND STREET CARS.

The hack service of Mexico is remarkably good and wonderfully cheap. Hacks are divided into three classes, although there are not many of the third class now. The first-class have a blue stripe across the door and blue bands around the hubs. The second-class have red stripes, and the third-class have yellow. The rates are about one-half what they are in the United States, for the first class, and are

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still below that for the second and third classes. Each hackman has a small metal flag attached to the end of his seat that shows by its color the class to which he belongs. This is turned down when he is engaged and is thrown up when he is open for an engagement. This is a good idea.

A peculiar custom prevails on the street cars. It is said that the company used all kinds of devices to stop the purloining of fares by the conductors of the cars, but couldn't succeed, until they organized a lottery which is operated in connection with the street car system. Now, whenever a passenger pays fare on the car the conductor gives him a lottery ticket, then as the car has moved forward a few blocks, another man, called an inspector, hops onto the car and punches the lottery ticket to be sure that you have it. Then every month there is a drawing and enough people are given prizes to keep up interest in the tickets. The custom is said to have increased the revenue of the street car company thirty-three per cent. Everybody wants a lottery ticket and as the conductor must answer for every ticket he has disposed of, the company is pretty sure of all returns.

When I left Mexico I had my pockets lined with lottery tickets, but I have never heard whether or

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not I have drawn the capital prize. I am somewhat opposed to lotteries, and when I got the first ticket I gave it to a native, and as a consequence when the inspector came on, who was an actor in the farce that I had not counted upon, I came very near being thrown off the car because I didn't have a ticket.

LA VIGA CANAL.

A trip in the La Viga canal to the so-called floating gardens is an experience that can not well be missed, if you have a desire to see the interesting side of Mexico, and in making it you follow in the path of so many illustrious predecessors, that you may excuse yourself for indulging in what might otherwise be considered a foolish excursion.

Statesmen, warriors, eminent writers, artists and poets have all traveled this route and each and all have added their estimate to the wonders of the trip, so why not join the list and dote upon the grand old canal as they have done before you.

The La Viga canal commences at the City of Mexico and runs to Lake Xochimilco, sixteen miles south of the city. The water runs from Xochimilco down the canal to the City of Mexico, that lake being higher than the city, then the water continues on in another canal and empties into the great tunnel through the mountain that was constructed to drain

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the city. This canal was constructed in a measure, and used by the Aztecs, even before the Conquest.

On the route between the city and Lake Xochimilco are the so-called floating gardens, the most productive gardens on the face of the globe. The canal is utilized to bring in this garden truck, also chickens, goats, sheep, etc., in sufficient quantities to supply this city of over a third of a million of people, also for conveying general merchandise, wood, charcoal, etc., and for ferrying people to and fro, and for pleasure boating.

It is also used as a universal laundry, and for the washing of vegetables, for bathing, for drinking and for other uses and purposes nameable and unnameable. It is about the busiest streak of water in the universe, and as the sides are of common soil and the bottom of mud, it is about as foul a looking stream as one would be likely to find in a long day's travel.

The gondolas that float upon the water of this canal are of an entirely different type than those which appear in Venetian pictures. In fact, these are what are ordinarily known in our country by the unpoetical name of "flat boats." They are propelled by one or more men, according to the size of the boat, who stand up in the craft, and with a round pole

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about ten or twelve feet long shove vigorously on the bottom of the canal. There are over a thousand of these gondolas, and they vary in size from less than two feet wide by ten or twelve feet long, to as wide as ten feet and as long as forty feet. The average size, however, is about five by fifteen feet. Such a boat will carry about a dozen people.

A party of about a dozen of us engaged such a boat at the city end of the canal one Saturday afternoon. The villain who controlled it was, like his many competitors, so completely saturated with pulque, the national drink, that he hardly knew in what direction the canal lay. Owing to the heavy load we insisted that he should have another man to help him in order to make average time. So punching his pole into the mud in the bottom of the canal as an anchor, he put into my hands the job of holding onto the pole while he went to look for help.

This gave me an excellent opportunity to study the beauty of the start. On both sides of the ditch were heaps of dried and decaying vegetable trimmings and cast off debris from the landing and cleaning out of many boats. These monuments were backed by huge piles of stove wood that had been unloaded by boats and was being hauled away in carts. Back of these across the street were a row of

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drinking places and a crowd of fellows trying to get up a fight. A few feet from the boat were several women washing clothes on the stones and drying them on the uninviting shores. Next to them was another woman washing her feet in the canal and a little further on was a woman washing her face in the water which was absolutely vile, and still another woman washing and trimming up vegetables for the market. We were surrounded by cabbage leaves and other loose material floating in the water and the smells of all the surroundings were well mixed together.

Our boat was ornamented with a canopy top covered with red, white and blue muslin, and to the extent of our canopy top we were more aristocratic than most of the people around us.

Carriages and street cars were emptying new victims of the trip in rapid succession, boatmen were clamoring for passengers and the competition in offers for passage fluctuated more rapidly than prices of grain or stocks on the floor of a board of trade when a panic is on. The price on a particular boat would scale from three dollars down to fifty cents and up again in three minutes.

Finally our gondolier returned with a very lame man with one very short leg, but this proved no

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serious disadvantage, as he could stand with the long leg in the bottom of the boat and balance himself nicely on the edge of the boat with the shorter leg. So we drew up the anchor and were off for the voyage.

It was a feast day, which is altogether the best occasion to choose for this trip. The canal was full of boats and all the boats were filled with merry excursionists, men, women and children. Some were dressed in very bright colors. Some carried huge bouquets, some carried and played mandolins, banjos and guitars, some had an orchestra of several instruments and many sang songs and choruses as they proceeded and all the natives who came near us evidently made us the subjects of their songs and jests.

The canal was speckled with boats, almost as completely as a busy street in a large city is crowded with teams and trucks, and it seemed a good many times as though we should meet with collisions, as all the gondoliers seemed to be pretty well intoxicated, but this business has been going on in this canal for about five hundred years and these drunken sailors have become quite expert in the use of a punting pole. As I understand it, they

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propel boats the same here as they do in the upper end of the river Thames in England.

The street car lines and the roadways along each side of the canal were nearly as crowded as the canal. Mounted squads of police and police on foot scattered all along the way preserved good order, and the occasion seemed a happy one for everybody.

We passed under several railway and street car bridges, and then we came to a double arch stone bridge very low. Each arch was about ten feet wide and but little over two feet above the water in the highest place, and the bridge being wide, gave considerable length to the tunnels under it. We were all directed by the sign language to lie down in the bottom of the boat. The strings that held our canopy were loosened, the frame, made of 2x4 scantling, fell, striking one of our party a blow on the head that sounded like the breaking of a coconut. Then our gondolier turned over on his back in the bow of the craft and by walking with his bare feet on the underside of the arch, like a fly walking on the ceiling, pulled the boat through one of the tunnels.

On the return trip there was such a congestion of traffic in the tunnels, one passage of which had

LA VIGA CANAL

got stopped up, that there was a scramble equal to a rush at a bargain counter. So our ladies concluded to take the overland route and walk around the bridge on dry land and take the boat after it had emerged.

We had added another gondolier by this time and in the little riot under the bridge our fellows, who were well filled with pulque and recklessness, held their own and got through in fairly good shape.

On the up trip we went several miles until we came to a dilapidated little town mostly of mud houses, where they sold wienerwursts, tortillas, steaks of horse meat, and drinks, and where the feast was being celebrated. The town was decorated for the occasion and swings and other apparatus for sport had been erected.

I was much struck with one contrivance, and challenged each and every one of our party to try it with me, but they all declined. The contrivance consisted of the rough trunk of a straight tree set in the ground about as tall as a fair sized telegraph pole; resting on top of this was a double cross made of two good pieces of scantling about six feet long with a bolt in the center for a pivot on which they turned, like a windmill lying on its side. From each of the four ends of the cross hung a rope, com-

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ing within about thirty inches of the ground, with a loop on the end. Four men would each buy a ticket for the ride, then each of them would put the left leg through one of the loops and at the word would start on a rapid run around the main shaft, ever and anon taking a leap which would swing them high out over the canal bank. As the momentum was furnished by all four of the runners, no one man could control his own actions or his own speed, neither could one stop until all were worn out.

It seemed to me in the way of sport, a good deal like earning your fare on a canal boat by driving the mule on the tow path. But the four men dang-ends of webs made about as much sport for the spectators as it did for riders or performers, and I didn't know but that they should have been paid for what they did to amuse the crowd instead of being charged for their share of the entertainment.

THE FLOATING GARDENS.

It is said that in days long gone when there was more water in this valley than now, many of the gardens were actually floating, being thatched together with roots and fibres, but of late years they are a series of irrigated gardens divided by small

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canals and have the appearance of floating in the surrounding water. They are magnificently productive gardens, blooming and growing every day in the year.

They are laid out in sections about twenty feet wide and one hundred feet long, as regular as the blocks of a city, the strips of water taking the place of streets. Everything is raised in these gardens and the flowers produced are abundant and beautiful. There are acres and acres of these gardens, for it takes lots of acreage to supply a place the size of the City of Mexico.

It seems to be the custom to gather these flowers and vegetables and wash and dress them as they float down the canal. The lettuce, the glowing red radishes, the strawberries, and the flowers look very nice as they arrive at the end of the journey, but after you have seen these things washed in this canal you swear off on eating any more uncooked garden truck while staying in Mexico.

We took small boats and passed among these gardens and secured some nice flowers on the way. We returned to the city over the same route and there were more boats, more rush, and more music than on the trip out. We enjoyed at least the novelty of the ride and when we get home and

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people say to us, "You ought to see the grand canal of Venice," we can say to them in return, "You do not know anything about canals. You have never seen the grand canal of Mexico."

The Sixteenth Letter.

BULL FIGHTING IN MEXICO.

It is hardly possible to write up Mexico without a chapter on bull fighting. There was such an exhibition in the city at the time we were there, but we did not care to see it. There is no good reason why anybody should want to see such an exhibition, still many good people go to see bull fights while visiting here. But a kind hearted person is not liable to want to see more than one tournament.

Bull fighting was carried on in Greece many centuries ago, and also in Rome, but was afterwards forbidden by the popes and emperors. Charles IV of Spain, whose colossal statue stands in the City of Mexico, prohibited the practice in Spain in his day, but it afterwards was restored by his successor. Spain and Mexico, and maybe a few countries in South America, are the only places where it is practiced now. It has been forbidden in Cuba since the American occupation, and is only carried on in a few places in Mexico at this time.

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The so-called sport in our sister republic is copied from that of Spain. In fact, in every place in the world where bull fighting takes place, it is patterned after the contests that take place in the ring at Madrid, and most of those who are the active principals in the ring are native Spaniards, and recently from Spain and educated in the home country.

A few years ago one of the State Press Associations visited Mexico City and as a compliment to such distinguished visitors an extraordinary exhibition was given. I here present a letter written at that time, which is just as new now as then, as there has been no material change in the manner of bull fighting in many years.

It is a brutal exhibition of animal torture and the greatest wonder is that it has been continued and tolerated so long. Here is a faithful account of one exhibition; the reader may draw conclusions:

The fighters are divided into classes or degrees—the Matador or Espada being at the top of the heap; he might be called the “thirty-second degree” bull fighter.

The Matador is the artist who plunges a sword into the bull through his heart, giving him his death blow.

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The Banderilleros are those who strike Banderillas into the shoulders of the beast. The Banderillero is the next grade lower actor than the Matador.

The next fighter is the Picador. He rides on horseback, with a long pole to guard himself from the attacks of the bull. He is the next grade lower than the Banderilleros.

The next fellows are the Capedores. These are the men who flaunt the red cloaks in the face of the bull in order to divert him from the fighters.

The next are the Cacheteros. These are the butchers who, with short dirk knives, finish the bull after he is down.

In addition to these are a large number of helpers and other low-bred supernumeraries who help the horses on their feet when they fall, pull out the Picadors when they get rolled under the horses and make themselves generally useful to the fighters and obnoxious to the refinement of civilization.

In addition to these there are other men who drag out, with the assistance of horses and mules, the dead bulls and the horses that have been killed in the affray.

The bull ring is about seventy-five feet in

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diameter, the ground in the center being perfectly level. Around the ring is a tight board fence about five feet high. About eighteen inches from the ground is a small step, probably four inches wide, on which the fighters place their feet and leap over the fence when too hotly pursued by the bull.

Between this fence and the front row of seats is an open space about five feet wide for the use of the fighters and helpers between times. The whole arena is surrounded by an amphitheatre, a complete circle of seats in tiers, with a capacity of thousands. The front row of seats, fronting on the open space, is about eight feet from the ground and beyond the reach of the bull. The amphitheatre is open to the sky, and above the top row of seats are private boxes for the benefit of those who wish to pay the highest prices and have the poorest place to see the fight. The shady side of the amphitheatre, of course, embraces the choicest seats. The sunny side is fenced off by a barb wire fence and seats on that side sell cheaper than on the shady side.

At each tournament, which commences promptly every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock, there are usually six bulls slaughtered, as many horses as is necessary, and occasionally one or more men. On

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the Sunday that we were in Mexico in one ring in the city there were six bulls and fourteen horses slaughtered.

At Durango, a few miles distant, there was the same number of bulls, a large number of horses and the lives of four men or human brutes were sacrificed to enliven the occasion. I think that the fascination in the sport of the contest must be in wishing that the bull would catch some of the fighters, as the audience in the matter of demonstration appears to be on the side of the bull, who scarcely has a fair show considering the fact that he has to fight a dozen at once, and whenever they are too hard pressed the fighters can get over the ring and out, and the bull cannot.

If I were to make the rules for bull fighting, I would change them so that when the fighter was out of the ring he would be counted vanquished and not allowed to return, and if the bull cleared the ring, I would let the bull go free. But the rules are not made that way.

At 3 o'clock at the sound of the bugle the Matadors, Picadors, Cacheteros, helpers, etc., in bright and dazzling uniforms, enter the ring and it makes a very brilliant sight, as there are several of each grade of fighters. In the meantime, a brass band

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(which is none of the best) is making the air wild with discordant melody.

The president of the occasion, who sits in a box high up amidst a display of red drapery, throws to the chief matador the key of the bull pen, and the show is then ready to commence.

The contest with each bull, of which there are six, as already mentioned, progresses by regular stages or acts, all in the same succession with each bull, and each one brutal enough to satisfy the taste of the most sanguine devotee of brutality and lover of blood.

The bull is loosened from the stall where he has been kept in darkness, and, I presume, tortured until he is practically wild when he dashes into the ring. As he does so a man standing at the door of the ring has a rosette of fancy colored ribbons with a barbed spike in the center. As the bull passes through the door he drives the spike at least two inches into the bull's shoulder. The color of the ribbons designates the breeding of the bull, the owner of the herd, etc., the bulls being especially bred for the ring. The spike to which this ribbon is attached has been dipped in sulphuric acid or some liquid that is exceedingly hot and very painful to the bull, and by the time he

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rushes to the center of the ring he is wild with pain and ready to attack anything or anybody.

The capedores surround him with their cloaks, which are red on the outside and lined with different colors, which they flaunt in the face of the bull. The bull charges first one and then the other, and ordinarily it does not take him more than thirty seconds to entirely clear out the ring, as those chaps go over the board fence with an agility that would beat a deer hound.

After a few minutes have been spent in this kind of work the picadors on horseback ride into the circle. These are dressed in yellow suits, with broad-brimmed hats fastened with straps under their jaws, and it is very necessary that the hats be fastened on, because if the hat was not fastened on the head, by the time the bull gets through with one of his mad charges, it would be very difficult to find it in the mix-up.

The horse that the picador rides is usually a poor, old, worn-out creature, that has served an unappreciative master all too well, and that lacks both life and action, and is one of the many bought for the occasion. The picador is armed with a pole about eight feet long, an inch and a quarter in diameter, made of a strong wood, with a sharp spike ex-

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tending about one inch beyond the end, with a little tuft of ribbon about it to relieve its look of brutality.

As the bull sees the horse it makes a rush at him, for it is one of the misfortunes of the bull that he lacks intelligence and invariably fights the horse or the capedore's cloak instead of fighting the man on the horse or the man who is holding the cloak. It is the picador's place to meet the bull with his steel-pointed pike, but he is not usually successful in this, and the consequence is the horse is unmercifully gored and the picador, horse and all go down in disastrous defeat. The horse is blindfolded so he cannot see the bull as it makes its mad charge. The picador's trousers are lined with thick sheet iron, which protects the limbs when the horse falls on them, which is almost always the case, and he has to be helped up from under his horse while the capedores divert the attention of the bull.

I should think the picadors have rather a precarious existence, and yet it appears that they are not injured as often as they ought to be. Almost at every onslaught the horse, rider and all are thrown in a heap, and invariably the picador has to be released by his fellows before he can rise from under his horse.

But the horse suffers the onslaught of the at-

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tack. After the bull has attacked the first picador, and his attention has been diverted by the cloak bearers or capedores, it then gives its attention to the next horse and rider, and the same result is the consequence. From two to four horses are killed in this first act, which continues until the bugle sounds the call for the next change of scene. While all the so-called sport is bad enough, the killing of the horses is the most brutal part of the work, and a full description of this part of a bull fight could scarcely be given in language that would be acceptable reading.

The horse being blindfolded has no intimation of the attack until the horns of the bull are driven ten or twelve inches into his body, and is totally unprepared to meet or escape from the attack. Sometimes the bull strikes the horse full in the breast with his sharp horns, throwing him high in the air and penetrating his heart. In one instance as the bull withdrew his horns the blood spurted from the heart of the horse in a stream at least an inch in diameter and the horse fell dead within ten seconds from the time it was struck.

In several instances the horse turned as the bull made his charge and was struck by the horns of the maddened animal in the stomach and badly mutilated, and in one instance, which was not much worse

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than several of the others, as the horse retreated its entrails fell from its stomach and the staggering horse trampled on them with his hind feet as he tried to run. In another instance as the bull drew back for a second onslaught the entrails became entangled about his horns.

When the rents in the stomachs of the horses were not so bad they were taken back into the stables and the holes filled with sawdust, the wounds sewed up and the horses were brought into the ring in the next fight. There were other acts in this part of the drama even worse than I have mentioned, but I cannot describe them.

The bugle sounds, and the next act in the drama comes. This is the placing of the banderillas in the shoulder of the now frantic brute.

While the fighters always strike the bull in the shoulders or the back, there can be one thing said in their favor, that is, they never sneak up on the bull from behind to do the work, but must meet him face to face in the arena and take the consequences, be they what they may.

The banderillas are sticks about one inch in diameter, eighteen inches long, and trimmed very profusely with ribbons or finely cut tissue paper to correspond with the color of the suit of the fighter

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who handles them. In the end of the stick is a prod, from two to three inches long, with a barb on the same like a large size fishing hook, so that when the banderilla is probed into the shoulders of the bull the barb will prevent it from being shaken out. These barbs have been dipped into acid to cause pain. The actors who do this part of the fighting are dressed in the well known style of bull fighters which is always displayed in pictures — that is, high colored knickerbocker pants, light colored stockings, low cut shoes, bolero jacket and a peculiar shaped regulation hat.

The banderillero steps into the center of the ring with two of his instruments of torture, one in each hand. He advances toward the bull and attracts his attention by the waving of these gaudy colored instruments before his face. The bull makes a mad charge at him. As he does so the fighter adroitly steps to one side, and as the bull passes him with his head down, the fighter with great force strikes these two prods into his shoulders, leaving them there. If he is skillful they both stick; if he is not skillful he will sometimes miss one; if he misses both he will likely be hissed from the ring.

This act is repeated by four different men. In the meantime the bull is charging backward and for-

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ward across the ring and bellowing so that he can be heard even beyond the walls of the structure. If the work is skillfully done the bull will be burdened with eight of these sticks, each one two or three inches into his flesh, the weight of it having brought it from the upright position where it was stuck to a hanging position, the barbs tearing his flesh and the points corrugating his shoulder blades at every step that he takes. Thus finishes the second act.

The third act calls into action the skillful work of the matador. He advances to the center of the ring; he has a small red cloak and a sword. The blade is about thirty inches long, three-fourths of an inch wide, slightly curved, coming to a sharp point at the end. He is the most skillful of all and is the top-notch fighter of the gang. He has very little regard for his own life, is unknown to fear, and is not troubled with the pangs of delicacy of feeling that bother most people when they are going to do anything mean.

With his small red cloak, which he holds in his left hand, supported by the sword in his right hand, he attracts the attention of the bull, which charges at him repeatedly. It is wonderful how skillfully and how gracefully he can side-step a foot or so to one side or the other and let the bull pass by. The spec-

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tator thinks time and time again that he has missed his calculation this time and that the bull has got him, but the matador comes up smiling and bows gracefully to the applause of the audience.

After he has played with the bull to his own satisfaction, to the great delight of the thousands of the howling mob around the amphitheatre, he puts on a more serious look, and again approaches the bull, which finally makes a rush at him, and if the matador is skillful, it is the last rush that the bull ever makes. As the bull passes him in its maddening onslaught he raises the sword in his hand and strikes the bull between the shoulders a tremendous thrust. The tip of the sword cuts through the body, passes through the heart and comes out of the body of the animal just back of the left foreleg, and in a few seconds, or within a few minutes, the bull falls to the ground practically dead.

But for fear he may again come into action, the cachetero, as he is called, takes a small dirk knife and strikes it into the fallen animal at the vital point just back of the horns on the head, which causes instantaneous death or removes all chance of the bull recovering from any false thrust that may have been made if the bull be alive.

If the work of the matador was always well and

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skillfully done it would not be so brutal; the matador cannot always be certain, under the exciting circumstances, exactly where he aims and some very shocking work is done in this last act. It frequently occurs that the matador strikes in the wrong place, and the sword stops on the shoulder blade or other bones in the animal's body, or perhaps runs between the ribs or is bent in making the final blow, and may only penetrate to the extent of eight, ten or twelve inches into the animal's back; in that case the yell of disapproval of the audience is heartrending to the matador.

He is then obliged to recover the sword unless the animal shakes the same out in his mad gyrations, and he must try the same act over again. In one instance in the fight to which I refer, the sword lacked some eight or ten inches of being driven in to the hilt, and as the bull backed against the railing, suffering from the pain, a man took a shawl which he twisted up to use as a club, and struck the sword on the handle, driving it in to the hilt.

In several instances the fatal plunge was a failure, and the bull charged about the ring with the sword sticking ten or twelve inches above its shoulder and penetrating nearly twice that far into its lungs or into its side. In another instance the bull

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was so worn out with his long continued torture that he lost all interest in the contest and refused to charge the matador.

In order to provoke him into anger the matador stepped up in front of him and bringing down the sharp point of his sword, split the nose of the bull to the bone in three places, the blood running therefrom was licked up by the poor brute until it enraged him so that he made a slight attempt to charge on the matador, when he was slaughtered as above described. This ends the last act in the so-called fighting and the bugle again sounds.

The doors of the ring open, three white mules, gaily caparisoned with flags and ribbons, are driven hastily into the ring. A chain is thrown around the bull's hind feet and he is dragged dead from the ring to a sort of butcher shop in the rear, where he is regularly dressed as he would be at an ordinary slaughter house, and is sold for beef.

In the meantime, probably two or three horses are lying dead or are struggling in their last agony in the ring. Men on ponies, wearing the regular Mexican sombreros, gallop hastily into the ring, throw their lassos down, which are attached to the horses' hind feet, and gallop with first one dead

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or dying horse and then another from the ring, until the ring is cleared.

The bugle again sounds. Another bull is sent into the ring and this brutal performance is repeated six times within two hours, with no change in the order of progression, the only variation being in the minor differences in the degrees of brutality.

At the end of this particular tournament, the carcasses of six bulls hung side by side in the meat house in the rear of the amphitheatre, and the carcasses of fourteen horses lay upon the ground, ready to be carried away, and hundreds of buzzards were circling around awaiting a great feast.

There is much pro and con in reference to bull fighting in Mexico. It has been prohibited by law time and again, and then the laws repealed. The best class of Mexicans do not favor bull fighting, all reports to the contrary notwithstanding. In fact, in the audience I am sure that the best class of Mexicans were not fully represented, and President Diaz is strongly opposed to the practice. The Mexicans claim that it is less brutal than American prize fighting or even foot ball playing. I can hardly agree with them, although prize fighting is bad enough, and foot ball is almost as bad as prize fighting.

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The Mexicans say it would cease to exist and would not be profitable in Mexico if it was not for the attendance of the American tourists. On this particular Sunday a large number of Americans were present, owing to the excursion being in the city. Most of the Americans remained only until one or two bulls were slaughtered. Many of the American women attended the exhibition, but they were glad to retire soon after the start and long before the finish. Some of them went to the hotel and one or two of them were sick with nervous prostration from what they had seen even in part of the exhibition, and an artist who went to take pictures fainted during the first of the fight, and left the ring.

Think of the people of Spain celebrating as they did recently the marriage of their young king and queen by a royal bull fight. Such a celebration, such a government, such a people should have and will have heaped upon them, the contempt of man, the curse of God, and are sure to suffer the withering blight of sinful rottenness.

The Seventeenth Letter.

FLOWERS.

In Mexico there are flowers, flowers everywhere. In the gardens, on the house tops, in the markets, on the streets and every place you go there is some one to sell or perhaps give you flowers.

It seems that every flower that grows can be found in Mexico, only they are larger and much more gorgeous in coloring than we ever see them in our country, and the prices are much lower. Imagine buying a dozen roses, of a variety similar to the American Beauty, for twelve cents "Mex," six cents in United States money; a bouquet of most exquisite pansies or violets as large as one can hold for ten cents American money. A peep into some of the patios of the private residences is like a glimpse of the Garden of Eden, with the fountain, the birds, trees and flowers of many varieties.

Among the flowers can usually be found the most beautiful flowering vine that I have ever seen. I

FLOWERS OF MEXICO

have forgotten its name, but it is usually trained over a tree, sometimes as high as fifty feet, and so numerous and gorgeous are its magenta blossoms that the tree itself looks like one big bloom, and it is only by close inspection that you see the nature of its growth.

The Mexicans arrange their flowers in bouquets and sets or pieces of the most marvelous floral architecture. At many of the stations on the railway are sold bouquets of jessamines arranged in large pyramids. Each flower is put on a twig, the twigs bound together around a nice smooth stick, which serves as a handle, some are arranged on palm or banana leaves like a fan with the same style of stick for a handle.

A very neat arrangement that is offered for sale at the stations is the stock of a banana tree or something of that nature. It is cut about a foot long, and the pulp center is hollowed out; then it is filled with jessamines. The ends are closed and wrapped with fibre and a handle is made of the same material, and there is a little trap door in the side with fibre hinges giving an opportunity to take the blossoms out one at a time. The moist, dark interior preserves the flowers a long time and when carried the tube looks about like a roll of music, in the usual covers.

But the funeral pieces which are found in the

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flower markets are truly remarkable. There is every kind of figure, but the most common is the wreath; but its size! Think of wreaths four or five feet in diameter. They are not made on wire frames, but have a solid foundation, stuffed with straw, held in shape by coarse netting, into which are thrust the smaller flowers, then on one side is tied with bright colored ribbons an immense bunch of some large flowers, such as calla lilies or something of that nature. Such pieces certainly denote extreme devotion.

Throughout the country a great many beautiful flowers grow wild, calla lilies, most gorgeous poppies and flowers of every size and hue, until one might think the whole country one great flower garden; or that the country was in preparation for a great national flower show.

MUSIC OF MEXICO.

In connection with flowers we think of music, and the Mexicans are just as fond of music as of flowers. Where there is one there is the other, which is to say music and flowers are everywhere in Mexico. Every city, no matter how small, has at least one plaza which has a band stand and there on certain nights the band plays and all gather to listen.

In the larger cities are many plazas and one can

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nearly always find in some one of them a concert going on. The Mexicans seem to be natural musicians, for almost every little hut contains some musical instrument, usually a guitar, and in the evening the young man takes his guitar and goes out on the street, playing and singing softly to himself. We presume that he does not always thus sing for his own amusement, but perhaps later finds his way to the window of some fair *senorita*, where he can tell his love in song. It is said there are many truly phenomenal voices among the lower classes, that without knowing the first principles of music, they will sing in perfect harmony selections from difficult operas.

Most of the music is of the Spanish style, *Carmen* being one of their favorite operas. Much of their music is of a sad, melancholy nature; even the dances are slow and dreamy. *La Golondrina* is the Mexican "Home, Sweet Home," but the prime favorite is "La Paloma," which is played at almost every concert. I shall never forget one night in the hotel at Cuernavaca the orchestra played *La Paloma*, singing certain parts. The effect was most beautiful. Everyone stopped talking and there was perfect silence, and when the last strain died away, they were encored again and again.

LA PALOMA

A musical score for the piece "LA PALOMA". The score is written on ten staves of music, all in treble clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several triplets and groups of notes marked with a '3' above them. The first staff begins with a 3-measure rest followed by a 5-measure rest. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a final chord.

MUSIC OF MEXICO

THE DOVE.

I.

Let her be watching there at the window,
For me as my Dove.
Treat her with tender caresses,
As my very self.
Tell her gently my love for her,
Dear as my life to me.
Ah, dearest one, if ah it must be,
Give me thy truest love.
Ah, if thou wouldst come with me,
Where'er I may rove!
Ah, dearest one, if ah it must be,
Yet give me thy love.
Yes, if thou wouldst come with me, dear,
Where'er I may rove!

II.

In the day that we are married,
May God prosper our way!
In the week coming after, may it
Make us to rejoice!
From the church joined together,
Exulting we stray.
We shall rest, yes, fondly forever,
Fulfilling our choice!
Refrain—Let her be watching, etc.

III.

As swift time shall elude us,
May God prosper our life,
From the day we are wedded
There ceaseth all strife!
Still with fervor in pleasures
We shall peacefully dwell,
As fair maids with their treasures,
Esteeming them well!
Refrain—Let her be watching, etc.

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La Paloma is charming; it is one of the songs that will never die. Presented herewith is the air from a score that fell into my hands; the music was copied by Mrs. Rees, and by the process of etching it, is presented to the reader, who will certainly agree that it is a very pleasing melody. The words were translated from the Spanish by my friend, the Rev. J. E. Rogers, of Springfield, who performed the difficult task of preserving both the beauty and poetry of the words in the translation.

Speaking of music in this country, I am reminded of the reception of the Georgia Press Association here several years ago. The Georgia editors, on one of their junkets, visited Mexico, and were greeted by the magnificent National Band, who played for their edification that soul stirring piece, "Marching Through Georgia." The musicians were much disappointed at not receiving a particle of applause. A short time thereafter the same band played "Dixie" and received such an encore that they asked an explanation. The president of the association told them that "Marching Through Georgia" was all right for music, but it was rather a painful subject to Georgia people, as it was a war song, and it was the "other fellows" who did the marching and who also wrote the song.

SHOPPING IN MEXICO

STORES AND DRESS IN MEXICO.

It seems there are several distinct shopping districts in Mexico City; first those stores located near the Iturbide hotel on San Francisco and neighboring cross streets, which are patronized almost entirely by tourists.

These are curio stores and deal in Mexican drawn and leather work, baskets, serapes, opals, turquoise, spoons, postal cards, and souvenirs of every kind. Some of these shops keep antique jewelry, but this class of goods has been pretty well picked up and the assortment left is small, and doubtless gathered from all parts of the earth.

But one can get the most beautiful antique furniture, also old church furniture, ornamented with the most exquisite carving, which could be easily converted into charming fireplaces, sideboards, etc. One piece which we admired and which would make a most magnificent mantel, the salesman informed us would not be sold for a cent less than ten thousand dollars.

Maximilian souvenirs are always in demand and a few are still on sale. We were offered a neat china cup and saucer with the emperor's monogram, and were assured that it was genuine, for thirty-five dollars.

MEXICO THE WONDERFUL

These curio dealers seem to be the only merchants who deal in drawn work in Mexico City. From the prices asked, any one might know that they had a monopoly of the trade.

Near the Plaza Mayor are situated the most pretentious jewelry and dry goods stores. "The Esmeralda," a most beautiful jewelry establishment, and often called the Tiffany store of Mexico City, contains most gorgeous jewels, silver and art works of every description. A friend of ours saw there a nice pearl necklace that he thought of taking home with him. But he changed his mind when he found the price was twenty-five thousand dollars.

By the way, every shop, no matter what it may deal in, whether dry goods, jewelry, bakery goods or liquors, has a fanciful name placed over the door. The dry goods stores of the better class display some of the most gorgeous materials, exquisite Parisian costumes, the latest Parisian novelties, in fact almost everything is from France, in most excellent styles and of the best material.

Sunday afternoon while on the Chapultepec drive, one has a very good opportunity to study the dress of the Mexicans. They certainly make a beautiful picture as they ride in their luxurious car-



Photo by Thomas Rees.

THIRD CLASS FUNERAL.

"The third class are open platform cars, the coffin resting in the centre and usually without mourners."—Page 314.

SHOPPING IN MEXICO

riages, clothed in silks and laces of the finest quality and of most dainty colorings.

Lastly, there are the shops for the poor people scattered all over the city. They deal in everything that is of use to the people of the lower classes. The women of the lower class are very poorly dressed and every female, whether five or fifty years of age, is dressed almost exactly like every other female of her class, each one wearing a long scant skirt, generally of wool, reaching to the feet, overtopped by a sort of cotton dressing-sack, sometimes tucked under the band, but often left loose.

All wear either blue or black cotton rebosas, a sort of scarf shawl, draped over the head or wrapped around the shoulders, and it seems that almost every woman and girl of any size has a baby tightly wrapped in her reboosa, usually in the middle of the back. The majority of the women go barefooted, even sandals are seldom worn, but the men usually wear sandals and many possess shoes.

The Eighteenth Letter.

REVELLING IN DEATH.

"We meet 'neath the sounding rafter
And the walls around are bare,
As they shout back our peals of laughter,
It seems that the dead are there;
Then stand to your glasses steady;
We drink to our comrade's eyes,
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!"

The above lines are from a poem that might be called a masterpiece in English, which was written by one Bartholomew Dowling, a newspaper man of San Francisco, many years ago and applied to one of the great famines and plagues of India that carried away many people.

They were forcibly brought to my mind during the time I spent in Mexico City. This poem might be adopted by Mexico as an appropriate sentiment for all occasions. Human life has been a wonderfully plentiful and inexpensive article among the people of this country.

REVELLING IN DEATH

Its history is so mingled with sacrifices of human life; its places of interest are so intimately associated with tragedies; its museums are so filled with skeletons; its cities have so many statues of statesmen who have been executed; its galleries have so many pictures depicting scenes of death; its cemeteries are so much in evidence; its churches are so crowded with tombs; its death rate is so high and its funerals are so numerous that you are continually reminded of the fact while here that you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

The Aztecs practiced the sacrifice of human beings to an extent that was appalling. Prescott in his "Conquest of Mexico" says that the yearly estimate of human sacrifices was from twenty to thirty thousand persons each year in ordinary times, while it was greater at some times, and at the dedication of the great temple of Tenochtitlan seventy thousand persons were sacrificed on the one occasion.

They usually preserved the skulls of the victims of these sacrifices in buildings erected for that purpose. And Cortez' soldiers found in one, alone, of these edifices, one hundred and thirty-six thousand skulls. All classes, even infants, were sacrificed and all prisoners of war were so disposed of.

Cortez came with the sword and one of his first

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acts was to massacre the Cholulans to the extent of three thousand to six thousand. He left a path of death wherever he marched, fighting battles where the slain were numbered by thousands, and when he entered Mexico City after his great siege, it is said, that the corpses were so thick in the streets that one could not go through the streets of the city without treading on the bodies of the dead, whose number history places at one hundred and twenty to two hundred and forty thousand.

A further account says: "Bodies were piled one upon another, the living mingled with the dead. Death was everywhere. The city was a vast charnel house in which all were hastening to decay and decomposition, and it bred a pestilence that swept off greater numbers than the famine.

Continuing the fight, the besieged were hemmed in like deers surrounded by the huntsmen and slain. The ground was heaped up with dead, until the combatants were obliged to climb over human mounds to get at one another. The miry soil was saturated with blood which ran off like water and dyed the canals crimson.

Forty thousand human beings were slain in a few hours. In another engagement the dead bodies were thrown into the canal until they formed a

REVELLING IN DEATH

bridge over which the assailants passed to the opposite banks to continue their work of slaughter."

As soon as the Spanish were well in possession of this country, the deadly inquisition was inaugurated and put in operation, and for over two hundred years that murderous piece of legal religious machinery put many to death by burning at the stake, by torture and other cruel means.

In the National Museum is shown a garrote which broke the victims' necks by twisting an iron pin into them, and other equally effective machines were used.

Now, if you will add to the above an indefinite estimate of how many have been killed in the several wars, in insurrections and riots and in the enforcement of law, you have a great harvest of death.

Then make another addition to your estimate if you can, of the deaths from disease and epidemics, including the great plague of 1737, when it is said that two-thirds of all the people of New Spain, as Mexico was then called, were carried away in one season. Add all of these together and then contemplate an annual death rate exceeding, perhaps, that of any other similar city in the world, and which goes on year after year and generation after generation, and you can readily understand that one is im-

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pressed with the small value placed upon life here and you will likely conclude that all the time you remain here you are certainly taking some chances and are to some extent coquetting with death.

The death rate in the ten largest cities of the United States averages a trifle over nineteen per thousand population, and New Orleans with its large colored population and unhealthy surroundings, and which leads, in the race of death, all American cities, has a death rate of only twenty-eight per one thousand of its population, while Mexico City has an annual death rate of between fifty and sixty and sometimes even exceeding the latter figure, the total deaths running from twenty to thirty thousand each year. At fifty-five deaths per one thousand, it would make the average duration of a human life in this city a trifle over eighteen years.

The infant mortality in a measure accounts for this high death rate as there are many children that have very poor care. But the fact remains that this is a very unhealthy city, and that it is well to be exceedingly careful of your living while here.

One reason for this excessive rate of mortality is the unfortunate topographical location of the city. But a considerable number of the deaths are due to the lack of observance of proper sanitary precautions

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and the carelessness of the people in regard to the prevention of diseases.

Small pox appears to be a regular thing. It came with the Conquest, one negro slave being brought here suffering with the disease, which spread rapidly over the country, carrying off thousands at that time.

I do not think the authorities take very great care to isolate the victims, nor do the people make any great effort to keep away from the disease, nor to keep the disease away from them.

As one of the Mexicans said, "The Lord sends small pox and if you try to fight it off you will have it that much worse. The only thing that you need to do is to get two potted plants, that is flowers in pots, and put the patient's feet into the pots well covered with the soil. Keep them well watered and that will draw all the fever from the head into the feet and the disease will soon be gone, and the patient will get well."

This is a treatment for small pox that I respectfully refer to the various boards of health of the states and cities of the north for adoption.

Typhus fever epidemics are common in the city of Mexico, and there was quite a siege of this while we were in the city. There were from sixty to sev-

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enty-five new cases reported every day, which resulted in a number of deaths.

This made our stay in the city less comfortable than it otherwise might have been. We were cautioned not to drink the city water, nor to eat uncooked vegetables, which we didn't want to do after seeing them transported and washed in the La Viga canal, and if possible not to run into contagion.

As we were cautioned not to eat or drink so many things, and the meats here are of such poor quality, Mexico City was one of the places where we felt that we suffered for something to eat.

It is rather awkward to die so far away from home, and especially in Mexico, where they bury people quickly and where they take little chances on traveling corpses, and where it is difficult to claim and remove your own or anybody else's remains. So we ate as little as we could in the city, and made our visit as short as we could and see very much of the place.

The last day we were in the city we visited Dolores cemetery, which lies in the mountains just beyond Chapultepec castle. I thought that it was extremely unfortunate that the city should have been located in the valley and the cemetery pitched on the

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mountain top, in a direct line from where the water supply seems to come. An arrangement exactly the reverse would have been better and even that would have been bad enough, for there is plenty of high ground in the vicinity for both the city and cemetery.

The funeral business of the City of Mexico is peculiar. Everything here is divided into classes, usually "first class," "second class" and "third class." It seems that in the matter of funerals, this is extended to four classes, and that the cemetery is divided into six classes of burial places.

When the street car system was put into operation several years ago, the company bought up all the hearses in the city and put them out of commission. Since then all the funerals are by the street car lines in special cars run for that purpose.

The first class cars are finished and draped as elaborately as an expensive hearse, and with them go trailer cars that are elegantly appointed and draped appropriately, in which the friends follow the remains to the grave.

The second class cars are not so elaborate, the sides are open and the casket, resting on a raised platform in the center of the car, is visible, and

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ordinary cars go with the funeral car for the convenience of friends.

The third class are open platform cars, with canopy top, the coffin resting in the center of the platform, and they go usually without trailers or mourners.

The next, or fourth class cars, are like small railway box cars, a dozen or more doors opening on the sides into as many crypts into which the coffins are deposited for conveyance, and two or more of these cars are attached to and drawn by a trolley car.

The coffins of the children of the poorer class are usually painted a bright blue. The larger coffins are painted black, although there are some of fancy colors, while the expensive caskets are covered ordinarily with black or white cloth.

The cemetery is a considerable tract of ground surrounded by a high white wall, and seems to be crowded to its limit. It has some good buildings for the administrative offices and chapels for services.

In the first class section and on the highest ground are some very expensive and elaborate tombs, mausoleums and monuments, and the little avenues and parks are well attended to by a number of workmen.

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The second class section of the cemetery has not so many nor so elaborate monuments, and as you go down through the third, fourth, fifth to the sixth class section, the only marks are small numbered tin crosses, that are neither ornamented nor durable, and many of which are bent, broken and scattered about the ground.

It is sort of sad to contemplate that the class distinction stays with these poor people here all of their lives and even follows them after death.

The day we went to the cemetery there were a number of funerals, as is usual each afternoon.

The first car to arrive was Number 13 with two trailers, their crypts filled with coffins. The car went into the lower gates and the workmen began to relieve it of its cargo. Four men carried a large coffin away on their shoulders to the place of burial. Then one man carried a smaller coffin on his shoulder the same direction, and another took a small blue one in his arms.

By this time a car came filled with people, evidently friends or relatives of some of the deceased. Several coffins were placed in carts, and a very small blue coffin was handed out to a young woman, who took it in her arms and held it for some time,

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shifting it from one side to the other, while conversing with her friends.

By this time other cars with other coffins had arrived, some stopping at this gate and others passing to the more fashionable entrance, further up, where a priest waited to perform burial services.

After looking over the cemetery we took the car to return to the city. For about a mile there is a single track, so that cars going to the cemetery must wait until the track is free from returning cars before they can proceed. When we had reached the switch there were many funeral cars waiting for right of way. It was a long, sad-looking train, made up of funerals of all classes, the caskets lying under their canopies and decorated with floral pieces of great size and variety. The cars carrying the mourners were also crowded with such floral pieces.

As we went on toward the center of the city, we met many more cars carrying their sombre burdens and excessive flower pieces in the same direction. It looked as though all of the deaths of a month had occurred at once, and that the funerals had all taken place at one time, and yet this was but one day like all the rest of the other days in every year.

We were glad to be away from this line of cars

REVELLING IN DEATH

and back into the livelier scenes of the city, where death seemed more remote and where the busy activities of life lifted in a measure the pall of death that surrounds the road to Dolores. But, after all, life is but a vapor at the best, and as Dowling further said:

“Who dreads to the dust returning?
Who shrinks from the sable shore,
Where the high and haughty yearning
Of the soul can sting no more?
So, stand to your glasses steady—
The thoughtless are here the wise;
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!”

The Nineteenth Letter.

SCRAPS.

In writing a series of letters such as these, there is an accumulation of stuff presented that does not just fit in any particular place, and yet seems to be of too much interest to be entirely omitted, so I have concluded to just call it "scraps" and throw it in here.

In the western part of Mexico is a beautiful river called the Juanacatlan. It is the largest river in this country. It has a fair size Niagara Falls, with a tumble of seventy feet as it drops over the precipice. It is a beautiful sight.

The government taxes are collected largely by the sale and use of stamps, as is the custom in the United States during war times. All bills and invoices have to carry a stamp, and a stamp must be affixed to each page of a hotel register, etc., so the average man who does much business must become quite an expert in the licking of stamps.

SCRAPS

There is a great industry in silver in Mexico, large shipments through the country and from the country. There was nine million seven hundred sixteen thousand dollars in silver shipped from Vera Cruz in the first two months of this year. At a junction near Puebla I saw the transfer of one hundred thousand dollars in silver from one train to another. It was in one hundred bags, each holding one thousand dollars. They were laid upon four express trucks, such as are seen around any ordinary railroad depot. I sized it up and concluded that if it was on one pile it would have measured about five feet long, two feet wide and nearly two feet high, and would weigh about six thousand pounds.

Guanajuato is a large city with a small cemetery. Graves and crypts therein are rented for five years. If nobody pays a second rental at the end of five years, the corpse is evicted to make room for another. The corpses are usually petrified when they come out of the tomb, and the pictures of these mummies are what are always shown in the books on Mexico. They were formerly displayed in their nakedness as they stood side by side in a long corridor. They were so hideous that they now wrap them up in white winding sheets, which, while it is

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more decent, rather adds to the weirdness of the grim view.

The Mexicans are persistent beggars and inveterate peddlers. There is scarcely a thing that you cannot buy through a car window at any station. There are lots of people with articles for sale, and men, women and children sell lottery tickets every place at all times. Lottery ticket venders are more numerous in Mexico than newsboys and bootblacks in the United States. It is a very common sight at stations or in city streets to see people with ice cream freezers on their heads and with dishes and spoons in their hands selling coolness by the dish. Stoddard, the lecturer, says that peddlers even sell coffins, but I had none offered to me, and I think the worthy lecturer got his impression by seeing the regular carriers delivering coffins on their backs to customers, which is frequently done.

The Mexican man is a picturesque individual when he is dressed even in ordinary clothes, but when he aspires to be a dude he is irresistible. He wears a sombrero of such size and weight and so ornamented with silver it would seem to be a great burden to the wearer. Add to this a close fitting jacket, a pair of trousers so tight that the legs of the trousers have to be opened up to get the

SCRAPS

wearer's leg in and then fastened up with hooks and eyes, and which have a flare at the bottom that covers a good part of the shoes and is ornamented in the gore with rich embroidery, then a red sash around the waist and big spurs of elaborate design clanking at his heels, and a bright colored serape or shawl carelessly thrown over his shoulders, he makes a very ornamental figure. The most elaborate mimic character in Mexican opera or drama on the stage cannot overdo the real thing in Mexico. On the contrary there is nothing either picturesque or striking in the appearance of the women of the poorer class, who scarcely ever wear hats or bright colors. The expensive hats in this country rest on the heads of the men, not the women.

There are various taxes and charges imposed upon industry, aside from stamp taxes. For instance, the government taxes butchers for slaughtering cattle, each two dollars and thirty-five cents; hogs, each ninety cents; sheep or goats, each twenty cents in gold, which is double that amount in Mexican money. This tax alone in Mexico City amounts to three hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year in gold. And here is an instance of the reckless giving away of concessions. While the United States is fighting the beef trust Mexico has recently

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granted an American company a concession that gives them a virtual monopoly of the slaughtering business here. It has given this company an advantage over all other butchers by reducing to them exclusively the above rate to the following figures: For slaughtering each beef, five cents; each hog, three cents; sheep and goats, no charge. This company is further relieved until 1913 from paying any federal, state, county or municipal taxes (except stamp tax) on all its lands, buildings, machinery, capital and capital stock. It is also relieved from all import duties on materials and machinery used in the construction of its plants. It is further relieved from export duties. It also has magnificent water power free from taxation for twenty years. In addition to this the railroads controlled by the government are to construct refrigerator cars and give advantageous freight rates. It would seem from these advantages that one company might do a very profitable business.

This illustrates how Mr. Diaz and his cabinet are disposing of concessions that will enrich outsiders, rather than be of profit to the government and the common people.

OPERA CLOAKS AND HATS

NEW USE FOR OPERA GARMENTS.

In New York or Chicago, during the horse show or the season of grand opera, or even at ordinary times, you will see a large number of gentlemen after six o'clock in the evening wearing "Inverness" or cloak overcoats, with capes instead of sleeves, and high top silk hats, sometimes vulgarly called "plug hats."

These are the proper things to wear with a dress suit and you will find this garb in use by the limited number of gentlemen who wear proper clothes in all cities in America. But I did not expect to find them all the go in Mexico, and it looked to me at first as though a large number of the gentlemen of Mexico were on the way to an up-to-date grand opera, both day and night. I found, however, on further inquiry, that this particular style of dress was not entirely confined here to the people who make up opera or theater parties, but most always covers the portly forms of gentlemen on religious errands.

When the separation of church and state was accomplished here, a number of stringent laws were made affecting the clergy. One was that no priest or minister of any religious sect should appear upon the public street clad in any religious garb. So, in

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conformity with the new law, the priests cast off the gown and miter of the church and adopted the cloak and hat of the man who attended the theater or the opera, and ever since that time the priests have appeared in this dress in public, and it becomes them well.

It is not so great a change from the black cloak of the priest to the cloak coat of an opera patron, and a high smooth silk hat adds a degree of dignity, either to priest or layman, that cannot be denied. So that the law that was made to erase the personality of the clergy has raised the "Inverness" coat and the "plug hat" to an elevation in this republic that its most ardent admirers never expected to see it attain, and has made the priests the most distinctive and best dressed men in Mexico.

Another one of the laws enacted at this time was that there should be no religious processions. This not only stopped the Catholic processions, but it has been the means of squelching the Salvation Army, as marching seems to be their prevailing mode of worshiping the Lord or of fighting the devil.

PULQUE OR PULKEY.

The favorite drink of the lower class of Mexicans is "pulque" or "pulkey," as it is sometimes

PULQUE OR PULKEY

spelled. It is for sale on all occasions and in every place, in the canteens or saloons, in the cities, towns or villages, and it is peddled at the stations on every road. It is the juice of the maguey or century plant. It sells at two or three cents per glass in Mexican money, and sometimes as low as one cent, which is equivalent to one-half cent in American money.

Its price places it within the reach of all, but notwithstanding the low figure at which it sells the entire business represents a considerable amount of money. J. S. Stoddard, the well known lecturer, is authority for the statement that the Mexican railway runs one train each day from the valley between Vera Cruz and the City of Mexico to carry only pulque, and that the freight on this one article pays this railroad one thousand dollars per day, or three hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars per year.

The maguey fields are laid out in regular rows, the plants growing as great as ten feet in height and ten feet in diameter, measuring to the ends of the leaves or arms, and a field of one hundred and sixty acres or more makes a prettier sight than one who has never seen one might imagine.

It takes about seven years for one of these plants to reach the age where it produces pulque, which is

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extracted by one of the natives, who usually goes through the field with two or three pig skins strapped on the back of a mule or burro.

When he comes to a plant which is ready to blossom, he takes his instrument, which is a hollow tube, and thrusts it into the bulb in the center of the plant, which produces the juice. He then places his lips to the upper end of the tube, sucks thereon until he lifts the juice out of the bulb into the tube, and then he discharges it into the pig skin, which is carried to market on the mule.

Owing to the enormous size of the plants he is compelled to crawl up between the great leaves or arms with their thousands of needles, and in the act of extracting the pulp, while hanging onto the plant like a parasite, he makes an interesting and comical spectacle.

No way as yet has been devised by which this liquid can be preserved. If not drunk within about twenty-four hours, it becomes sour and unfit for use. As a consequence it appears that every Mexican seems to think it devolves upon him to drink his share in order to save the waste that would occur by allowing the stuff to spoil.

It is somewhat intoxicating when drunk in generous quantities, and the Mexicans drink it that way.

PULQUE OR PULKEY

I also imagine that the price, which is ordinarily two or three cents and sometimes even as low as one cent, is negotiated somewhat on the "mark down" sale idea. When the pulque is in good condition it sells for three cents. If it has seen its best day it will be marked down to two cents, and then later it will be put upon the market at one cent per glass.

The reader has probably heard of the little boy and the little girl who were running lemonade stands, and in the morning were selling lemonade at two cents per glass. In the afternoon the young man had a "mark down" sale and put his lemonade on the market at one cent per glass. Being asked by a patron who had just drunk a glass why he reduced the price, or inaugurated the "mark down" sale, he said it was brought about because about noonday the pup had fallen into his crock and from that time on the reduced price had been in operation.

As above stated, it takes seven years for a maguey plant to produce pulque. After the juice is extracted, the plant dies, but it is immediately replaced by a new plant. When the field is laid out this matter is taken into consideration and the field is so devised, or the number of plants so arranged, that about one-seventh of the plants will mature each year, thus maintaining a yearly production of the

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liquid, and as there is practically no winter here, the gathering of the liquid is kept up every day of the year, and the supply, which is limited in the time it is good to use, and not in quantity, to about twenty-four hours, is never exhausted.

The Twentieth Letter.

COUNTRY, CLIMATE, POPULATION.

In order to give the reader, who has patiently followed me through these various letters, a better understanding of whom and what we are writing about, I thought it would be best to halt right here long enough to give a little description of the country and show of what the population is made up. The extreme length of Mexico, from north to south, is about two thousand miles, about as far as from New York City to Denver. The northern boundary is seven hundred and fifty miles wide and it tapers down to a width at Tehuantepec of one hundred and forty miles.

There are two mountain ranges, one on the east side which follows close the line of the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, and one near the west that is a continuation of the Sierre Madre of our own Arizona, which territory forms the northern boundary of the republic. This range is about two hundred and fifty

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miles from the Pacific, where it crosses the northern boundary line, but approaches much closer to the ocean further south.

This leaves about three-fourths of the republic a somewhat hilly table-land between these ranges, from six thousand to eight thousand feet above sea level. The climate of these table-lands is never oppressively hot, even in summer, and is never cold in winter.

The northern part of the country is quite barren, a considerable part being designated as desert land, and about three-fourths of the population of the whole republic is within a radius of a few hundred miles of Mexico City, which is about one thousand miles south of the northern boundary.

The low lands along the coast, and especially those south of Vera Cruz, are called the "Tierra Caliente," or the hot country, the weather being warm at all times. As you rise going toward the interior, you always find a cool temperature. You rise in five hours from a torrid heat to a temperate zone, and if you want to get a regular arctic climate, you can get it at any time by going up one of the several mountains from whose brow the snows never depart.

The climate of Mexico City is delightful at all

CLIMATE AND POPULATION

seasons of the year. There is a movement among the railroad men and people who have the interests of Mexico at heart to divert the summer travel to that place. The high altitude of the city and its peculiar surroundings are such that it is never very warm even in midsummer. The thermometer varies but little during the year. The mean average of the winter months is between fifty and sixty degrees F., and of the summer months between sixty and seventy degrees F. The nights are always cool and the days are always pleasant, there being neither excessive heat nor cold at any time.

There are many delightful places to spend the summer months in Mexico, and there is an inclination now to make it a summer resort as well as a winter resort.

The republic of Mexico is comprised of twenty-eight states, one territory and a federal district, surrounding Mexico City, similar to the District of Columbia in which Washington City in the United States is located. Each state has two senators in the national senate, and one member of congress for each forty thousand population or fraction over twenty thousand.

The population of the whole republic is about fourteen million at the present time, which is divided

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approximately as follows: Five million pure bred Indians, descendants of the original Aztecs and other tribes, nearly six million of mixed white, Indian and sometimes negro blood, and not over three million whites, mostly Spaniards or their descendants, so that it will be seen that the lower strata of society, the Indians and mixture of Indians with other blood, very largely outnumber the more intelligent races of people.

With the admixture of population which Mexico has, it is really a wonder this country has made the progress that it has, and when the poverty of the people is considered, they deserve great credit for what they have achieved. Many of them are so poor, from the cradle to the grave, that in comparison Lazarus might have been considered an aristocrat, when he ate the crumbs that fell from the master's table, and when the dogs acted as his only physicians.

Many people go from the United States to visit Mexico, and when they have traveled about a thousand miles and have reached the capital, they imagine that they have seen the whole of the republic, while they have only got into the interesting part of the country.

It is the people that make up a nation and not the waste lands. Draw a line across Mexico from

CLIMATE AND POPULATION

Tampico on the gulf to San Blas on the Pacific coast, and there are eleven million of the population living below this line and only three million north of this line, and this line would be within one hundred and seventy-five miles of Mexico City.

So it is necessary to go, not only to the city, but south of the city and also east and west if you would like to be able to judge of Mexico and her people. Very few of the important or interesting cities are very far north of the capital. Besides this, one should go into the interior away from the railroads to judge of the real life of the inhabitants.

Spanish is the official and prevailing language, although there are some tribes in the interior that have languages of their own.

There are a number of Americans in all the cities, the number in Mexico City being estimated at five to ten thousand. The population of Mexico City is nearly four hundred thousand, showing a gain of about fifty thousand in the last ten years. The population of Guadalajara is over one hundred thousand; Puebla, ninety-eight thousand; Leon, sixty-three thousand; Monterey, sixty-two thousand; San Luis Potosi, sixty thousand; Merida about the same, and there are ten or a dozen other cities of twenty-five thousand population or over.

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CONSTITUTION AND LAWS.

The constitution of the United States was taken as a model in preparing the constitution and laws of Mexico, but it differs in several regards.

In our country there has been some question as to whether the constitution shall go with the flag. In Mexico the question frequently arises whether it shall go at all.

After a year's session a Mexican congress, on February 3, 1857, issued "in the name of God and by authority of the Mexican people" the constitution that is now in force, and of which Mr. Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State, said that he regarded it as the best instrument of its kind in the world. It has been amended since then. A brief synopsis of this constitution follows:

1. The establishment of a constitutional federal government in the place of a military dictatorship.
2. Freedom and protection to (fugitive) slaves that enter the national territory.
3. Freedom of religion.
4. Freedom of the press.
5. Nationalization of two hundred million dollars' worth of church property.
6. Subordination of the army to the civil power

CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

and the abolition of special military and ecclesiastical tribunals.

7. The negotiation of commercial treaties of the fullest scope and liberal character, including reciprocity of trade on the frontiers.

8. The colonization of Mexico by the full opening of every part of the country to immigration and the encouragement of foreign enterprise in every branch of industry, particularly in mining and in works of internal improvement.

To carry out the provisions and purposes of the national constitution and guard the liberties which it guarantees, enactments of the legislature called "Laws of Reform" have been issued, the leading items of which are as follows:

The complete separation of the church and state.

The free exercise of religious services. The state will not give official recognition to any religious festivals save the Sabbath as a day of rest.

Religious services are to be held only within the place of worship.

Clerical vestments are forbidden in the streets.

Religious processions are forbidden.

The use of church bells is restricted to calling the people to religious worship.

Pulpit discourses advising disobedience to the

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law or injury to anyone are strictly forbidden. Worship in the churches shall be public only.

Gifts of real estate to religious institutions are unlawful, with the sole exception of edifices designed exclusively for the purposes of the institution.

The state must not recognize monastic orders nor permit their establishment. The association of Sisters of Charity is suppressed in the republic, and Jesuits are expelled and may not return.

Matrimony is a civil contract and is to be duly registered; the religious service may be added.

Cemeteries are under civil inspection and open to the burial of all classes and creeds.

No one can sign away his liberty by contract or religious vow.

Education in the public schools is free and compulsory.

POLICE AND MILITARY.

Mexico City has a police force of two thousand four hundred men, four hundred of whom are mounted and two thousand work on foot. Allowing the city a population of three hundred and eighty thousand, this gives one policeman to a trifle less than one hundred and sixty of the population. Assuming there is one voter or full grown man in each four of



Photo by Thomas Rees.

MEXICAN PEON.

"Many of them are so poor that in comparison Lazarus might have been considered an aristocrat."—Page 332,

POLICE AND MILITARY

the population, this would make one policeman to every forty men in the city. The city in which I live has a population of about fifty thousand, and has less than forty policemen, or less than one to every twelve hundred of population. This city is much more scattered than Mexico City. I should think both cities cover about the same area of territory. This would give Mexico City about sixty times as many policemen to the square mile as an American city of this size.

The policemen are well uniformed and the mounted ones ride very good horses, and from their number it would seem to be a very easy thing to get arrested, and yet it does not appear that there are so many arrests in proportion.

The city policemen carry "billies" or clubs, as our policemen do, and also carry revolvers, as is the custom with all police. The revolvers, however, are of large size, are strapped on the outside with a good belt, and are ready for action. The mounted policemen carry rifles or carbines.

In addition to these accoutrements, at night each policeman on foot has a lantern. There is a policeman at every corner and he places his lantern on the ground at the center of the street intersection, and, retiring to the sidewalk, stands on call, so that from

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any corner you can see these little lighthouses of safety in every direction for a very great distance. You also know that where the lantern is, the policeman is near at hand and easy to find.

In addition to policemen at every corner, you find them in many other places like hotel entrances, theater doors, railroad stations, etc.

No hack leaves a railway station until the police have taken the carriage number and the destination of its passengers.

So Mexico City is a fairly well regulated place so far as the police force is concerned, and you are pretty safe at all times, except from petty larceny and pocket picking, in which it is said these people are so exceedingly expert that nobody can catch them.

In addition to the policemen there are the "Rurales," or rural guards, and there are soldiers everywhere, so that all the time you are in Mexico you seem to be in a vast military camp. The standing army numbers about thirty thousand men, nearly half as many as the United States army now in the States, while the population of the republic is only about twice that of New York state alone, so it gives a good sprinkling of soldiers. In addition to this there is a reserve force of great numbers.

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But the most remarkable part of the military or police service is that known as the "Rurales," and the organization of this body shows the shrewdness and policy of President Diaz.

For many years the country was full of bandits. Every road was infested with cutthroats and robbers, and life even in the cities was not safe. Rich miners had to maintain standing armies. Merchants moving goods through the country had to hire armed soldiers to guard them. Property or life were not safe any place. The robbers held people up on the roads and robbed them, not only of their money, but even of every stitch of clothing they wore, and left them naked on the highway.

With all the effort to suppress these outlaws, the number continued about the same. When caught, they were shot without trial. One officer in one community reported that he had shot one hundred and thirteen bandits in two years, but there were always others to take their places and continue the bandit business where the others left off. Outlawry, which had been carried on for generations, had got down to a business basis. The bandits possessed good horses, good arms, and were a fearless, dare-devil set. They knew every nook and crevice in the coun-

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try, and they could not often be captured and never suppressed.

Soon after Diaz became president, he sent word to all the heads of the different bands and clans in the country to come in and have a peace conference with him. Most of them appeared and the president opened negotiations with them.

They took up the matter of earnings, and it was finally concluded that, the business being somewhat overdone, the earnings of the average bandit, taken year in and year out, amounted to about thirty or forty dollars per month.

That being arrived at, Diaz asked them if they would not rather earn the same amount of money with more regularity, with less work and less risk of life, and if they did chance to lose their lives it would be in the line of duty and not as brigands, and they would have a Christian burial and be buried under the white cross of innocence rather than under the black cross of perdition, without hope of resurrection or prayers for the repose of their souls. Of course there could be but one answer to such a proposition.

The negotiations ended by the government hiring every bandit in the republic to maintain law and order and to protect the roads instead of to rob and

POLICE AND MILITARY

murder people; and so the rural guard was organized.

One of the most remarkable and efficient police forces was thereby installed and it has been a success ever since, and they say there is to-day less highway robbery in Mexico than in any other country on the face of the globe.

These rural guards patrol all the roads, are at every railway station on the arrival and departure of all trains and at least two of them on every train. They wear handsome uniforms of gray, surmounted by a broad-brimmed sombrero ornamented with loads of silver cord and silver embroidery and their respective numbers, and they carry the latest pattern of sure-shot carbines, which are always in evidence.

The penalty for highway robbery is death. Since the organization of this corps there has been but one hold-up of a railway train in Mexico, and that was by a gang of Americans near the Texas line.

One day a train on which I was riding came to a sudden halt to prevent striking a cow which was on the track. Quicker than it takes to tell it the rural guardsmen had leaped from the train and were at the head of the engine with their rifles ready for action.

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With all these factors of safety, however, a number of persons seem to have more confidence in themselves than in the government, and you may see on trains in lower Mexico persons carrying revolvers strapped on as they used to or do now in some places in the western mining camps of the United States.

The Twenty-first Letter.

SOME HISTORY.

It seems to be necessary here to insert a limited amount of history to explain some of the characters that have been referred to with more or less frequency in the preceding letters. I will promise the reader, however, that the historical section will be as short as possible, as I like to write original matter, and it is difficult to write a history as it ought to be written and be entirely original at the same time.

The great events in Mexican history, and the great characters of this remarkable country, are worthy of a very careful study and more attention than they will receive here.

That Mexico had a prehistoric era is evidenced by the ruins which are scattered from one end of the country to the other, and which are certain to have been the handiwork of people whose names are conspicuous by their absence from our current textbooks. This era I will not discuss here.

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So, starting with more modern history, we are told that a race called the Toltecs inhabited Central or Southern Mexico previous to the Aztecs.

The latter, by unreliable history or tradition, seem to date from about the year 1320 A. D., and these are the people whom Cortez had to contend with when he reached what was then called Tenochtitlan, but which is now called Mexico City.

It is not known where they originated nor whence they came, but they were here. The Aztecs, although the leading nation of this section, called by historians an empire, had never gained complete control of all the people of this country, but were at war, as it appears, at all times with some of the surrounding tribes or nations, notably the Tlaxcalans, whom it seems they had never been able to subdue, and whose enmity, with the genius of Cortez, was the cause of their final destruction.

The natives of Mexico were in a well advanced stage of civilization when the discovery of this continent was made.

The City of Mexico, and other cities, were well built of masonry and wood work, and had great temples with altars magnificently furnished. Many articles were skillfully made of gold and silver, and

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cloth of feathers and other materials was beautifully woven.

The matter of government was carried on better than it has been on some occasions since then. The cities were laid out in regular blocks and streets, in many respects better than some of the older cities of Spain, England, France and even the United States. The same streets are used to-day that were laid out by the Aztecs and other natives, except that in Mexico City many of the streets were canals then, which were filled up by Cortez and others, and are now streets in fact.

MONTEZUMA.

The Aztec Empire was, when discovered by the Spaniards, ruled by Montezuma, the name meaning "The severe one," or "The sad one." The name is spelled in several different forms. Ordinarily people speak of "Montesuma," meaning the particular Montezuma who was ruler of this country when Cortez came, although there were one or more of the same name who had ruled previously.

The Aztecs under Montezuma were, at the time of the Conquest, a severe and bloodthirsty race. Montezuma ruled in splendor, had great temples, grand palaces and immense zoological gardens

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stocked with all kinds of animals and with many men to care for them, and among other appurtenances he had not less than one thousand wives, all lodged in their own apartments and splendidly provided for. He dressed in the height of fashion from his own standpoint and his clothing and person were ornamented with gold and pearls.

He liked fish, and salt water fish at that. In those days they did not have any railroads nor refrigerator cars nor cold storage of any kind, so Montezuma organized a relay of men who ran on foot from the Gulf of Mexico and carried fish in bags as they ran, and laid them on his majesty's table before the skippers could get into them. He would have them on his table within twenty-four hours from the time they were swimming in the gulf, over two hundred miles away.

He never used the same dishes more than once, they being consigned to the servants after each meal, except a set of solid gold dishes, which were used only on holy feast days. He never wore the same suit of clothes the second time, so it must be taken for granted that he lived pretty well and that he reluctantly gave up a rich position when Cortez seized him in his own castle and carried him away and confined him in irons in the Spanish quarters,

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which he had established in Montezuma's capital. The people of Mexico City, or Tenochtitlan, as it was called then, rebelled against the Spaniards when their emperor was carried away, and at the solicitation of Cortez, Montezuma appeared on top of the walls of the temple to pacify them. But the people had lost confidence in their ruler and set upon him with stones, javelins and other missiles. He died four days later from his wounds and a broken heart—a sudden ending to so glorious a reign.

Only a few months before had Montezuma met Cortez in great state, placing magnificent presents at his feet, among which is recorded in history a solid gold plate as large as a cart wheel, of exquisite workmanship, representing the sun, and another still larger of solid silver representing the moon, besides a cask full of golden grains as they came from the mines, and thirty gold ducks as big and almost as natural as life, etc., etc. This shows that the tenure of office of a great ruler may be of a very transitory nature, that great riches and splendor may soon take wings, and to what an inglorious end a great ruler may come. And so ended the rule of Montezuma, the mighty.

On the death of Montezuma, Cortez and his band were set upon and driven out of Mexico City with

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great loss of life. His army was nearly annihilated. It was the greatest defeat the hardy warrior ever suffered. This will be referred to later in the life of Cortez.

GUATEMOTZIN.

In one of the gloriets or circles on the grand paseo in Mexico City is the statue of an Indian standing high on a heavy and elaborate stone base with bronze panels, representing several historic scenes.

It is a magnificent work of art, and was designed and executed by a native artist. It represents Cuantemoc or Guatemotzin, the last of the Aztec rulers and a very brave and determined warrior.

When Cortez seized Montezuma and made a prisoner of him, he still remained emperor of the Aztecs until his death. In the meantime, however, Montezuma's brother, Cuitlahua, had organized the natives against Cortez, and on the death of Montezuma, Cuitlahua became ruler of the empire, and was in fact ruler at the time of the expulsion.

While Cortez was reorganizing his army and his allies at Tlaxcala, a great scourge of small pox swept over the whole of Mexico. It was a new disease to that part of the world, having been introduced by

GUATEMOTZIN

the Spaniards, who brought with them a negro slave who was suffering with the disease. In its ravages it caused many deaths, and Cuitlahua was one of its victims; he died four months after being crowned and before Cortez had organized for the final siege of the capital.

Guatemotzin was a nephew of Montezuma, and on the death of that ruler and his brother Cuitlahua, Guatemotzin was installed as emperor, and it was he whom Cortez had to contend with when he came to retake Mexico. Had his uncle, Montezuma, filled his position as well in the beginning as Guatemotzin did in the final struggle, the history of the Conquest so far as Cortez was concerned would certainly have been a very short one, as he and his whole band of adventurers would have been wiped off the face of the earth and never would have been allowed to enter the capital.

Guatemotzin organized his forces, made great preparations for the defense of the city, and made a strong fight, but the whole outside country under Cortez had been organized against him, and Cortez had at his disposal, when the siege commenced, an army estimated to have been at least two hundred thousand strong.

But the young emperor did not surrender until

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nearly all his city was completely destroyed and the greater part of his followers had been slain, and even then only left the city when it was in flames and it was impossible for him longer to remain therein.

Cortez found in him a strong and honorable foe, worthy of every consideration, but to the disgrace of Cortez and the Spaniards, after his capture, instead of being treated as a prisoner of his rank should have been treated, he was put to torture in order to induce him to disclose the wealth which he was supposed to possess.

Even in this ordeal he proved the greatness of his character, for when he was submitted to the most excruciating torture he refused to divulge any of the information which his captors desired, and even refused to make any outcry or to groan while suffering the most severe pain.

One of the bronze tablets on the base of the monument above referred to represents Guatemotzin lashed to a large stone and enduring the torture of having his feet burned with a considerable fire. Not being willing to impart any information, after much suffering, he was ordered released, and he recovered from the torture.

After Cortez had held him as a prisoner for some time, and then finally concluded to go south

GUATEMOTZIN

into Honduras for new discoveries and new adventures, he deemed it unsafe to leave Guatemotzin at the capital for fear the natives would again organize against the Spaniards and drive them out of the country.

He therefore took Guatemotzin and several of his princes and nobles with him. On his march he had many things to contend with, and he did not add anything to his safety and comfort by carrying with him a lot of royal prisoners.

So when he had traveled many miles and arrived in the Honduras country, Cortez accused Guatemotzin of organizing a conspiracy to assassinate him. It is very doubtful if Cortez had any grounds on which to base such a charge, but it was sufficient to condemn Guatemotzin and his fellow prisoners.

In order to rid himself of the burden Cortez and his band decided that Guatemotzin and his companion prisoners were guilty of conspiracy and sentenced them to death.

Then the Spaniards hung Guatemotzin and all of his noblemen and princes with him from the branches of a great tree in that distant country far away from their own people. Guatemotzin said to Cortez: "Why do you slay me so unjustly? God will de-

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mand it of you," and so the end of the royal princes and the house of Montezuma came to an end.

For three hundred years the Aztecs and their descendants and all the natives of this new country became subjects of the crown of Spain and servants of the Spanish who came among them. But even now every feast day the Indians of Central Mexico, the descendants of the original Aztecs, meet at the base of this heroic statue of Guatemotzin and pay homage to the last of their princes—not only the last, but the greatest of their rulers.

The Twenty-second Letter.

MR. CORTEZ.

Of all the characters the world has ever produced, Cortez was one of the most remarkable. He was the greatest combination of adventurer, general, statesman, soldier, buccaneer, strategist, conqueror, destroyer of temples, builder of churches, murderer, courtier, lover, polygamist, robber, saint, cutthroat and Christian the world has ever known.

He was a man of many parts, did not know fear, took all sorts of chances, was of wonderful resource and won out many times when a personage of less courage and less ingenuity would have failed.

With all of his badness, he had many good traits and with some goodness he had more and worse traits than any one else. He never let anything stand between him and success, and in nearly all his affairs of war, statecraft, treachery, love or religion, he came out on the winning side. But with

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all his cruelty, deception, warfare, his battles, massacres and his plunderings, I am of the opinion that eventually he did more good in Mexico than he did harm.

He put the government of Mexico in the hands of Spain, which was bad enough, but it was a better government than it had enjoyed before.

He inaugurated a grim quality of Christian religion with the attachment of the Spanish inquisition, but this was better than the pagan worship of idols, with its enormous human sacrifices, which he found.

He established a cruel civilization, but a higher and better civilization than Mexico had known before.

He destroyed temples, but he built churches, fortresses and palaces that stand even unto this day, and were better than the temples he destroyed.

He left estates that are the inheritance of his relatives at this time, and made an impress on Mexico that has never been eclipsed nor even approached by any one who has come since his day, and his glory is likely to outlive that of any one who may follow him in Mexico in all the years yet to come.

His whole life, if written, would fill several vol-

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umes. In fact, many volumes have been written on it already, and still there is more to write.

The story of his strenuous and tempestuous times in Mexico is more like a romance than like history, and can hardly be believed when it is read.

It is not my purpose in this letter to write all the life of this wonderful man, but some of it seems to be necessary for a better understanding of this series of communications.

Cortez, whose surname is sometimes given as Hernando and other times as Fernando, was born in Spain in 1485. In his youth he was what might have been termed a worthless sort of fellow.

He sailed with a commander and after a number of adventures he arrived at and helped in the conquest or the subduing of the natives of Cuba. He was well treated by the governor of Cuba, whose name was Velasquez. He was given a large land grant and a number of natives as slaves to work for him.

He fought duels and led a riotous and romantic life. He became engaged to a beautiful young Spanish woman and then refused to marry her. He returned the kindness of the governor by conspiring against him.

He was placed in irons for treason, but broke

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his shackles and then used them to break his way out of prison. He was then recaptured, placed on shipboard to be sent away for trial for treason, but slipped his feet out of the shackles, ran off with one of the ship's boats, and when the waters became too rough for it, set it afloat, jumped overboard and swam to shore. He afterwards hanged the man who arrested him. He married the girl whom he had deserted, got the good offices of her family and became reconciled to the governor.

Then the governor decided to put him in command of an expedition to go to Mexico to Christianize the Indians, that being the chief instruction in regard to his voyage.

When Cortez had about half completed the preparation of his fleet, the governor became suspicious of him and decided to place the command of the expedition in other hands. Cortez heard of this and that same night he lifted anchor, took the fleet so illy prepared, appropriated it, carried off the city's supply of meat, and sailed out on the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

This was on the night of November 18, 1518. He touched at other points on the coast of Cuba, where the governor could not reach him, and took on further supplies. He dodged around Cuba with

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his fleet some three months, while the governor was after him.

At the end of that time he sailed away to make one of the greatest conquests the world has ever known and to make more history than is usually accorded to one man.

He landed at Tabasco, on the Mexican coast, on March 20, 1519, and it seems that he was as warm a proposition at that time as the famous sauce of that name is today.

When he landed in Mexico he had about seven hundred sailors and soldiers, two hundred Indians from Cuba, fourteen small cannons, considerable ammunition, some Indian women whom he took as cooks, and sixteen horses, to conquer a country whose inhabitants were numbered by millions and who were a bloodthirsty and warlike people.

He raised the standard of his crusade, which was a crimson banner bearing in Spanish the legend, "Friends, let us follow the cross, and if we have faith we will conquer."

The hearts and courage of his soldiers sank at the appalling task before them; they mutinied and would have turned back, but Cortez prevented this by hanging a few of them and by destroying and sinking every ship that he had, making a return an

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impossibility. So his soldiers had to fight or be slaughtered by the enemy.

He was received in a friendly way by the natives, which friendliness might have continued if Cortez had come for that purpose, but Cortez came not for friendship, but for gold and spoils, and to establish a religion of peace.

He started inland, and after a few slight engagements came to Tlaxcala, where he first met severe resistance and where he fought five battles with these people. The Mexicans had never seen horses and had never heard the report of firearms. They took the men on horses to be gods and the roar of the cannons seemed to them the collapsing of the heavens with the fires of hell. The reports of the guns and cannons paralyzed them with fear at first, but they recovered and fought with desperation.

His war with the Tlaxcalans was one of his most severe ordeals. He was opposed on one or more occasions by a greater number than one hundred thousand warriors, who came down upon his little army in the gulches as great avalanches come down on the traveler in the Alps.

His troops fought bravely, slaughtered the natives by hundreds and even by the thousands as

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he sent volleys of musketry and cannon shot into their ranks.

Between battles he invited them to be allies, and when the opposing general or chief sent fifty of his best men ostensibly as envoys of peace, but in reality as spies into his camp, he cut off the hands of all of them and then sent them back with a defiance of war, a message of peace and an invitation to join him in fighting and in humbling the great Montezuma.

Then the Tlaxcalans gave up the fight and joined with him and became his staunchest allies. He enlisted them in his army, which gave him a large following.

He then went to Cholula on an invitation of the ruler of that city, where he massacred a large number of people, estimated by various writers at from three to six thousand. He also destroyed their temples and leveled to the ground every house in the town, which consisted of at least twenty thousand habitations, housing one hundred thousand or more people.

He replaced their temples by churches and received their apologies for his intrusion.

The massacre was as brutal an affair as could have ever taken place in the darkest ages. The

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natives were invited into a square, unarmed, surrounded by high walls and buildings, and were slaughtered like cattle in a pen.

Yet it was not without some reason on the adventurer's part. He had been invited to visit their city under the guise of friendship, but it seems there was a conspiracy on the part of the Cholulans to lead him into the same place and to slaughter him and his troops just as he destroyed them before the regular slaughter according to the original program had commenced.

Before this time he had been notified by Montezuma, who sent him valuable presents and good tidings of friendship, not to come to his capital. He returned his compliments to Montezuma and said he thought he would come anyhow. He then sent men to the top of Mount Popocatepetl, who descended into the crater, secured sulphur, made a new supply of powder, and continued his march.

He fought his way, winning several battles, and entered the capital of the Aztec empire, the great city of Tenochtitlan, now the City of Mexico, and was royally received by Montezuma, who met him ostensibly as a monarch, but in reality as a superstitious, trembling coward.

The mighty ruler, who had made war on millions

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and had slaughtered thousands for his own amusement, was now face to face with a greater power that was to eclipse forever his glory and soon bring him to an ignominious death.

Cortez tried to convert Montezuma to the Christian religion, but seems to have failed. Before Cortez had reached Mexico City he had suppressed several mutinies in his own ranks, which necessitated the hanging of several of the best men of his little army, and as the natives had killed others, his original army was reduced to small numbers, but he had a large acquisition of natives, which came him well in hand.

After he had remained in the Aztec capital for a while, he accused Montezuma of treachery, seized him and made a captive of him in the Spanish quarters, which he had established.

Then he tried, convicted and burned at the stake a governor and several leading men of one of the provinces who had assaulted some of his men. When the people rebelled Cortez compelled Montezuma to go upon the temple and endeavor to pacify the people. Montezuma was assaulted and wounded by his own people and died a few days later.

In the meantime Cortez had more troubles. The Governor of Cuba, who was intent on his destruction,

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sent a fleet of twelve hundred men to Mexico to capture Cortez and bring him back dead or alive.

Cortez turned over the possession of Mexico to about one hundred and fifty men and went to Vera Cruz to meet the new invading army which were after his scalp, instead of the scalps of the Indians.

The new army of invaders had left their ships and were camped on the shore, ready to march inland and capture the adventurer. Cortez did not wait to be caught first, but with two hundred and sixty men he marched from Mexico to meet them, gathering up sixty more of his men on the way. He came upon his fellow countrymen in the night in the midst of a great storm when he was least expected, and before they knew it he was in their midst with his little army, had captured their cannon, and was cutting, shooting, slashing and killing them so fast that they were glad to hoist the white flag and surrender before the fight had fairly commenced.

Cortez accepted their surrender and then pardoned all of them, and with great promises of gold and spoil enlisted all of them in his service and marched back to the capital at the head of an army of nearly fourteen hundred good soldiers, from whence he had marched away a few days previous with about two hundred. He afterwards captured

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two or three ships with men and supplies and ammunition sent to reinforce the army that had been sent to capture him.

But his troubles were not yet over. The Mexicans were not satisfied with his presence in the capital and fell upon him by thousands and even tens of thousands, slaughtering many of his men and driving him and his followers out of the city.

This was the only time that Cortez ever seems to have been discouraged. The natives killed so many of his men at one place in the city that a church was built there afterwards, and it stands there to-day, with an inscription on a large tablet, setting forth the disaster.

Retiring beyond the limits of the city, he sat down beneath the branches of a large tree and wept. There he was, thousands of miles from home, after all his toil, war and bloodshed, broken and discouraged, the worst whipped soldier of all ages; many of his men killed and their dead bodies scattered along the line of retreat, and what was worse, some left alive for sacrifice on the pagan altars.

He had lost every cannon, all arms and ammunition, and every advantage of war. He had no place to go and was in a most pitiable condition.

The tree stands there to-day, surrounded by an

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iron fence, to preserve it as a valuable historic relic. It is called the tree of "La Noche Triste," meaning the tree of the dismal night.

It is a ragged old snarled cypress, the center decayed and all gone, having suffered recently from a fire which was lighted in it. It is ten to fifteen feet in diameter, and where the heart was is a cavity big enough to house a family of bears. I think, though, where Cortez' heart was supposed to be there was also a very large cavity, so it seems fitting that the tree which recalls him to mind should be in this condition at this time.

I rested beneath the branches of the old tree and meditated on its age and the scenes it commemorated. Then I sat down where Cortez did, and wept as loud as Cortez wept four hundred years ago, but before I had ended the caretaker of the park which adjoins came over to see what was disturbing the peace, so I had to break off my lamentations in the middle.

But Cortez wept and with no one to stop him, but with many to join him in weeping. His tears rolled down his cheeks and fell to the ground, but those tears watered a new resolve, and that resolve grew with the water so copiously shed with almost as much alacrity as did grow the fabled bean pole

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which was planted by Jack the Giant Killer in the days of myth so long ago.

That resolve which Cortez formed under such discouraging circumstances was that he would return and retake the great Aztec capital. But his troubles of retreat were not yet over, for he could not find a place for his battered army to spend the night in sleep until he had fought the natives for the possession of the only available locality.

Even then his retreat was liable to end with complete annihilation, for between him and the capital of the only friendly Indian nation which he knew was another army of one hundred thousand or more savages to intercept him. He was compelled to fight his way through this great number with only the most primitive arms, being practically no better armed than the savages themselves.

But he had resolved to retake the Aztec capital and he was determined to do so. In order to do this, he had first to capture three or four more ship loads of Spanish soldiers and sailors, who were armed and equipped for his own destruction, which he did promptly on their arrival. Then he had to subdue all the nations and cities around the capital, make of all his enemies reliable friends, organize

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them into a vast army and eradicate all kinds of prejudices and factional differences among them.

In order to subdue one nation which had slain some of his men, he made war upon them, defeated them, captured them, and branded all of the men with hot irons and distributed them as slaves among his Indian allies.

Then he had to cut off supplies from the capital, dig canals through the marshes, build bridges over streams and canals and do a thousand other seemingly impossible things, besides finally fighting a well entrenched army of savage warriors who had never been conquered, and whose numbers were beyond computation.

When he was finally prepared to retake the Aztec capital, he found that all of the roads and bridges across the lakes leading to the city had been destroyed, so he constructed a fleet of brigantines or ships and transported his army across the great lake to the margin of the city. In order to do this he had to construct the ships on dry land at Tlaxcala, sixty miles from the lake, take them to pieces, and with the aid of Indians who carried them on their backs, transport them in pieces sixty miles over the mountains to where they were embarked.

They then had to dig a canal through the low-

MR. CORTEZ

lands in which to float his ships into the lake. In the end he had a fleet of thirteen boats so built and transported.

Then he, with his Indian allies, commenced a siege of the city. Before getting to the city he met an army estimated at two hundred thousand and defeated them and in the battle there were twenty thousand of the natives slain. Then he made war, which lasted several months, upon the city, which finally surrendered. But not until the dead in the streets had reached the great number of one hundred and twenty thousand to two hundred and forty thousand. In the siege he destroyed the great temples and spent many days in leveling the city as he closed in upon it. The Aztecs finally surrendered after three-fourths of the city had been completely destroyed, the balance on fire, and the greater part of the people dead, with the promise that the living should be allowed to go out unmolested, and so they went out, leaving the dead behind.

As they marched out, the glorious Aztec regime that had dazzled and bewildered the western world for many years was closed forever and the reign of the Montezumas was at an end.

Pagan worship was supplanted by the religion of the cross, and the people, by Cortez' command

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and under compulsion, were baptized by the thousands and by the tens of thousands. And this was the first step toward establishing the Christian religion in America.

Then Cortez took the princes and the great men that were left and tied them on stones and burned their feet off up to their knees to make them disclose the hiding places of their treasures, and he also sent emissaries to all parts of the empire to gather gifts for himself, his soldiers and the king of Spain. And they collected gold nuggets from the mines, and gold bars and all kinds of gold plates and artificial birds and other articles made of pure gold.

Such wealth had hardly ever been seen before in the world's entire history, and it was all stolen or absorbed by and for the Spaniards and for the king of Spain.

As the result of this one man's iron will, and as the only choice left after a war of almost entire extermination, the people of Mexico had exchanged their allegiance from Montezuma to the crown of Spain. It was some improvement in some ways, perhaps, but it was destined to be bad enough for the next three hundred years, until the yoke was finally thrown off and Mexican independence was

MR. CORTEZ

secured after much travail and long suffering, when Mexico became one of the independent nations of the earth.

After the surrender of the great Aztec capital Cortez made many other voyages of discovery and conquest and had many other adventures. Each occasion in itself was great enough to be an epoch in any ordinary life, but for Cortez they were small affairs compared with what he had passed through.

He had several wives and other domestic troubles. He was indicted for murdering one wife and threatened to kill all accusers. He then had no accusers and was never tried. He returned to Spain, where he died, somewhat neglected, as he was at that time out of favor with the crown. And so ended the life of the greatest character the western world has ever known.

The Twenty-third Letter.

MUCH TURMOIL.

It is unfortunate that every nation that achieves independence seems first to have to undergo a long siege of anarchy and bloodshed before its aim is finally reached. Mexico is no exception to this rule. The first call to arms for independence from Spanish rule was in 1810, when fighting commenced, and from that time until about the year 1875 to 1880 there was almost continuous warfare. The best blood of Mexico was sacrificed, either in battle or by numerous executions of defeated patriots. Independence was declared in 1813, and between that time and 1868, only fifty-five years, Mexico had ten different forms of government, more than fifty presidents or dictators, and two emperors. The first constitution was adopted in 1857, but was remodeled and amended in 1873 and 1874, and violated almost every day and year between. Diaz is the only ruler who has succeeded in maintaining peace

MIGUEL HIDALGO

for any considerable length of time, and when he passes away the old scenes may be re-enacted, although it is to be hoped not.

MIGUEL HIDALGO.

Everything has to have a beginning, and so had the movement for independence in Mexico. So after three hundred years of Spanish misrule and oppression, the first blow for the independence of Mexico was struck by Father Hidalgo, when he went to his little church in Dolores at 11:40 at night on the 15th of September, 1810, and sounded the tocsin of liberty by the ringing of the bell of his church.

Had he known at that time what trials and tribulations Mexico would go through before independence was finally established, he might have hesitated a long while and perhaps changed his mind entirely, before compelling the bell to ring out defiance to the crown of Spain. The old regime might have continued many years without interruption, and the war for independence never have taken place.

But the future of such movements always looks bright to the over zealous patriotic heart, and so it was at this time when Father Hidalgo rang the bell

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and then read his declaration of independence, commonly called in Spanish the "Grito de Dolores."

Miguel Hidalgo at that time was the parish priest of the church at Dolores, and started his rebellion with ten armed men, who were augmented by the prisoners in the jail whom he released and armed for war. With this little army he started for the capital, and by the time he reached Guanajuato he had an army of fifty thousand men. He captured that city, established a cannon factory, and by the time he reached the environs of Mexico City his army had increased to eighty thousand. But they were a "ragtag" and "bobtail" army, poorly armed, poorly equipped and poorly disciplined, and bent more upon plunder and spoil than upon liberty or independence.

After several battles he concluded not to attack the city, as it seemed too much of an undertaking for him. He took possession of Guadalajara, organized the new government, but his army that now amounted to one hundred thousand was routed by a well disciplined Spanish army of six thousand men. He was captured and was executed at Chihuahua on the 30th day of July, 1811, and the national flag of Mexico is displayed at half mast on this day each year in honor of his memory.

MORELOS

A beautiful statue on a tall monument in Chihuahua stands to his glory today. His head was displayed upon a spear at Guanajuato as a warning to all patriots, but it is an old proverb that the blood of martyrs cries from the ground, and Spain found there were many more to follow in Father Hidalgo's footsteps. And many more did walk the same path that led to glory and to death.

MORELOS.

Among the patriots of Mexico who followed in the footsteps of Hidalgo and who sacrificed themselves for independence there is none that did more for the cause and who is deserving of more honor than Jose Maria Morelos.

He was a mule driver in his earlier years and studied for the priesthood at his own expense under the patriot Hidalgo before the insurrection. When that brave heart took up arms for liberty Morelos asked the privilege of joining the cause and organized a great army and fought a number of successful battles and won nearly all the southern part of Mexico to the cause of independence. He kept up the fight long after his old preceptor had been executed. He kept the war going for five years, and

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when he was finally captured and condemned to death, they removed him to another town outside the capital, as they feared the execution of so brave a warrior in the City of Mexico would cause a popular uprising.

He refused to escape from prison when he might have done so, as he did not wish his friends who would assist him to suffer the consequences of his escape.

He went to his death as a brave man, and with his own hands bound a handkerchief over his eyes as ordered, and was shot.

In after years his body was removed and now rests beside that of his old friend and tutor, Hidalgo, in the great cathedral. The town where he was born was renamed for him, a new state was formed and named Morelos in his honor, and the cause for which he died was successful soon after his death.

JUAREZ.

One of the strongest, if not really the greatest character of modern Mexican history, was Benito Pablo Juarez, a pure bred Indian. Left an orphan at the age of four years, he became one of Mexico's greatest heroes and was the president who, with the assistance of Diaz, defeated Maximilian, the em-

JUAREZ

peror, executed him and his generals and restored the republic, and has been designated the "George Washington" of Mexico.

By his own exertions he secured a good education and became a college professor and afterwards a lawyer. He was an alderman, a judge, a member of the house of deputies, and was imprisoned while a young man for creating an incipient rebellion. He became governor of his state and opposed the invasion by the United States.

He was cast into prison by Santa Anna and then exported to the United States, where he lived as a very poor man for two years. He then returned to his native land, engaged in a rebellion, won out and was appointed minister of justice. He went through all the stormy times of Mexico, holding many important positions, and got into prison on several occasions.

He declared himself president at Guanajuato, but owing to internal disorder carried the government with him to Guadalajara, Coloni, then to New Orleans and then back to Vera Cruz, where it was recognized for the first time by the United States, and then he got the government back to Mexico City in January, 1861.

He was president in April, 1862, when France

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declared war against Mexico and started the movement that landed Maximilian on the throne. After one or two battles Juarez moved his government to San Luis Potosi, then to Saltillo, then to Monterey, and then through several other towns to Chihuahua and then over to El Paso, in Texas.

It was a sort of a government on wheels or in the saddle. He lugged the government around several places while Maximilian was emperor, and finally turned up with it at Vera Cruz when France withdrew its support from the emperor. Juarez then started to move towards the capital and it was time for Maximilian to put his government on wheels and start with it, which he did finally, landing at Queretaro, where he was captured and where his execution took place.

Juarez then overthrew the church power, made a complete separation of church and state, and confiscated an amount of church property valued at from two hundred million to three hundred million dollars.

He died at the age of 64 years, worn out with war and turmoil. He was buried in great state in the cemetery of San Fernando, in the City of Mexico.

This is a little burial lot in the center of the

JUAREZ

city adjoining the church of that name. The church was nearly thrown down by an earthquake several years ago. It leans much out of perpendicular and the walls have heavy arches of brick thrown up against them to sustain them.

The little graveyard is overcrowded with illustrious dead and with old crypts filled with corpses shoved in side by side, each one being allowed about two feet square of space reaching six feet into the structure and labeled on the outside like the cases in a docket file in a court clerk's office.

The tomb of Juarez is a sort of mausoleum, the roof being supported by a number of Corinthian columns made of marble, the space between the columns being closed by iron railings. The monument within the edifice has a heroic size figure of the illustrious president in a recumbent position, with his head supported by a female figure. It is supposed to represent Mexico supporting the dying president. It is the work of two brothers, sculptors, who are residents of Mexico City, and the whole composes a magnificent tribute to the old soldier statesman.

Only a short distance removed from the tomb of Juarez are the graves of Miramon and Mejia, the two generals who were executed with Maximilian,

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under the administration of Juarez, and a little to the east of these is the grave of the judge before whom they were tried. Here is presented another case which seems a peculiarity of this country, the bodies of men who led opposing forces in life so close to each other and resting so peacefully in death, and further the respect paid by all to the memory of those who died in what seemed to each the path of duty.

I stood among these tombs where it was only a step from the judge to the condemned and from the conqueror to the defeated, and thought how wars were waged between them in life and of the criminations and recriminations and how they fought amid the rain of bullets and roar of cannon. Then as I thought how peacefully and quietly they rested here together awaiting the time when all should be judged by Him who judges all, I was impressed with the certainty of how completely death ends the warfare of each and every individual, and how surely the end of life ends all personal animosities between even the most bitter enemies.

NAPOLEON'S DREAM.

That which constituted Napoleon's roseate dream became Maximilian's hideous nightmare. But

NAPOLEON'S DREAM

it ended with a glorious sunrise for Mexico. In 1863 Mexico was torn with disorders. Prior to that time the government had defaulted on certain bonds due the Shylocks of France, England and Spain, and under the guise of protecting their capitalists, these three nations organized a triumvirate to take charge of the financial affairs of Mexico.

Napoleon III, then emperor of France, sent a large number of troops to enforce demands. The three countries agreed that Napoleon could offer the crown of Mexico to Maximilian, an Austrian prince, and France agreed to support him in establishing the empire.

Napoleon had overthrown the republic of France and had established an empire there. The United States, the greatest experiment in self-government the world had ever tried, was rent asunder by the rebellion and Napoleon seemed to have had a dream.

In his dream he saw the government of the United States passing away. He saw a gorgeous empire growing up under his protection in Mexico. He heard the people of the southern states of America crying to him for help. He saw in his dream another empire covering the southern states of America. He saw in his dream internal disorders in the northern

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states, and a settlement of all the difficulty by the establishment of another empire or perhaps the absorption of all the western empires into one. He saw the elimination of all the republics and of all the democratic forms of government from the face of the earth, and the dream, like all bright hallucinations, was so clothed in possibilities, plausibilities and glamour that it made him believe that it might come true.

And he related the dream as though it was a reality to Maximilian and Carlotta, and they thought it was all to come to pass, and Maximilian accepted his offer to become the first emperor and Carlotta to be the first empress in the realization of the dream, and they came in glory and magnificence to be the stars in the golden drama.

Maximilian proposed to supplant the plain, every-day affairs of the republic with the gorgeousness that existed in the days of the Montezumas. He thought he was making an advance in matters of state, but his face was turned the wrong way. He didn't know it, but he was walking backward into a trap of death.

The story is long or short, as you may wish to make it. I will make it short. In a trice the war of

NAPOLEON'S DREAM

the rebellion was over; the union of states was more strongly cemented than ever, and the United States was still a republic and the greatest nation of the earth.

The Grand Army of the Republic passed down Pennsylvania avenue in Washington in final review before the world's greatest statesman, Abraham Lincoln, and the soldiers were ready to be mustered out and return to their homes and their peaceful avocations.

And thousands upon thousands were so disbanded, but there were a quarter of a million kept under arms, while our Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, informed Napoleon that the United States could not tolerate an empire on the western hemisphere supported by a European army. Then Napoleon withdrew his troops and the dream was over. There was an awakening. The empire collapsed. Maximilian was captured, executed between two of his bravest generals, and Mexico was itself again.

In a few years more the hosts of Germany marched through France, battered down the defenses and took possession of Paris and humbled France. The last of the Napoleons was dethroned. The bloody commune followed, and out of all the wreck

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and ruin came another great republic, the Republic of France, to bless the people and help along the cause of popular government which must eventually spread over all the earth and in time govern all the people thereof.

The Twenty-fourth Letter.

PRESIDENT DIAZ.

Porfirio Diaz, the illustrious president of the Republic of Mexico, was born at Oaxaca, the 15th of September, 1830. He is of Indian blood, with a small strain of Spanish blood intermingled therewith.

He is now 76 years of age, and the question as to how Mexico will be able to get along without Diaz will, in the natural course of events, soon have to be answered. He enlisted in the army at the age of seventeen, and opposed the American invasion of 1847, but the war was over before he was able to take much or any part therein.

Since that time Diaz has led an active and warlike life. He has been connected with all the revolutions, on one side or the other, held most all positions within the province of government; was forced on more than one occasion to flee the country and to reside for a time in New Orleans and other places in

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the south; was several times arrested and made his escape.

He kept up a continual warfare during almost the entire time that Maximilian was emperor and kept the republican cause alive during that discouraging season. On one occasion he took five hundred Austrian soldiers of the Imperial army prisoners. In 1867, on the withdrawal of the French troops, he largely increased his own army and with other generals fought the imperial army and captured Puebla after a bloody assault. He defeated the imperial army also at San Lorenzo and laid siege to the City of Mexico. He drove Maximilian out of Mexico City to make his last stand and meet his fate at Queretaro, and captured the city June 1, 1867.

In October following he was a candidate for president against the great soldier and statesman, Juarez, who had formerly been his teacher when Diaz was a boy. Being defeated by Juarez, he headed a revolution which he formed against that statesman and started another march on Mexico City. After fighting a number of battles, he found it judicious to reside outside of Mexico, which he left by way of Metamoras and Brownsville, Texas.

In the meantime his old teacher, Juarez, died and a decree of amnesty was issued, under which

PRESIDENT DIAZ

Diaz again returned to his country. In 1876 he organized another revolution and was again compelled to take refuge in New Orleans, where he remained until he received a call from his old state of Oaxaca, the center of another revolution, to return.

On the voyage to Vera Cruz, thinking that he had been discovered, he jumped overboard in the gulf and likely would have been drowned, but was picked up by a boat and taken back to the steamer. At Vera Cruz, while his enemies were looking for him, he took the position of a coal heaver and escaped the vigilance of the officers and got back again and into the middle of the revolution at Oaxaca.

He defeated the government forces in 1876 and again entered the capital of the republic, while the president, who opposed him, took flight to the United States. He declared himself president, in which capacity he fought a number of other revolutionists and defeated them. For a short time he was one of the four presidents which Mexico had at one time.

After such a long, stormy and tempestuous time Diaz was regularly elected president on the 5th day of May, 1877, and his government was officially recognized by the United States in 1878. After

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-serving one term he was succeeded by President Gonzalez, as the constitution at that time provided that no person should succeed himself as president.

In the meantime he came to the United States, as far north as Boston, Mass., receiving great attention from our people.

He was re-elected president in 1884. The constitution was changed so he could succeed himself and he has been regularly elected every four years since that time.

Under his administration railroad building and other enterprises have been fostered and he has been successful in subduing all revolutions, and for the first time in many years there has been a considerable period of continued peace in Mexico.

There has been more progress and development in Mexico under his administration than in any equal period of time in the entire existence of the republic. He is a man of great executive ability, with a wonderful degree of force, coupled with much tact and clever policy. He has maintained the separation of church and state inaugurated by Juarez, and has been wonderfully successful in guiding the ship of state smoothly through a tortuous path, beset with obstructions and obstacles, and is

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entitled to be counted one of the greatest men of modern times.

Diaz is not the loved idol receiving the admiration of all classes, as some people are led to believe. I think he is feared by some and respected by all, and is supported as representing the unity of government and the exemplification of peace, and is a man who is prepared to maintain the peace he has fought for or fight for peace again.

He has, however, a hard row to hoe between the various elements that combine to make up this curious republic, many of whom are ignorant and all of whom are excitable and emotional.

Every government has to contend with the various degrees of citizenship—from those who believe in an absolute monarchy or aristocracy that would make laws compelling the many to contribute to the support of the few, to the other extreme that would all be brigands, that would rob and plunder the rich for the benefit of themselves, whom they delight in believing are the poor.

In no country on the face of the earth are these elements more in evidence than in the Republic of Mexico. A peaceful administration of the affairs of such a government calls for statesmanship of the

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very highest order, and this has been exemplified by Diaz.

Once upon a time, with a crowd of newspaper men, I called upon Diaz. We all walked by him and gave him a warm grasp of the hand and then he made us a little speech in Spanish which was repeated by his interpreter, in which he said he had faced many a cannon on the battle field, but he would rather war with men who operated guns than those who controlled newspapers, etc., etc.

I handed him a fifteen-cent badge of our association which he accepted with thanks, and for the time being we were all happy.

But the next day the leading political paper of the capital, printed in Spanish, criticized the president severely for receiving and entertaining a band of American heretics.

Having been in the newspaper business and somewhat in politics for many years, I had been accused of most everything except being a heretic, and now to be so accused was beyond the limit, and I felt deeply wounded in my heart.

My memory went back to the days when I used to get a red ticket for repeating a verse of Scripture in Sunday school, and a blue ticket for bringing a ragged heathen into the blessed sanctuary, and how

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I used to sing, "I want to be an angel." Then I thought of how I had been running a strictly religious paper, or a democratic paper, which is the same thing, all these years and was once exalted ruler of the Elks and then to be called a heretic in a language in which I could not make my answer was altogether too much.

THE LIBERTY BELL OF MEXICO.

Before leaving the city we took a last look at the liberty bell of Mexico. On our first visit to the national palace we had noticed a bell suspended over the main entrance, but we did not know its history at that time.

We afterwards found that this was almost a sacred relic of this republic, and that the 16th day of September of each year is independence day, something like our Fourth of July. On that day the declaration of independence is read, being the document written by Father Hidalgo in 1810, and this bell is rung on these occasions, and it is intimately connected with that celebrated manifesto.

The bell is about the size, or perhaps not quite so large, as the Liberty bell in Independence hall in Philadelphia. It formerly hung in a little church in Dolores and was rung by Father Hidalgo in September, 1810, in the hours of the night, to call

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the people together to strike for the independence of Mexico. When the people gathered Father Hidalgo read his declaration alluded to above and the war for independence commenced.

This bell remained in the Dolores church until 1896, when peace rested over all the republic. It was then brought to Mexico City.

The bell was escorted through the streets on a wagon ornamented with gold and flowers. It was conveyed with glory in the midst of a great procession. The wagon also bore a cannon made by Hidalgo on which was cast an inscription in Spanish, "For the defense of the faith and the purity of Holy Mary."

There were other relics of the wars for independence that came with the old bell. There were broken swords and rusty guns and bridle bits and bayonets and cannon wheels, and there were old battered bugles that had ordered many a gallant charge, and drum-sticks that had beaten the long roll, and that had never sounded a retreat.

There were antiquated implements of primitive warfare that had been used in the struggles for the independence of Mexico; old spears and pikes, and sugar cane knives that had taken the place of swords,

THE LIBERTY BELL

and they were all turned over to the nation to preserve as valued relics.

Then the old bell was raised from the wagon and placed where it is seen today, and then Father Hidalgo's declaration of independence was read and then the president reached out and grasped the rope and the old bell sounded as it had sounded long ago.

It spoke the same language that is spoken by every liberty bell, the same words that are upon our own liberty bell in old Independence hall in Philadelphia, and these are: "Proclaim liberty throughout the world and to all the inhabitants thereof."

Then the cannons boomed and the great bell in the tower of the old cathedral rang and then all the other bells in this great city of bells joined in the chorus of freedom, and then a beautiful scene was enacted.

A thousand doves, the living emblem of peace, which had been gathered from all parts of the country and around whose necks had been placed beautiful ribbons of the three bright national colors, were liberated and rose in the air and circled round and round and then flew away to their remote homes, carrying in every direction and to every part of the republic a glad message.

It was that same message that the angels sang

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at the birth of Christ: "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men." And all the people joined in glad acclaim.

TROUBLE AHEAD.

Large holdings of land, while doing a great deal in the way of the development of this country, is certain in the future to become a serious problem, and if not halted will eventually bring the lower classes of the republic to a condition of serfdom that will be a great detriment to advancement in this rich country.

The government is granting all kinds of concessions that will, if continued, make the native people of Mexico merely hewers of wood and drawers of water, while the good things of life will go to the outsiders or to the aristocrats at home. There is not much use in developing a country if it is done at the expense entirely of the common people and the profits fall into the hands of aliens or drones.

For three hundred years the descendants of Cortez have controlled large grants of land in the locality of Oaxaca, and there are other Spanish grants, and now the Americans, the English and other nationalities are taking practically all there is left.

Take, for instance, a young man from Iowa who

TROUBLE AHEAD

owns a tract of land one hundred and twenty-five miles southwest of Mexico City. It is called the "Hacienda of Santa Fe." There are twenty-two thousand acres in the piece, and this is considered only a small holding, for there are many other holdings much larger than this.

He employs three hundred men and boys and has, with their families, a population of twelve hundred on the whole place. This place has trebled in value in three years, greatly to the owner's credit, and also to his profit, while the laborers who have developed it have been paid in United States money value twenty-five cents per day for men and twelve and a half cents per day for boys.

This would appear to be a great development of Mexican property, but not a great development of Mexican men and women. Assuming the working force are half men and half boys and there are three hundred workers to the population of twelve hundred, it would give each member of the family about four and three-fourths cents a day to live on.

General Terazas, governor of the state of Chihuahua, has the credit of being the largest land owner in the republic. He has fifteen million acres.

You can ride six hundred miles on one railroad every foot of the way on this one man's land. There

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is no tax on unimproved lands, and thousands of cattle can be raised on this untaxed property for the advantage of the owner.

This makes it pretty good for the governor, but pretty hard for the poor people who have thereby to pay greater taxes than they would if such land owners would pay their share. He also owns two-thirds of all the homes in Chihuahua, a city of fifty thousand population.

I met a man at Oaxaca who told me he was looking for and enlisting men to go down into the "hot country" to work on a plantation or hacienda about two hundred miles south of where we were at that time. He said he represented a New York company that employed one thousand men on their place; that he enlisted or hired the men for six months, at the rate of fifteen dollars per month, the equivalent of seven dollars and a half American money, advancing them two months' wages when they were engaged; he then shipped them in companies of one hundred to the place; there they worked them under guard in the day time and locked them up at night. Some of them from time to time would desert and foot it back home, and as they could make thirty or forty miles a day they

TROUBLE AHEAD

were soon back to where they started from. "What do you do then?" I asked.

"Why, there is an officer called the "Jese Politico." He comes in somewhere between the mayor and the governor. He apprehends the deserter, takes him and sends him back. They always go right to their homes, so we have no trouble in getting them back every time."

I reflected: "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." It is where all turn to, civilized or savage. It is where the slave owner always looks first for his slave.

A man named Smith, a son of the eminent confederate general of the same name, is said to be the largest dealer in peon labor in Mexico.

They have a system here compelling the peons to work out their debts and the services of people in debt are sold somewhat in the manner of involuntary servitude and the debtors seem to be practically slaves until they work themselves out of debt, which may be a remote possibility, but not always a certainty. Smith handles five thousand to six thousand peons at all times and furnishes them to various plantations on contracts just as any other dealer might contract to furnish horses or mules. This system, if continued, is bound to bring distress, unrest and dis-

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turbance, and unless changed and these abuses eradicated, there is still trouble ahead for poor old Mexico. I think Diaz is making many mistakes in the many concessions he is granting.

The school books tell us that slavery was introduced into the United States by the Dutch, who brought negro slaves to Jamestown, Virginia, in the year 1619, but, as a matter of fact, slavery began in the United States by men who indentured themselves to work for a certain time for some one who would pay their fare from the old world to the new.

Speculators then enlisted companies, brought them over and sold them out. They were followed by others who kidnapped men and brought them over and sold their services. Then it was discovered that it was easier to kidnap black men than white men, so the regular African slave trade was inaugurated which led to such disastrous results.

Mexico is breeding trouble in a similar way at this time.

A LAST WORD.

We had now been in Mexico more than two weeks, and when we summed up all we had seen and all we had learned, we were surprised by the

A LAST WORD

volume it would fill. We felt pleased with our visit and well repaid for our time, and were ready to start for home and leave much that we did not see, and that would fill a much larger volume.

We retired to rest in a train of the great National Railway of Mexico on Saturday night, and on Sunday morning we were many miles from Mexico City and away from the higher mountains and shooting along over miles of track so straight that an arrow shot from a bow would waver more in its course than the train on which we were riding. Every revolution of the wheels brought us nearer home, and the wheels made each whirl faster than we could count, and we rejoiced to know that we would soon be back in the dear old capital of Illinois, among our friends and kinfolks, where everybody knows us and where we know everybody.

In all our travels we found no temple more beautiful than our own great capitol; no fortress more graceful than our own great armory, and no shrine where we could worship with greater devotion than the tomb of our immortal Lincoln, and no friends more loved or loving than our old friends at home.

And then we came to the Rio Grande river. On the one side was the republic of Mexico, on the

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other the union of America's great states, and from the custom house floated the flag of all flags, the one we all love so well, and I never saw a flag that looked more beautiful.

It is a glorious and thrilling feeling, after you have traveled in a foreign country, to get back once more to the land of your birth and realize fully that you are right under the very center of the canopy of heaven, where God reigns, where every man is a brother, and

"Where the stars and stripes above you
Seem to whisper, 'boys, I love you,'
And the Eagle welcomes all beneath its wings."

And this is the end of this series of letters.

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