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WILLIAM  
PHILADEL

1886



A

# DESCRIPTIVE READING

ON

# PICTURESQUE MEXICO

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## PICTURESQUE MEXICO.

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FOUR days from the Crescent City to Vera Cruz is a very delightful trip unless a gentle occurrence, called a "norther," attempts to sport with the steamer. Far away in the north, on the bleak plains of Dakota and Montana, the breeze starts, and increasing in fury it moves southward; and when it strikes the Gulf of Mexico the breeze has become the norther, and woe betide the passenger who feels its effects. Vessels are seldom lost, for they are built to roll and give to the winds; the genial captain of our steamer assured us that she was so good at this kind of gymnastics that there was not the slightest danger, for should she roll too far she would come up the other side.

Four days from the highest modern civilization to a land where the people still do as they have been doing for the past three hundred years; where the rich and poor kneel side by side in a common church; a land where the sights of the year one are mingled with the modern telephone and street car. Let the spectator imagine a warm, humid air, a tropical sun and sky, and we will introduce our first view.

1. **Vera Cruz Harbor.**—Like all those on the east coast of Mexico this harbor is a very poor one. The people and baggage are transferred from the steamer to the shore in small boats, which are frequently upset, giving the passengers a free bath, greatly to their disgust, but much to the enjoyment of the natives.

The harbor is rendered dangerous by the northers which often visit it; constant watch is kept by the signal service, and

upon the first indication of one a small blue flag is run up. This is known by all as the danger signal, and anyone venturing on the water after it is up is subject to a heavy fine. These northers change the temperature in a few minutes from tropical heat to a chill, raw atmosphere that renders life miserable. The sand is lifted and flung against the windows of the houses with such force by these storms that they resemble ground glass.

In the massive stone pier are sunk heavy rings for securing the boats. During the northers the sea rolls with such violence as to sweep the pier its entire length.

**2. Street in Vera Cruz showing Cathedral.**—Vera Cruz, the first Spanish settlement on the coast, is quite an important city. It has a population of about 15,000, composed of a motley collection from many nations. The city is built in a semicircle facing the sea, and is regularly laid out; the streets, which are wider than usual in tropical countries, running east and west from the harbor, with others crossing them at right angles. The gutters are in the middle of the street, and the sidewalks, when there are any, with the exception of those along one or two of the principal streets, are rendered almost impassable by the presence of sleeping dogs, that with characteristic laziness refuse to move for the pedestrian.

The town is well defended by a strong wall and by the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, which stands upon an island about half a mile from the shore.

It was upon this island that the first landing was made by Cortes, April 21, 1519. On the following day he landed where the present city stands. Because his landing was upon Good Friday, and because of the rich gold mines discovered, he gave to the city he founded the name of "The Rich City of the Holy True Cross."

The cathedral, like most of the antique buildings, is beau-



tiful, but one's enjoyment of it is considerably marred by the incessant drum of the wooden clapper used by the priests to summon the people to prayer, since the Government prohibited the use of the oftentimes too unmusical bell.

3. **Plaza in Vera Cruz.**—This pretty plaza is not large and full of distant views as are many of those in Mexico; but it is quaint and curious, with its antique stone bench surrounding it, and its fountain, and its pavilion for the musicians; for the Mexicans love music, and every town has its band. The distinctive feature of this plaza is that it is surrounded with buildings, and is so small that the mind at once conceives the idea of a private garden rather than a public park. It is lovely in the evening, when the moon shining through the gracefully waving branches of the tall cocoanut trees makes it appear like fairyland; and it is the scene of frequent love-making by the bewitching and bright-eyed little Mexican maids.

4. **Patio of the Hotel Universal.**—The scene before us is a repetition of the usual Mexican interior, for all Mexican houses are built in the form of a hollow square, and light and air have access through the center as well as the outside. In the private residences it is here that the people eat their dinners, take their siestas, and in every way use the open gallery or hall as a room. When, however, the house is a "combination of private residences," that is, where each family occupy one or two floors, the gallery is surrounded at each story with a veranda, and the lower floor is sometimes used as a stable or storehouse. The higher up a Mexican lives the better he likes it, and in this warm climate the patios and verandas are used more than the rooms as places to enjoy life and receive company, the latter being a very stately ceremony on the part of a Mexican family.

5. **Peak of Orizaba from Vera Cruz Railroad.**—This grand mountain peak, rising 17,370 feet above the sea level, forms one of the individual lofty peaks of the range. It is visible at every turn of the Vera Cruz Railroad. After the train has run out of the rich tropical growth near the Gulf, as the cars wind up through the more mountainous districts, there appears the glistening white summit of this Giant of the Tribe, his head capped with perpetual snow. As we journey toward it, it appears to recede, until finally, when we reach the plains of the Valley of Mexico, the grand old peak is still far to the north, continuing the same silent watch that it has kept for ages.

6. **A Street Corner in Cordova.**—As we present four views of Cordova it will be well to say something of the general appearance of the place. Cordova is a Mexican paradise; from a hill half a mile distant looking toward the town the traveler is enchanted by the glow of tropical life: flowers of exquisite beauty everywhere, and vines and shrubs climbing over and branching above the little low, white-walled, red-roofed houses, which peep through here and there, the rich red of the tiled roofs forming a most deliciously cool and grateful prospect. Let us draw nearer the town and stop a moment to interview the family in the doorway of the little house on the corner.

We learn that this pretty scene is the home of a "panadero," or baker. His house, which, by the way, has native shingles on the roof instead of the usual red tiles, is as neat as can be made with eternal scrubbing and numerous coats of paint. His family, though all have bare feet, are as fresh in their attire of white muslin as the house in its new paint. Part of his wood supply has been dropped in front of his door; and though the day's business may be lost, his family and himself will stand and talk with us as long as we may stay. But time presses. Let us move on.

7. **Scene in the Tropics, Cordova.**—As we leave our genial baker friend we turn to the left, and the full glory of a tropical day opens before us.

“ Now the noonday quiet holds the hill ;  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.  
The purple flower droops ; the golden bee  
Is lily-cradled.”

In the foreground are some burros (which would not stand still to be photographed) loaded with firewood. The luxuriant vegetation is prominent, while in the distance is the row of red-tiled houses, and faintly beyond is the white tower of the village church. Absurd as the idea may seem, the pole and wire faintly discernible to the left connect the town with the Indian village of Amatlan, some six miles away, by telephone. We will leave this scene of tropic beauty and approach the town.

8. **A Hilly Street in Cordova.**—As we approach nearer the town proper we descend a little slope and have before us the row of red-tiled houses seen in the preceding picture. The first house to the left is of architecture somewhat different from the general rule, being half wood and half stone. As there is not, with the exception of a street car, a single four-wheeled vehicle in Cordova, little children play in the middle of the street with perfect safety, as the patient burro never dreams of stepping on one. The garden to the right is filled with coffee plants, for Cordova is in the midst of a coffee-raising district. Just upon the brow of the hill, over the houses to the right, we see the graceful palmetto adding beauty to the landscape.

9. **Street and Mountain, Cordova.**—As we reach the top of the little hill shown in the preceding picture, we

glance to the right and are struck by the exquisite beauty of the scene. The slope we have just ascended falls off again, and again we see the dreamy beauty of this enchanting town. In the distance are the mountains; and the valley between them and the town is but a tangle of tropical growth.

At midday Cordova sleeps, the siesta lasting from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon. No one thinks of working. Why should they? Nature abundantly provides food, and the intense heat renders anything but the lightest clothing a burden.

The afternoon sun shines brightly, and the shadows are in delightful relief. Soon the sunlight will fade away, and the soft beauty of a night in Cordova is upon us.

Moonlight in the Eden of Mexico! Flowers everywhere; cape jessamine and orange blossoms strike against you as you walk along the grassy road, and the stately calla is a common wild flower. In the plaza one leans his back against an allspice tree and inhales the fragrance of myriads of roses and sweet-scented flowers of almost every variety known to hot climates. It is to this spot that all Cordova repairs in the evening. The Mexican girl, to enhance her beauty, adorns her hair with the cocuyo or firefly, held captive by a single strand of hair, its flash of light far outshining the most brilliant gems.

**10. Picturesque Street in Orizaba.**—Orizaba, the mountain pearl, lies at the foot of the mountain from which it takes its name. The houses are not built of the regulation adobe, but are constructed of stone with red tile roofs, making a pleasing variety for the eye, some of the smaller huts even being constructed of matted bamboo.

As is shown in our picture, the streets of this town are so clean that the people can with impunity lay their washing on the stones to dry.

The town, being at an elevation of four thousand feet above the sea level, is more moderate in temperature than many of the neighboring cities, and has been a place of retreat in summer for the people of Vera Cruz, and a pleasant resort in winter for the people of the plateau ; it was a favorite resort of the Emperor Maximilian.

In the War of Independence the town was several times besieged ; and on the night of June 13, 1862, a little force of one hundred French Zouaves surprised and routed a force of between four and five thousand Mexicans.

**11. Street and Cathedral, Orizaba.**—This picture gives the spectator an idea of the indifference paid to time in Mexico. Everything will do “to-morrow.” The ruined wall in the distance has been in that condition for years, and will probably be so for years to come, as the inhabitants think always that “to-morrow” will be time enough to begin to remove it, and their to-morrow never comes. The old wall to the left incloses a magnificent flower garden, owned by the chief custom official of Orizaba, a gentleman who lives but for flowers and birds. Anyone can enter through the gateway shown in the old wall, and wander at will through a wilderness of sweetest blossoms, and if he should be so fortunate as to meet the owner, he will have the pedigree and virtues of each and every plant explained in the richest of Spanish or most broken English. He will not be allowed to depart until he is loaded down with blossoms by its kind-hearted proprietor.

**12. Tropical Scenery, Orizaba.**—Orizaba is a gem, a veritable treasure to the antiquarian, the artist and the pleasure seeker in general. The days are warm, the nights cool, the scenery peculiarly grand and the fruits and flowers varied and numerous. Our view shows the quaint buildings

rising one after another on the mountain-side, and the bed of the stream which winds its way through the town—

“Babbling low, amid the tangled woods,  
Slips down through moss-grown stones with endless laughter.”

In the foreground is a wall around a banana grove, the graceful leaves of the tree drooping over it. To the right is a Mexican oven built of clay, for an indoor oven is unknown in this land of happiness.

Nobody but the storekeepers appear to work; and should you by accident happen to ask a man tending shop the location of some place a mile away, it is very probable he will close his shop or leave it to run itself, while the proprietor, with many bows, smiles and cigarettes, accompanies you, and remains with you until you are ready to return—and all for kindness.

Well may they be obliging, for Nature sets the example by furnishing fruits upon which one can live in abundance. Here grow spices, bananas, oranges, pineapples, coffee, tea, yams and plantains; and when one variety has ripened and gone, another is ready, until it is no wonder that the people of this dreamy old place have sixteen more holidays than there are days in the year, and keep them all.

**13. Scenery about Orizaba, from Hotel de la Borda.**—The curious main street winds through the town, and in the center are two old Mexican inns; one called the “Diligencia,” from the fact that the diligence or stage coach, which still runs, has stopped there every day since it was first established; opposite is the “Hotel de la Borda,” managed by a little German woman, who years ago drifted to this beautiful spot upon the sea of adversity. So affiliated has she become to the land of her adoption that she remembers scarcely a word of her native tongue. The view from this

hotel gives a good idea of the location of Orizaba, nestling in a little valley, surrounded on all sides by mountains.

Here the Mexican neatness in painting their houses is admirably shown; when we consider that the white part is scrupulously white, and that the colored part is a rich terracotta, and that the paints are made from the minerals by the crude art of the Indians, the appearance of their dwellings is indeed a great credit to these simple, happy people.

**14. Mexican Kitchen, Orizaba.**—This view is peculiarly interesting, particularly to the ladies, for in the right of the picture is the entire outfit of an Orizaba “chef.” A Mexican kitchen would make an ordinary hotel cook faint with surprise, for the average Mexican will do more cooking over a six-inch hole in an earthen pot filled with burning charcoal than an American will over a four-foot range. The small earthen charcoal brazier and three or four pots or jugs, perhaps one or two pans, a wooden paddle and a woven fan of palmetto complete the kitchen furniture. Charcoal is put in the “brazier” from crates of this material (as noticeable in the picture), and by means of the fan the fire is brought to a red heat; and every kind of broiling, frying, boiling, etc., will be done for a family of a dozen persons over this contracted fire-pot. The Mexicans won’t have anything better, for cooking stoves sent to Mexico share a fate similar to that of the wheelbarrows once sent there by an enterprising Yankee, which, after the wheels had been taken off, were used on the shoulders and backs of the natives, who thought the new style basket very nice.

The Franco-Mexican landlady of a hotel on the street on the Cinco del Mayo, City of Mexico, had a stove sent her from St. Louis, costing there seventeen dollars. By the time it reached her it had increased in value, by addition of duties, freight, etc., to some seventy dollars. She, however, persevered

and set it up, only to have each one of her cooks strike and leave—and to-day upon her hands is a melancholy wreck of a rusty stove.

**15. Old Bridge at Acambaro.**—Our picture shows the only thing in Acambaro that has a prosperous or business-like appearance, this having been built some years ago when the town was a stopping place of some importance, and had a considerable trade. Now it is of no importance at all, only a delightful do-nothing, down-at-the-heel Mexican town, having a beautiful little old-fashioned, uncared-for plaza, where the Mexican eagle sits on a fountain complacently eating his snake. With its tumble-down, one-story adobe houses, and its town-folk who are content to sun themselves and be thankful that sunshine is so plentiful and so cheap, the town is very satisfactory as it is. Its picturesque appearance requites one for the general decay, and the air of dreamy, delicious idleness that pervades the place induces one to forgive the native laziness.

**16. Puebla, showing Popocatepetl.**—The city of Puebla is built on the side of a gently sloping hill, an arrangement that makes its drainage excellent and adds greatly to its picturesqueness. The two volcanoes, Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, are in full view west of the city, and being quite near, without intervening hills, are impressive and magnificent. Our picture gives a very accurate idea of the flat-roofed style of Mexican architecture.

From the foot on the hill of Guadalupe may be seen one of the great views of the world, three snow-crowned volcanoes, and a fourth mountain, whose top is just below the snow line. Over the low hill of Amaluca is seen the crest of Orizaba, to the left a long, broken hill, rising between two smaller ones; farther to the left the height of Malintzi; far away the Cerro del Conde, and then a gradually rising line that culminates in the peaks of Iztaccihuatl and Popocatepetl.



**17. Puebla, showing Iztaccihuatl.**—In the foreground is the foot of Loreto, beyond the city is the Cerro de San Juan, with its hacienda, having three great arches in its facade; directly beyond this is seen the Church of Los Remedios upon the Pyramid of Cholula.

“Groves, through whose broken roof the sky looks in,  
Mountain and shattered cliff and sunny vale,  
The distant lake, fountains and mighty trees,  
In many a lazy syllable repeating  
Their old poetic legends to the wind.”

Puebla is a manufacturing center, and has large manufactories of cotton cloth, glassware, pottery and inlaid steel bits. The streets are delightfully clean and quite wide; all the crossways are little causeways, quite necessary during the rainy season.

A peculiar feature of the city is the use of richly glazed tiles for both interior and exterior house decoration, and much finely wrought iron work will be found in both churches and houses.

The market of Puebla is peculiarly interesting, and here may be bought colored straw baskets and mats and other curious Indian manufactures.

**18. Puebla, showing Cathedral.**—Elevated upon a terrace the cathedral stands out boldly from the surrounding buildings. On the west front rise two lofty towers, and between them is the main entrance, surmounted by moldings in white marble. An inscription upon the old tower tells that its cost was a hundred thousand dollars. In this tower are eighteen bells, the largest weighing upward of nine tons. The building is massive in construction, with heavy buttresses, the whole of a dark stone resembling blue basalt.

In its interior decoration this cathedral is the finest in Mexico. The aisles are divided off by massive columns, and the floor is laid in colored marbles. The interior has recently

been renovated, and we are happy to say with sound judgment and excellent taste, so seldom displayed in the renovation of these beautiful churches. The high altar is composed of a great variety of Mexican marbles, onyx predominating. The two organs are encased in richly carved wood, and adorned with figures of angels blowing trumpets. The cathedral is also decorated with fine ivory carving and many fine pictures.

**19. Street in Puebla, with Church of San Christobal.**—This church was founded, together with a foundling hospital, early in the seventeenth century. The facade is of dark stone, similar to that used in the cathedral, and similarly ornamented by carvings in white marble. The interior effect is one of extraordinary richness, probably produced by the ceiling of intricate stucco work. The pulpit is of onyx.

The raised seats at the sides of the nave are for men, the seats in the nave are for women, an arrangement very unusual. The church is also ornamented with oil paintings, one or two of which are well worthy of attention. This church has recently been "restored," which happily does not mean in this case, as it does in many others, that all its artistic beauty has been destroyed.

**20. Aztec Pyramid of Cholula.**—Leaving the city of Puebla in the morning and driving about nine miles over a dusty, winding road we reach the far-famed pyramid. The view in this instance is particularly good, for though it dispels all idea of a pyramid as we have been accustomed to think of them, particularly those in Egypt, yet it shows the general form and the chapel at the top with peculiar distinctness. This pyramid is built of sun-dried adobe bricks, but time and the different races of people who have held the country have disfigured its shape until it resembles a small irregular mountain instead of a square pyramid, which was undoubtedly its

original shape. To-day upon the summit stands the church of Neustra Senora de Los Remedios, and a constant travel up the long limestone steps is kept up by the penitents from the town of Cholula at the base. The Indians of Cholula have found that the American visitor loves curios and antiques, and the weary climber of pyramids no sooner reaches the top of this old mound than he is surrounded by numerous young Indians of both sexes, who have baskets of stone and clay idols picked up around the place, and one is enabled for a few coins to purchase all the gods of the ancient Aztec calendar.

When this pyramid was built is not known, its history being lost in the years preceding the coming of Cortes; but it is certainly wonderful, being larger than those of Egypt, and built by a people who were infants in feats of engineering compared with the Egyptians. A theory advanced by more than one eminent antiquarian is that it is the tomb of some ancient monarch, whose last command was that every year so many layers of bricks should be built over him. The Indian, with the love for his king which characterized the Aztec, faithfully obeyed the command, until generations passed away and ruler and rule were alike forgotten.

**21. Panorama of the City of Mexico.**—The City of Mexico lies nearly in the center of the valley of Mexico, at an elevation of 7,434 feet above the sea level. The ancient city of Tenochtitlan covered about one-fourth of the area occupied by the existing City of Mexico.

“The site of the City of Tenochtitlan was chosen by the gods. In the southwestern border of Lake Tezcuco one morning, in 1300, a wandering tribe of Aztecs saw an eagle perched with outstretched wings upon a cactus, and holding a serpent in its talons. At a word from their priests they took possession of the marsh, and there stayed their migration and founded the city. Such is the tradition. As men

love to trace their descent back to some storied greatness, nations delight to associate the gods with their origin.

“Originally the Aztecs were barbarous. In their southern march they brought with them only their arms and a spirit of sovereignty. The valley of Anahuac, when they reached it, was already peopled ; in fact, had been so for ages. The cultivation and progress they found and conquered there reacted upon them. They grew apace, and as they carried their shields into neighboring territory, as by intercourse and commerce they crept from out their shell of barbarism, as they strengthened in opulence and dominion, they repudiated the reeds and rushes of which their primal houses were built, and erected enduring temples and residences of Oriental splendor.

“Under the smiles of the gods, whom countless victims kept propitiated, the city threw abroad its arms, and, before the passage of a century, became the emporium of the valley. Its people climbed the mountain around, and, in pursuit of captives to grace their festivals, made the conquest of ‘Mexico.’ The arts grew and flourished ; its market became famous ; the nobles and privileged orders made it their dwelling-place ; wealth abounded ; as a consequence, a vast population speedily filled its walls and extended them as required.”

We have before us a bird’s eye view of one of the principal streets of the city, which greatly resembles one of our more modern cities. To the left, however, the Mexican style of flat roof will be observed. The average Mexican roof of a private house is as flat as a pavement, and generally the stamping ground for numerous broods of chickens. The roofs are made to serve as gardens and promenades, and the contrast between their picturesque beauty and the barrenness of the tin and slate roofs of our own country is most noticeable.

**22. The Cathedral, City of Mexico.**—The cathedral, which is built upon or near the site of the great Aztec temple

destroyed by the Spaniards when they conquered the city, was built in 1524. The building measures 387 feet from north to south, 177 feet from east to west, with an interior height of 179 feet. It is built of gray stone, with statues, friezes, bases and capitals of white marble, making a harmonious color effect. We have large buildings and grand ones in this country, but we have none that excite the peculiar feeling of awe that the perfect outlines of the towers of this noble building do, as they rear their massive forms like twin giants over the roofs and pinnacles of the city. These belfries are grandly beautiful, hung with ponderous bells weighing tons. No man can imagine how they were built and the bells placed in position by means of the crude labor and implements possessed by these people.

The interior is severely simple in style ; its beauty is marred by the wooden floors and modern altars, and by a lack of suitable decoration. The central arches form a Latin cross, above which rises a fine dome.

**23. Aztec Calendar Stone.**—This wonderful relic of ancient Mexico is a large stone, about eight feet in diameter, several inches thick, and its face is covered with signs and figures. By means of this stone the subjects of Montezuma were enabled to know the seasons, the months, the moon's phases, and the movements of many heavenly bodies. It is curious to think of the great wisdom these ancient people possessed ; for the amount of knowledge depicted on the calendar stone is astonishing, and only proves how great progress the Indians had made when visited by Cortes and his band of destruction.

**24. Plaza Guadalupe, City of Mexico.**—One of the most charming environs of Mexico is the little village of Guadalupe.

In primitive times the Aztec divinity, the "Mother of Gods," had a shrine at this place. One morning while a native was on his way to early mass, as he neared the hill he heard the music of angels; looking up he beheld a lady, who told him that in this place should be built a temple to her honor. When the bishop heard the story he could not give it credence. The Indian returned and told the lady of the bishop's incredulity; she bade him come to her again. On the following Sunday she appeared to him and repeated her order that the temple should be built. The bishop, still incredulous, heard the message, and ordered the Indian to bring some sign by which the truth of his statements would be proved. He again met the lady and told her that he was required to bring some sign of her appearance. She ordered him to cut some flowers from that barren hill, and to his amazement he perceived flowers growing there. She commanded him to take these miraculous blossoms to the bishop as the sign that he had requested. He wrapped them in his mantel and hurried away; and then, from the spot where the Holy Lady stood, there gushed forth a spring of blackish water, which is now venerated as an antidote for all ills. No less than four churches have been built in honor of this miraculous appearance.

Before us is a part of what was once a "barren hill." The luxuriant growth of trees and shrubs and sweet-scented flowers, with the music of the fountain, makes this indeed a place of enchantment, where one could dream his life away.

**25. Market Day in the City of Mexico.**—In one sense of the word every day is market day here, for there are always venders, and numbers of them, in the crowded, dirty little market of the capital. The City of Mexico has the most unpleasant market in the Republic, and its small, narrow confines are taken up with venders of articles of every descrip-

tion, from beans to boots, and from hot cakes to shawls. These merchants are all mixed up together, all talking at once, and each one determined to be heard; a babel of tongues, a mixture of men, women, burros, dogs and babies, and a wonderful combination of odors. In short, the market of Mexico is a meeting of as motley a group of sounds, sights and smells as could be conceived by the wildest imagination.

The scene in the picture shows a street in front of the market, which contains the overflow of the market proper, and is sometimes full for a long distance. In the foreground are the women, with hot tomalies and other compounds of corn meal and cayenne pepper in their baskets.

One curious feature of the market is that a single article can be bought at as cheap a rate as one hundred. If you ask the price of one orange you will be told "one centaro," and the price of one hundred oranges will be solemnly quoted as "one hundred centaros."

**26. Street Market Scene, City of Mexico.**—You will notice that even when market is held in the streets the vegetables are piled right on the dirty pavement.

Much amusement is afforded strangers by the curious way in which a hat merchant will peddle his wares. He puts one hat on top of another until he has a pile six feet high, then he places the whole structure on his head, strutting up and down like an animated barber's pole, and yelling at the top of his voice. When he makes a sale he doffs not one, but a dozen hats.

Every article that is needed by the average Mexican can be found at these street markets, charcoal, crockery, vegetables, poultry, fruit, flowers and birds being included in the number.

**27. Water Carrier.**—In this land of wonders and absurd practices the water carrier is no exception to the rule. He is

generally a man, though sometimes he is an adjunct in the shape of a lanky, flat-eared donkey, which meanders along as if he had nothing in particular to do and did not care how he did it. The man water carrier is generally loaded fore and aft, that is, he will carry a big stoneware jug, or "olla," in front, and a still larger one, or infant barrel, on his back, the latter held in place by a sort of harness, and its falling weight taken by a strap over the forehead.

The donkey, on the other hand, is loaded to port and starboard, and as the jugs or kegs stick out from his body in each direction, and the donkey is not particular as to whom he bumps on his travels, he usually has the section of country through which he is moving entirely to himself.

These water carriers can be seen in all parts of the Republic, at all hours of the day, here and there, both men and donkeys always at a sort of trot, never seeming to have any idea of their destination, but, like Tennyson's brook, going on forever.

**28. La Viga Canal, City of Mexico.**—The name of this canal is probably derived from the wooden bridges of vigas (beams) which once spanned it. It is one of the most interesting sights of the city, for here it is that the middle and lower classes resort on Sunday and feast-day afternoons. If a stranger desires to take a trip on the canal, the beginning of the cruise is almost a fight with the crowd of boatmen as to which boat shall be taken and the amount to be paid for its use. By playing the men against each other, and finally pretending to give up the expedition in disgust, a reasonable price will be made. The boats are flat-bottomed, twelve or fifteen feet long, and about four feet wide, the whole affair looking like a species of rude gondola. After starting we almost immediately pass through the Garita de la Viga, where the merchandise boats are halted to pay the city tax. Out-



side the Garita a line of boats, loaded with firewood, is usually found, for the larger boats cannot pass through the narrow passages formed by the stone arches.

Our stalwart gondolier is evidently out for a pleasant time, and is taking his fair lady to one of the resorts down the canal.

If you have made the trip on Sunday or on a feast day, the return trip is one of the memorable sights of Mexico. The canal is crowded with boats of all sorts and sizes, filled with light-hearted merrymakers. On every side may be heard the tinkling of guitars and the sound of voices; on the larger boats dancing is going on. With the moon in the clear, blue sky, the lights of the city in the distance, and the delicious fragrance of flowers pervading the atmosphere, one may believe that he is in a place of enchantment.

**29. Vegetable Boats on the La Viga Canal.**—The canal is the high road of traffic for certain classes of Mexicans, inasmuch as it leads from the once floating gardens to the populous part of the city. Every day can be seen numberless boats of every size and age freighting flowers, fruits and vegetables to the city. These vegetable boats are long, narrow affairs, as will be seen by the group in the picture, moored side by side. Each and every one bears a most fanciful name, and the owners, with a keen sense of the ludicrous, use the national jokes as names for their boats. One extremely ancient and dilapidated boat is given the name of "The English Debt." This is in derision, as the Mexicans cordially hate the English, to whom a national debt is owed, and probably will be for long years to come. The vegetable boats are very long, some forty feet, very narrow, square-bow and stern, seldom painted and as ugly as can be conceived. When filled with vegetables, however, they are beautiful, for the Mexican gardener piles his cabbages, turnips and beets,

with an eye to the picturesque, in regular strips and cones, varying the size and color, until a dingy vegetable boat resembles a pretty bouquet, enlarged and resting in a rude rustic box.

**30. Shipping Pulque.**—Every one has heard of the century plant, but many do not know that this giant cactus is the natural beer brewery of Mexico. The century plant in this country is but a dwarf beside its brother in the land of Montezuma, where it grows with the center stalk bearing a flower, the whole sometimes twenty feet or more in height. Thousands and thousands of acres of this plant are under cultivation to furnish the national drink. When the plant has reached maturity the center is cut out and a bowl-like cavity is formed, which slowly fills with the juice. The pulque gatherer then comes along with a pig skin sewed up to form a bag, and by means of a long gourd he sucks the juice out of the plant bowl into the skin bag. When by repeated visits to different plants the skin is filled, it is deposited on a cart and hauled to the railroad stations and poured in casks, as seen in the picture. Pulque, when fresh, is rather pleasant, being sweet and having somewhat the taste of Russian "koomis," but when a few days old and fermented, to the enlightened taste it is simply disgusting. Imagine a slimy liquid having a taste between that of slightly sour milk and the odor of ancient eggs, and you have pulque. But the Mexicans love it and thrive on it, and it is the great drink for young and old.

**31. Bull Fight.**—The picture represents the introduction of the participants of the most barbarous sport in the world; and it is a puzzle to understand how a people so gentle and sensitive in many respects can be so wanton and brutal in others. The entrance into the ring of the bull fighters and their assistants, as shown in the picture, is the signal for a

storm of applause from the thousands of people sitting in their places of comfort around the arena. Fair ladies and noble-looking men are there, together with all other classes, to feast their eyes on this brutal exhibition of animal suffering. Men, too, sometimes suffer, for many fighters are annually killed by the maddened "torro;" and at one exhibition in Toluca, when a maddened bull squared accounts with a fighter, the people commented on the "lovely fight in which nine horses and one torrero were killed." You will understand that good horses are not used in this massacre; only old sorry wrecks, blinded with a fancy head gear, are ridden, and the bull is allowed to deliberately thrust his powerful horn through the horse's ribs, generally tearing a hole large enough to run an arm in. The audience applaud as the blood spurts out, and the suffering and dying brute falls while his rider is still spurring him toward the exit of the arena.

Little do people realize the awful work of the bull ring. While the better-minded people of the Republic have a petition to prohibit this cruel sport before the Government, still the seats are always filled, and the audience is composed of the flower of Mexico. Let us hope that the day will come when the cruelty of the bull ring will be a thing of the past, and lovely Mexico will be freed from the terrible influences of this great national crime.

**32. A Mexican Saloon.**—Of course the saloon of Mexico is like those of other countries in its chief aspect—drink—but in Mexico the saloon is not abused as in our land. An American takes a drink not because he is thirsty in the true sense of the word, but because he loves beer, or wine, or whisky, as the case may be; but the Mexican, besides loving the pulque, lives in a land of heat and poor water, therefore the workman, the wayfarer, and the dusty cattle driver all seek the one haven—the "Pulquerio"—and there enjoy the

pulque to their hearts' content. Seldom is seen, however, scenes of drunkenness or disorder, for the Mexican people in their ignorance seem to have more regard for propriety than their more enlightened neighbors to the North.

The name of the saloon in the picture with the painted flags above it indicates the proprietor's desire to inform the general public that he entertains people of all nations. This saloon, however, bears a modest title, for many fanciful names are used, such as the "Explosion," "The Lover's Retreat," "The Shower of Pearls," "The Wreath of Flowers," "The Bull Ring," "The Joy of the People," each proprietor striving to outdo his neighbor in the selection of a name calculated to please and attract.

**33. Chapultepec (Maximilian's Garden).**—At the sound of that name what memories of the past arise! The castle-crowned hill, the passes leading to it, the road winding around the hill to the summit, the beautiful grounds surrounding it, laid out with shrubbery gardens dotted with statues commemorating past events—these are the fitting home of the countless legends that encircle this massive pile.

This is a palace in fact as well as in name, an immense building, in which are large halls and galleries handsomely decorated.

Chapultepec is a little more than two miles southwest of the city. The hill is one of several isolated rocks which protrude above the swampy soil of the valley. Being surrounded by a marsh it was occupied by the founders of Tenochtitlan before making there still more secure city in the middle of the lake.

At its eastern foot is a large spring, whence a portion of the city's water supply is drawn. Legend says that the cavern from which this spring issues was in years gone by inhabited by Malinche, whose sweet singing enchanted "caballeros," luring them to certain destruction.

At the base of the hill is a large grove of ancient and moss-grown cypresses, dating from before the conquest, forming one of the most impressive sights in Mexico.

**34. The Terrace (Chapultepec).**—This picture shows the marbled terrace around one of the gardens of the palace.

“All round about the fragrant marge  
From fluted vase and urn  
In order, tropic flowers large,  
Some dropping low their crimson bells  
Half closed, and others, studded wide  
With disks and tiars, fed the time  
With odor.”

The beautiful building has never been completed, for on entering the doors, shown in the right of the picture, the eye is met by bare brick walls, and there is nothing but dreary emptiness in the hall once designed to be royally beautiful.

From this lofty elevation the view is superb. Directly in front lies the City of Mexico, dimly distinct and recalling many memories of the picture it must have presented to Cortes, when he and his band climbed the mountain wall. There are the blue waters of the four lakes; facing the city is a glorious succession of fields and hamlets; to the right is the charming suburb of Tacubaya; in the southeast, above a long range of mountains, are the volcanic peaks, poetized by the Aztecs into the “White Woman” and the “Smoking Hill;” and in the distance looms up the silvery head of Orizaba.

This castle was the place where the flower of the Mexican cadets and the noblest of the land rallied to defend the country against the invading Yankee, or “Gringo.” What a determined fight was made no tongue can tell, and the eye of the cadet of to-day (for the lower part of the castle is now the National Military School) flashes fire as he speaks of the heroic defense made forty years ago!

**35. In the Hanging Gardens, Chapultepec.**—As we enter the doors, shown in the picture, of the terrace and are struck by the evident neglect, we pass directly through this apartment and through opposite doors into the gardens of the castle. Hanging gardens do not hang, but are far up on the different elevations of the castle. The picture shows the principal garden of the front castle, and its romantic interior is faithfully depicted, filled with trees, shrubs, flowers and beautiful statuary. In the distance is the dome of the castle. Close to the right hand corner is seen one of the numerous secret passages leading to some other part of the buildings, to what part is not known, for the wardens are jealous of strangers, and wherever the visitor may turn he may be sure there are watchful eyes noting every movement. An attempt to pluck a single flower will bring a stern command in Spanish to cease, by which, if he is careful, the visitor will be guided in future.

In the castle cleanliness reigns with peace and quiet, and the Mexican cadet there learns the art of war, and in the long, dreamy afternoons reads of the past when the empire of Mexico was in its glory, and trusts the day may come when he may do as his ancestors did—fight and die for his native land!

**36. Old Spanish Castle and Street, Morelia.**—Morelia, an ancient paradise of flowers, lies 235 miles from the City of Mexico. Built upon a hill that rises in the midst of a lovely valley, it is very clean and dry and has a delightful climate, and is one of the most satisfying cities of Mexico.

At the peak of the town, between two large plazas, is the cathedral, massive in proportion and with beautifully ornamented facade. From this central elevation the streets descend in all directions toward the surrounding meadows. Opposite the cathedral is a magnificent castle, whose turrets are in the semblance of the crown of Spain. This noble edifice,

said to have been built in the time of Phillip II, is now used by the different embassies.

The water is supplied to the city from a spring about four miles distant, by a handsome stone aqueduct erected in 1785 by Fray Antonio de San Miguel Inglesias, in order to provide work, and so means to procure food to the starving people. At the present time water is splashing through every arch, and verdure has sprung up, making the entire aqueduct look like a series of triumphal arches.

**37. Panorama of Guanahuata.**—The city is situated in a deep ravine; the houses, built of adobe, plaster and stone, are built in almost incredible positions on the mountain side. The general effect of the city—narrow and irregular streets, broken by sharp acclivities, along which are ranged fortress-like houses—is eminently mediæval. This antique effect is lessened, however, by the bustling activity that pervades the place; and along the streets are carried telephone and telegraph wires. Owing to its situation it is liable to dangerous inundations, which occasion great loss of life and property.

Guanahuata is noted for its beautiful hanging gardens, and its small, quaint, three-cornered plaza, in which charming place the band plays in the afternoons and evenings of Sundays and feast days.

Near the city are valuable silver mines. These mines are descended by stone stairways and are the most accessible in Mexico.

**38. Fountain at Guanahuata.**—The fountain in this picture is located at the corner formed by two streets and is the most frequently visited place in the neighborhood. In Mexican cities the people do not have a water supply run in pipes to their houses, as we do in our land of conveniences;

the better class have their servants pump water from wells to tanks on the houses, but the poor classes all flock to the fountains; and go when you will there is always a crowd. The people in the picture evidently knew that they were being photographed, for they are all looking toward us. We see the water carriers, the women who are filling their jars for domestic use, and most probably lingering to have a sly chat about their neighbors' faults or the next feast day of the saints. But what their errands are other than to get water is left to conjecture, for the main business of the Mexican seems to be drawing water, and all day long a constant stream of people, of all ages and sexes, go to and from this center of attraction.

**39. Cathedral and Plaza, Guanahuata.**—The view is a portion of a street in this quaint town: to the right is the pavement bordering the plaza, to the left is the post office, and in the background is the very picturesque cathedral. This old church, first built about the year 1557, has within the past fifty years been renovated. The beautiful old altars have been torn away, and the present costly and commonplace ones erected in their stead. Similar detrimental changes have been made in other parts of the structure, but in spite of all this the church is very interesting and well worth a visit.

On the pavement of the plaza may be seen a white-capped policeman: and here let us say a word about the Mexican police. They are simply a portion of the military, and always as neat and clean in appearance as they are polite and gentle in manner. They will direct and even guide the stranger with a manner which makes the foreign visitor long to take two or three of them home with him among his other curiosities.

**40. Ox Team at Guadalajara.**—As we have observed before, Mexican customs are very crude; they carry a wheel-



barrow on their backs rather than propel it in the usual way; they plough with a crooked stick; they do a thousand things which tend to make a sane man think he is dreaming; but of all the outrageous contrivances the Mexican cart is the worst,—so crude that it makes your bones ache to think of riding in it; so heavy that a good team is required to move it when empty; and so noisy that it would break up a Louisiana baptismal shouting meeting. Not the pleasant, gentle noise of a Philadelphia ice wagon, but a succession of blood-curdling squeaks and groans, yells and howls, does this musical vehicle give vent to. The wheels are made of a section from the trunk of a tree, with a hole cut as near the center as a Mexican can do it while almost going to sleep over the job. With a wooden hub run ungreased, uncared for and neglected on a wooden axle, the effect is impossible to describe. When a Mexican cart is approaching, the fact will be perfectly impressed upon the dullest mind long before the music box itself appears in sight; and for days after one has passed, especially when heavily loaded, the teeth will be set on edge by the painful memory of those awful shrieks. The oxen seem callous to the noise, but they, like their drivers, are used to it, otherwise we are inclined to think that there would be a scarcity in the ranks of the common-sense ox.

41. **Guadalajara, showing Cathedral.**—This city is charmingly situated in a pleasant valley, abundantly watered. It is regularly laid out, the streets crossing each other at right angles, but it is broken by the picturesque windings of the little river San Juan de Dios, which divides it into two parts. The city is rendered still more pleasing by its many well shaded and flowery public parks. Along the banks of the river is a delightful Paseo, shaded by great elms.

The cathedral has a brown facade in which is a clock, and is flanked by two towers. One of these towers contains a bell,

which is struck only when an announcement is to be made of some fortunate event of great importance. Another bell was formerly rung to ward off thunder-storms, which rage in great violence in summer. The mission of this bell is ended now, as the church is well provided with lightning rods. The present imposing structure is in great contrast to the original cathedral, which was a little building thatched with straw, and cost to erect it just twenty dollars.

The dwelling houses in Guadalajara are good, many of them handsome; the stores have a comfortable air, and the churches are unusually fine. The inhabitants are as lively, energetic and agreeable people as will be found in all Mexico.

**42. Church and Plaza, Celaya.**—Celaya, built in the broad valley of the Laja, is of considerable commercial importance. Woolen cloth, cotton prints, soap and sweetmeats are its principal manufactures. Celaya is noted all over Mexico for its sweets. As soon as the train rolls into the station you are beset by a horde of men and boys all having for sale little round boxes of prettily colored candy. But the inviting appearance of the candy is decidedly offset by the anything but clean appearance of the vender, and the wary traveler refuses to purchase.

Our picture shows the edge of the plaza, with its fine old trees, and rows of benches which are quite modern, and not very comfortable looking. Surrounding this are the "portals" or arches over the sidewalk, where congregate the merchants, peddlers, fakirs, and every kind of catch-penny show. Here may be bought articles of every description, from a set of dilapidated false teeth to a live parrot or monkey.

A glance at the top of these buildings will show you the Mexican idea of roof drainage. Over the edge of the roof extends a clay pipe, and beyond this one of tin, from which the water is allowed to pour down into the street or on the head of the passer by.

The chief attraction of Celaya lies in its churches ; our picture shows the tower of one of these churches, with its ladder leading to the belfry, and a ruined wall, which the natives, with characteristic laziness, have neglected to remove.

**43. Alameda at Celaya.**—This Alameda lies on the outskirts of the town, and is remarkable for its luxuriant growth of shrubbery and fragrant flowers of every description. Our picture shows the central walk in the Alameda, with its rows of grand old trees giving a dignified aspect, and its curiously-carved antique benches adding a touch of quaintness. Well might we say with the poet :

“ They came to that smooth-swarded bower,  
 And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,  
 Lotos and lilies,  
 And overhead the wandering vine  
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
 With bunch and berry and flower.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm  
 Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb  
 Heavenward, were stayed beneath the dome  
 Of hollow boughs.”

If the trees could indeed tell us how many tales of love had been spoken under their branches, and how many hearts had been pierced by the magic of those wondrous Spanish eyes, we might be willing to listen forever.

**44. Church of Our Lady Carmen, Celaya.**—All of the architectural beauty of the city is due to one man, Eduardo Tresguerras, often called the Michael Angelo of Mexico. He combined in one person the genius of the architect, the painter and the sculptor. His great work, famous throughout Mexico, is the noble church of Our Lady Carmen,

remarkable alike for its size, its grandeur, its beautiful simplicity united with dignity, its lightness and its grace. It is surmounted by a tower and dome, both renowned for their extraordinary beauty. The church, in the form of a Latin cross, is 220 feet long by 55 feet wide, and 67 feet high. It is enriched with notable frescoes and fine oil paintings.

There is very little to be seen in Celaya but its churches; but anyone with a love for the beautiful will find in the church of the Carmen alone sufficient reward for a trip thither.

**45. Panorama of Zacatecas.**—This picture gives a view of the most crowded part of the town, which, though located in a barren country, is one of the most picturesque cities of Mexico. It is essentially a mining city—this industry being the main business of the people. Zacatecas is dirty, ill-smelling and noisy, with streets crooked and uneven.

In the background is the hill called the Bufa, and seen very faintly, on the left summit, is the chapel of Los Remedios. Up to this chapel pilgrimages are made by penitents, many of them on their knees the entire distance, to atone for some great crime they or their relations fancy they have committed.

This city greatly resembles those of the Holy Land, and the passenger on the Mexican Central train (which passes along on the side of the ravine opposite the city) is fairly entranced by the magnificence of the view spread out before him.

**46. The Cathedral, Chihuahua.**—Chihuahua stands in the midst of a desolate plain, surrounded by mountains. The houses are all built of adobe, and as is usual in towns built of this material, it is very picturesque, but not impressive.

The one strong point of Chihuahua is the fine old church of San Francisco, often incorrectly called the cathedral.

The expenses of building this church were raised by levying

a tax of one real to the half pound of silver produced by the Santa Eulalie Mine, amounting, it is estimated, to \$800,000. The building is unusually high for its width, as are also the towers, producing an effect of lightness and grace not often seen in Mexican architecture. Upon the richly-ornamented facade of the church are the statues of San Francisco and the twelve Apostles. In the recess of the pillars supporting the dome are basso-relieues of the fathers of the Church.

In one of the towers hangs a bell that was broken by a cannon ball during the bombardment of the city by the French.

This church is so well situated that from almost any point outside the town the towers can be seen against a background of blue sky and low-lying hills.

**47. A Mexican Burro.**—This bird is peculiar to Mexico, and more so to himself. He resembles no other living creature in his characteristics. Where he sprung from is left to ages gone by to fathom, but a good guess would be that he came over with Cortes to freight some fat old priest around. But there he is, very much there, and likely to remain so, for he is as important to Mexico as a railroad to this country. The burro will live on anything, from fence rails to old boots, and when nothing is to be had he takes it philosophically and waits. His countenance is varied according to age, disposition and other traits, but it always has a tinge of sadness. The nose of the brother in the picture has not been hit with a whitewash brush as would seem—the color is entirely natural. The burro is of all colors from white to black. He has two ears like leaves of a banana tree, which wobble and flap as he walks; the only use he puts them to is occasionally to club an impudent fly off his hind leg, and he does not have to stretch to do it either. The burro fed well and groomed—promptly dies; indeed the only treatment known to keep him in good trim is

to let him alone to forage for himself, which he will do with a certainty that is admirable. A bit is never put in his mouth. When he is wanted to move, the Mexican driver gently intimates the fact in his rear with a pointed stick; and when he is wanted to stop for repairs, the only sure way is to steer him head on to a wall, whereupon he will promptly halt, and, if not turned round and started in another direction, will wait till the end of time for the wall to be moved for him to pass.

The occasion, however, when he is lovable is when he sings *Ye gods, preserve us!* He lifts his tail, spreads all four feet apart, his ears get as far apart as they can, he opens his jaws, and then—but there is no wish to drive anyone frantic by further demonstration. Sufficient to say that when this lovely animal starts to repeat his ditty, all work, conversation and comfort anywhere in the vicinity must cease and wait until he is out of breath, for he won't stop until he is; and after he is done the former busy hum of life seems to be impressive silence.

**48. Governor-General's Palace, Merida.**—Merida is the capital of Yucatan, and is the center of a large and rapidly growing trade in henequin fiber.

A traveler who has time will be amply repaid if he stops at Merida, and taking the train make a trip of sixty miles to Urmal, where a study of the antiquarian treasures will amply repay the discomforts of the journey.

The most interesting buildings in the city are the churches, of which there are a number, the cathedral and the church of San Juan de Dios being especially fine.

Our picture gives us a view of the Governor-General's palace, with its fine old park in front. The building is of quite recent date, and of a very noble though simple style of architecture. The double row of arches, over which is a clock, flanked by a tower, make a most imposing appearance.

49. **Interior of a Residence, Progreso.**—We have here the interior of a fine residence. The tiled floor and general cool appearance render it especially attractive on a warm day.

“The first aspiration with the Mexicans is to make home beautiful, and to this end every element of a cultured and refined taste is duly provided and cared for within the massive doors. The exquisite beauty of the rare and gorgeous flowers in the patios affords constant pleasure by day, while by night they have only to glance upward to obtain wondrous visions of a star-gemmed firmament.

“Hospitality is one of the national characteristics, but it is of a nature peculiar to itself, and, contrary to our customs, the latch-string hangs on the inside, for the court circles of Europe are not more exclusive than the higher classes of society in Mexico. The architecture of the houses—their barred windows and well guarded doors, which prevent intrusion from prying curiosity—together with the climate and customs, conspire to incline the people to lead exclusive lives.”\*

50. **Street Scene in Progreso.**—Our picture presents a view of a street in an old Mexican town, in which the quaint style of the houses is in striking contrast to the very practical telegraph poles along the walk. This is a street in Progreso, a port at which vessels stop to take on a cargo of the goods manufactured at Merida. Evidently a vessel has just arrived, for everyone seems hastening to the wharf, and it is from this port that we shall sail for home. Glad, indeed, are we at the prospect of once more setting foot on our native land, but sad at the thought of leaving the country where we have experienced so much delight—the land where the ancient and the modern, the pathetic and the ludicrous are so curi-

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\* From “Face to Face with the Mexicans.”

ously blended. And as we set sail, with the azure sky of the tropics above and fragrance all about us, let us repeat the advice so appropriately given: "If you would see Mexico while the glamour that Prescott's 'Conquest' threw over it still lingers, you must go quickly, for the 'prince, whose name is Young America, is already on the way to awake the sleeping beauty from the repose of centuries.'" "





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