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[pseud.].**

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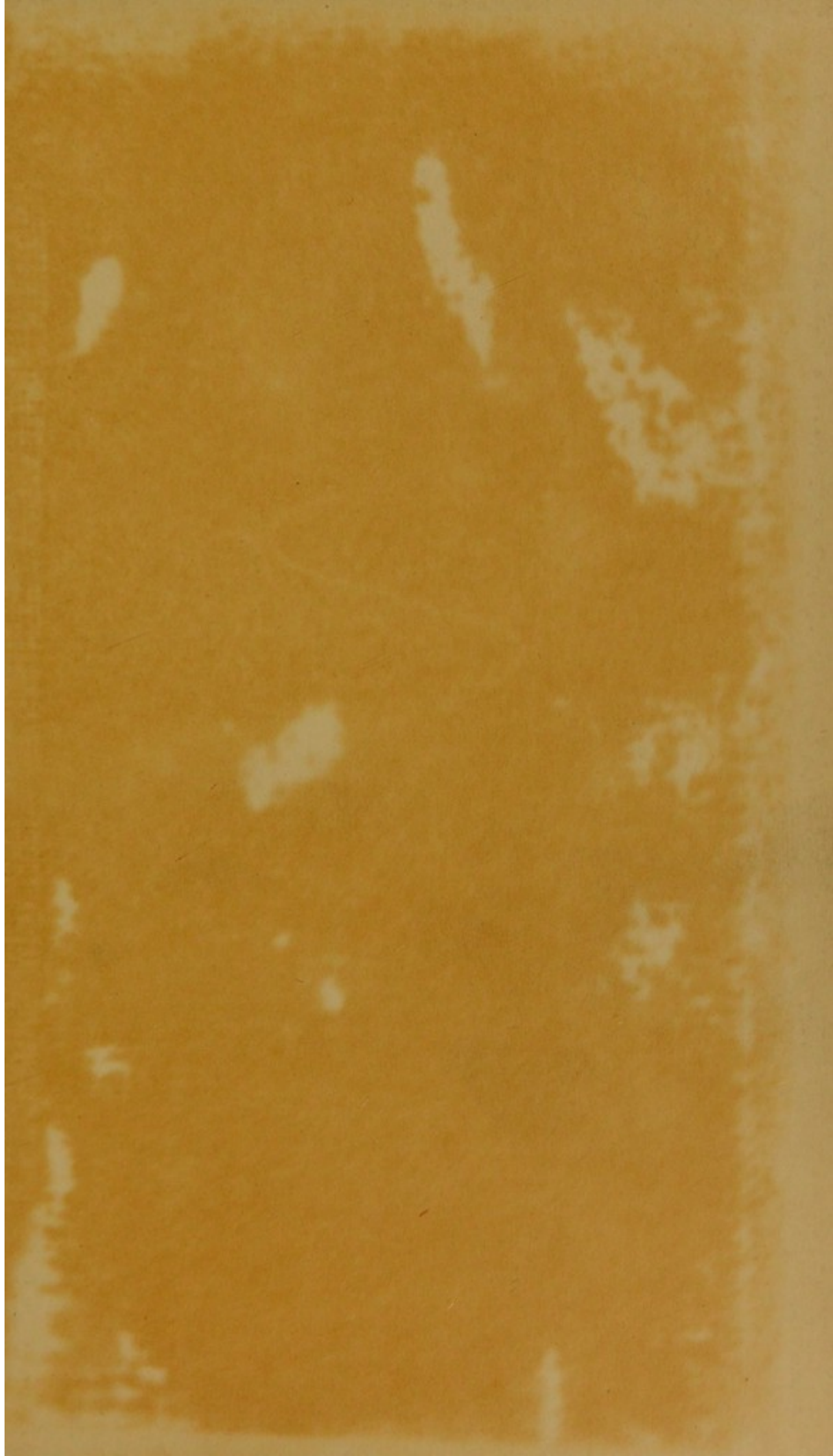
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ADVENTURES IN SEARCH  
OF A LIVING IN  
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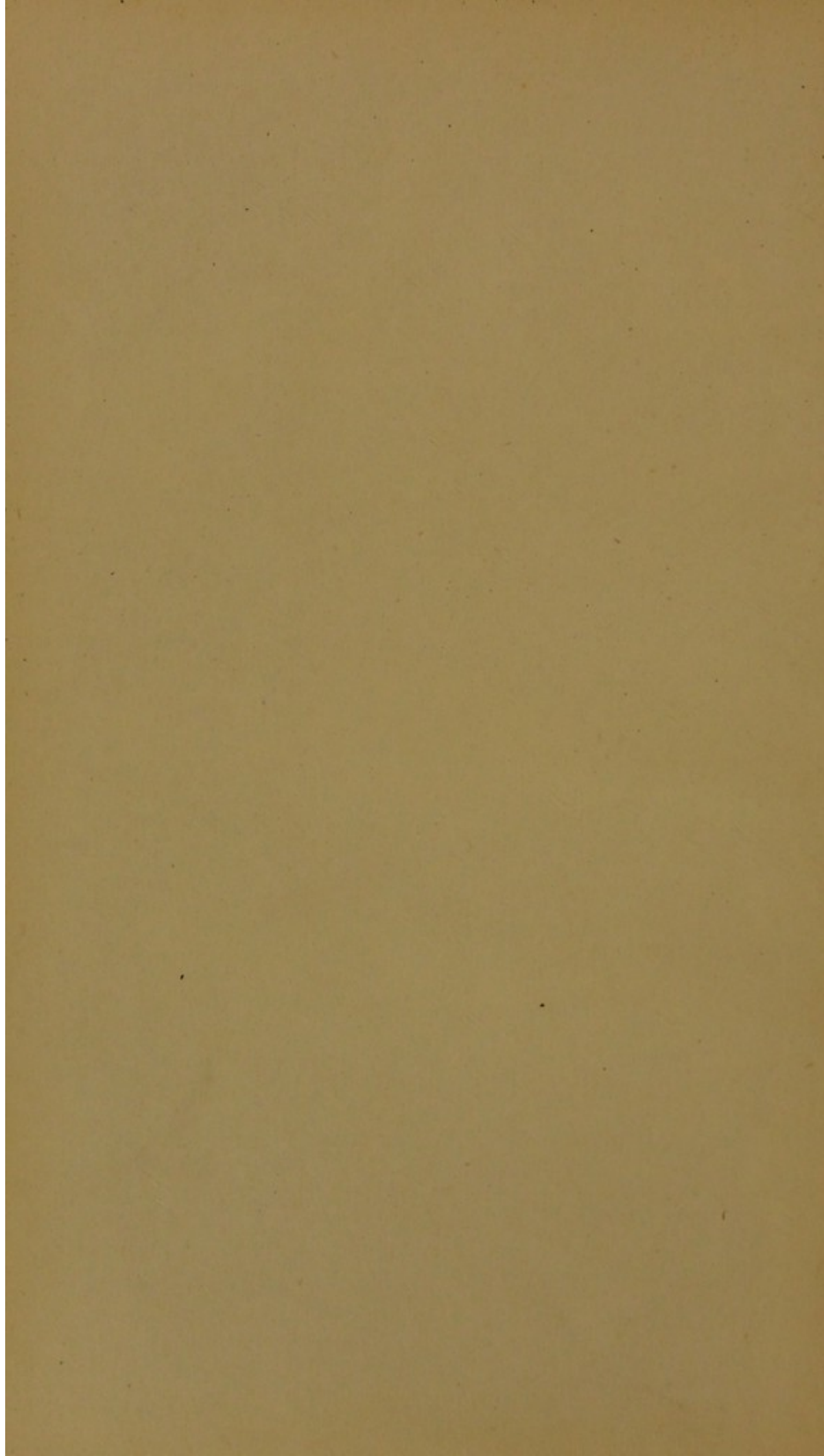




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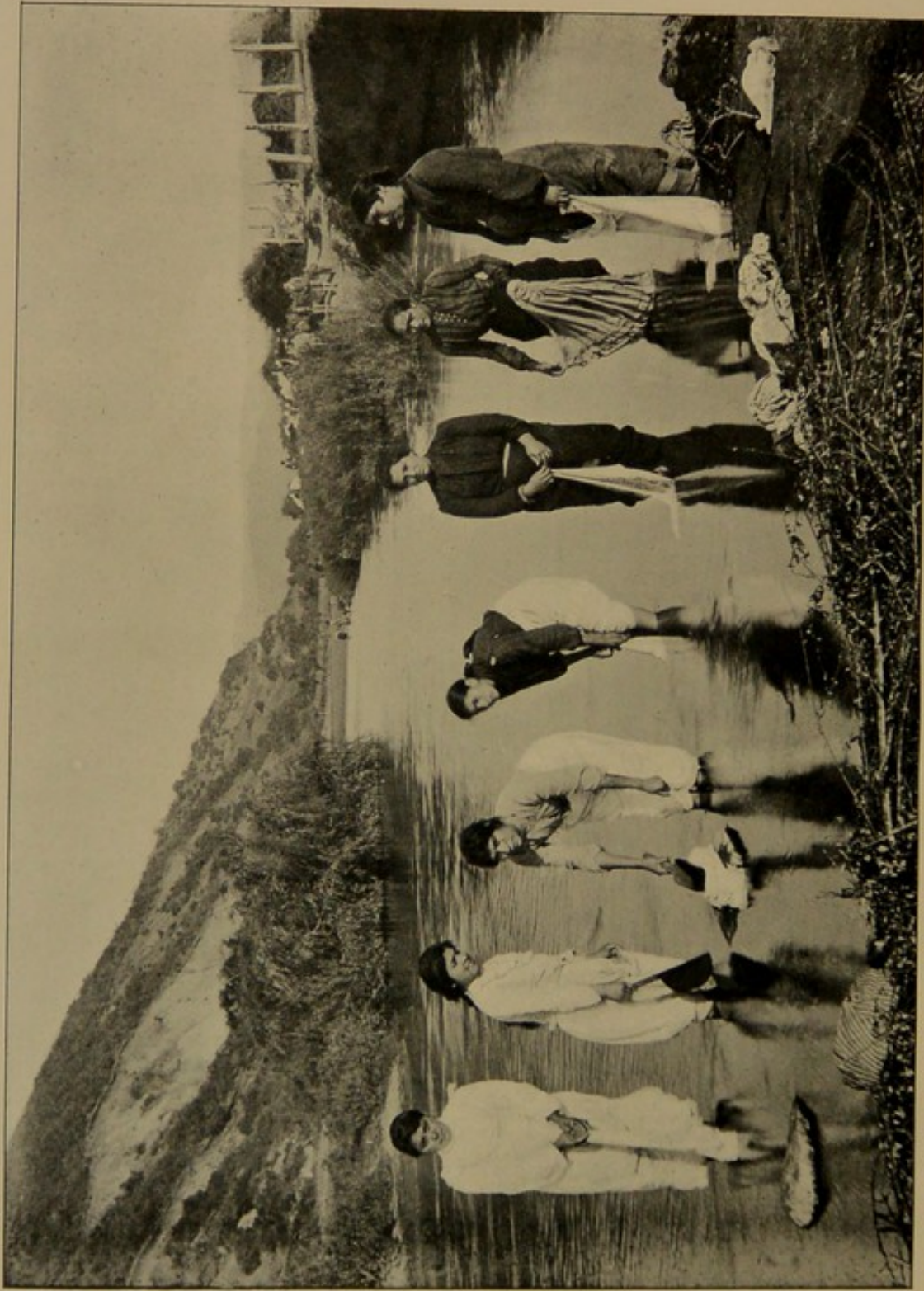












Washerwomen in the River Andalien, about one mile from Concepción—(p. 235).

# ADVENTURES IN SEARCH OF A LIVING IN SPANISH-AMERICA

BY

“VAQUERO”



London

JOHN BALE, SONS & DANIELSSON, LTD.

OXFORD HOUSE

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## PREFACE.

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IN these days of many publications the preface is often little more than an excuse for writing the book.

Two of the most common objections to books of travel are that they are either the superficial accounts of people who have been only a short time in the country they describe, or else that they are written from the standpoint of some occupation that does not interest the public at large. As my travels in Spanish-America extended over a period of nearly six years, it may be fairly hoped that the knowledge of some of the places here described is not superficial, and professional work often procured adventures which, if ill-paid in money, were rich in incident. So the profession has been merely used as a thread on which to hang the tale.

And if the incidents here described do not altogether correspond with those experienced by others, it does not necessarily follow that any of the writers have deviated from the truth. For a wealthy tourist will see most things from a different aspect to that of a needy foreign resident who is competing for a bare living.

The photographs have been selected from those taken during my travels, in the hope that they may convey to the reader a more vivid perception of the subject matter ; and if my efforts should be appreciated it is proposed to follow up these adventures by a second volume that treats of the West Indies.

THE AUTHOR.



THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
BY NATHANIEL BENTLEY  
OF THE BARRISTER AT LAW  
IN GREAT BRITAIN  
AND OF THE JUDGE OF THE  
COMMON PLEAS IN MASSACHUSETTS  
VOLUME THE SECOND  
PUBLISHED BY J. B. BENTLEY  
AT THE CORNER OF NASSAU AND NINTH STREETS  
NEW-YORK  
1825

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# Adventures in Search of a Living in Spanish-America.

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## CHAPTER I.

### SPAIN VIA CUBA TO NEW ORLEANS.

FROM time immemorial change of scene has been considered one of the best remedies for those who have become depressed by adverse circumstances.

Rich people are practically unlimited in their choice of place and mode of travel, but those of smaller means have to consider the probability of their being able to make a living in the country whither they are thinking of going.

It was some such train of thought, perhaps, that induced me to fix on New Orleans as a suitable place in which to practise my profession. The language spoken there was English ; the difficulties of obtaining a diploma or a permit to practise as a medical man are not considered to be very great in the United States ; and the climate in the southern parts might be expected to suit one who had lived for a considerable time in one of the warmer colonies.

I had been living in Spain for a few months previously, and it was with much regret that I resisted the overtures made by friends that I should try my luck there. Much as I liked Spain, however, I had made up my mind that the New World offered more facilities for making a living. So I embarked at Cadiz on board the steamer "Buenos Aires," of the Transatlantic Company, taking a second class ticket to Havana, at which place I should have no difficulty in finding a steamer to take me to New Orleans.

There were practically four classes of passengers, namely, first class, second class, third class of preference (*tercera de preferencia*), and third class. The first and second class passengers used the same deck, but had their meals and cabins apart. The third of preference had a kind of brevet right to mix with the second class and to use the deck that was occupied by the first and second class passengers, but had their meals and cabins apart. I do not know what other "preferences" they had over the ordinary third class, which was kept quite apart from the other passengers.

As things settled down on board ship I felt myself in a rather conspicuous position, for I was about the only passenger among the first and second classes who was not a Spaniard or a Spanish American, and although I spoke their language fluently I felt rather lonely.



This was shortly after the Spanish-American War, and the sympathy shown by the English, or at least by their Government, to the United States in the unequal contest still rankled in the minds of the Spaniards.

This may account for my tolerating the overtures of companionship made me by Benito Osorio, a passenger in the third class of preference. He was a sharp-featured man of fair stature, and a fluent speaker, with the pronunciation of a Castilian, and not like the people of the south of Spain where I had been. He said he had fought in the Philippine Islands, and talked a good deal of his experiences, but was not very popular with his fellow-countrymen. I did not care for him personally, but it would have seemed churlish to refuse the advances of a man who wished to be civil, and so we frequently talked and smoked together to while away the time.

A very few days after our departure we touched at the Canary Islands, where we took on board some hundreds of third class passengers, most of whom were going out to Cuba. About this time a man in my cabin became ill, and shortly afterwards some spots showed out on his face. He was promptly isolated, and we never saw the poor fellow again, for he died of small-pox before we reached Puerto Rico.

This event caused considerable anxiety to many of the passengers, not so much from a fear of catching the disease, as from an apprehension that we might be quarantined at the end of the voyage.

We had now arrived at Puerto Rico. There were but few who wished to land here, and I presume they were quarantined, for no passenger in transit was allowed to go ashore.

While the hatches were removed to take out luggage belonging to the passengers who were leaving the steamer, I happened to be just over the hold, and looked down to see if any of my luggage was within sight. Just then Osorio came up and asked me if I could see the trunk that contained my instruments; by a curious chance it was in sight and I pointed it out to him.

Havana was our next port, and many of us were going ashore here, amongst whom were a fair proportion of first and second class passengers and nearly all the third class.

As we entered the harbour many gazed sadly on the American flag which was now flying over the newly conquered place, and a Spanish priest said to me, "*Que vergüenza para España*" ("What a disgrace for Spain.")

The steamer was bound for Veracruz in Mexico, but what would the authorities do with those who wished to land here?

The case was not an ordinary one; a newly conquered country with everything upside down, and there were more than five hundred third class passengers to be provided for in the event of being quarantined.

We were all examined, and, as there was no case of infectious disease among us, a truly American decision was arrived at, showing the value of the almighty dollar.

The first class passengers, who had mixed freely with those of the second class, among whom the solitary case of small-pox had broken out, were allowed to land without quarantine. The second class, as might have been expected, were quarantined, but the third class, who had been kept quite apart from the others, shared the same fate as the second.



There did not appear then to have been sufficient quarantine accommodation near Havana, so we were put on a small steamer belonging to the same company and taken about twenty miles along the coast to Mariel, an old Spanish military hospital.

Our number was about six hundred in all, about fifty being second, and the rest third class passengers. These latter were chiefly Canary Islanders, who used to go to Cuba in large numbers, to do field work at harvest time.

The passengers' heavy luggage, which had been in the hold of the Transatlantic steamer, was sent to the customs house, to be claimed after our fortnight's quarantine, but whatever trunks we had in our cabins had to be handed unlocked to the sanitary department to be fumigated prior to our departure for the quarantine station.

It did not take long to reach Mariel, but before our arrival most of us had already examined our fumigated luggage to see if anything was missing, and one poor woman, who had thoughtlessly left her valuables in the fumigated trunk, burst into tears on finding that all her jewellery had been stolen; others lost more or less. As regards myself, I had but little of value in my cabin trunk, but I had taken out my leather desk and a few smaller things before I surrendered my baggage, so my losses were trifling.

On arriving at the quarantine station we were disposed of thus: The second class passengers, including the "third of preference," were allowed to remain on the steamer, which was anchored a few hundred yards from shore. The third class were housed in the long wooden sheds of the old Spanish military hospital that had been built on a small neck of land running out into the sea. This promontory was their quarantine ground, and it was fenced off and guarded on the land side. The third class had the advantage of us, as far as space was concerned, but ours was considered to be a more honourable captivity, because the steamer was surrounded by water and we did not require any guards.

We were allowed, however, to visit the quarantine station on land, as boats were often passing between the steamer and the shore, and Osorio and I often availed ourselves of this permission, the number of third class passengers making the place look like a little township.

The weary two weeks of quarantine had nearly passed, when we saw a most unwelcome notice on the deck of the little steamer, stating that on a certain day we should be required to pay the company so much a day for our maintenance. The day arrived, but nobody paid.

"But, gentlemen, why do you refuse to pay?" said the purser in Spanish.

Different reasons were given. The charges were rather high, and what had troubled me most was the bad quality of the sleeping accommodation. I had been one of four in a cabin of from six to seven cubic feet, and had to sleep on deck, as the foul air in so confined a space made me feel ill.

But so apprehensive was the American doctor that the third class passengers might break away and take to the bush from fear of being called upon to defray their expenses that the guards, Americans and Cubans, were doubled on the last night.



So ended a unique kind of quarantine, in which we had been to some extent under three flags. The controlling power was American, the country was Cuba (supposed to be free), and all expenses were paid by the unfortunate Spanish company which had been forced by the Americans to maintain people who were unwilling or unable to pay.

Early in the morning of our last day's quarantine the steamer took us all back to Havana.

Unfortunately for us it was a holiday, so we could not take our heavy luggage out of the customs house.

Osorio, who was naturally much more at home in Cuba than I was, had already heard of an hotel that was considered cheap in such an expensive country, so we went to "La Navarra," where the charge was one dollar and a half a day.

One could not expect anything very grand in Havana at that price, but we were poor and not inclined to be too exacting after our fortnight's captivity.

The next day we returned to the customs house to claim our luggage. The trunk that contained my things of most value could not be found, but I was told to call next day, and did so with no better result.

About this time Osorio had some business near Cienfuegos in the southern part of the island, and said he would only be absent two or three days, but he did not return; and as my trunk could not be found, it began to dawn on me after a few days that he had been concerned in the robbery and had taken flight.

I was rather overwhelmed with the severity of my misfortune. The most valuable things were all stolen, including the greater part of the instruments on which I depended to do my work. Happening to meet one of our late fellow-passengers, who was a lieutenant in the Cuban police, I told him of my loss, and he gave me an introduction to the late chief of the secret police; but although I had many interviews and plainly stated my suspicions of Osorio, I could never hear anything of the trunk or the thief.

Of course, if Osorio had been found I had no proof against him, but when I recollected how I had shown him my now lost luggage when we were at Puerto Rico, I could not help feeling that my suspicions were well founded. He must have had an accomplice either on board ship or else in the customs house. But this unsettled epoch was a harvest for thieves. The Americans, Spaniards and Cubans with whom we came in contact cordially disliked each other, and used to attribute anything objectionable to people of nationalities not their own. I remained about two weeks longer in the vain hope of recovering my lost property, and perhaps it was difficult to appreciate Cuba under these circumstances; but I think I should have been disappointed in any case, as Spaniards had within my hearing frequently overrated the glories of this lost paradise of theirs.

The central parts of Havana are certainly well built in solid Spanish style, and are partially intersected by a chain of beautiful gardens that serve as a promenade for the people when the band plays. When one sees the expensive manner in which these people dress,



the fashionable clothes of the men, and the gorgeous silks and satins of the women, many of whom are coloured or black, you wonder how they can afford such a display in a place where the necessities of life are so dear. "From fleecing the unfortunate traveller" I should then have felt inclined to answer. But an American subsequently corrected the word "traveller" to "American tourist."

In justice to the people themselves one must remember that much of this is mere outside show, and many of these well-dressed people when at home live in a style we should consider miserable.

But whatever may be one's opinion of Havana or the Cubans, there can be no doubt about the glorious tropical foliage that makes the parks and gardens so pretty, or of the fertility of the soil, a fact which the Americans have not taken long to discover and exploit.

I naturally wanted to see something of the country, and got an introduction to someone who lived at Guanajai, a little town about thirty miles from Havana.

On arriving there in the train I put up at the hotel, and presented myself to the gentleman to whom I had the letter of introduction. He received me civilly enough, and asked if he could do anything for me. I replied that I should be much obliged if he could procure me a horse and guide on the following day, so that I might ride a few miles to see something of the country. He kindly said he would call at my hotel with two horses and take me about himself.

I was ready early, but he did not turn up till late in the morning, and without any horses, explaining that it was now too hot to go out, but that we would start in the cool of the afternoon. I waited until about five in the evening, but he never came, so I went out and saw what I could by myself.

Conduct of this kind recalled to me the remark of a sea captain : "The old-fashioned Spaniard, you cannot beat him—his word is as good as his bond ; but a Cuban——" The captain here made an expressive gesture with his head, but said nothing more, as he was a prudent man.

I returned to Havana by coach, and this enabled me to see the country better than by train.

In this part there was a good deal of cultivation, such as tobacco and sugar-cane, but I think the Cubans chose well when they put a palm tree on their postage stamps as an emblem of their country. On a subsequent occasion when I travelled from Havana, in the north-west, to Santiago de Cuba, in the south-east of the island, a distance of about five hundred miles, I found that the colonization of the island appears to have spread from the former towards the latter direction. On the Havana side you will see plenty of cultivation, but this dwindles away towards the Santiago side, where you will often hardly see a homestead in sight. The character of the country is undulating pasture land, dotted with palm trees.

Conspicuous among the birds of the country is the turkey buzzard, a little vulture which acts as a scavenger, and does not eat living things. His name fits him so well that you know him by sight directly you see him. When on the wing he has the noble flight of a bird of prey, when he runs about in the vicinity of a house or farmyard his red wattles make him look like a turkey, but when he is perched on a wall he looks just like the unclean little vulture that he is.



Cuba at this period was beginning that stage of transition from which it had not yet emerged when I visited the country about six years later.

The Spaniards had only evacuated the country a short time previously, and the American army of occupation was still there. The head officials were all Americans, but a good many of the subordinate ones were Cubans. The money in use was Spanish, and if you offered to pay in American money, the chances were that they would first change it at a money-changer's, as they did not fully understand its value. But after a few years they learnt to prefer American money, and now it seems rather doubtful whether they will ever have a coinage of their own.

Even at this period, so soon after the conclusion of the war, the Cubans had already begun to distrust the powerful nation that had occupied their island under the pretext of freeing them from Spanish rule. They had co-operated with the Americans to drive the Spaniards out, and now found themselves under new masters with whom they had less in common than with their old ones.

The Americans themselves were rather uncertain what to do with their new acquisition: they wished to keep it, but had promised the Cubans their independence.

Perhaps their attitude might be summed up in the words of an American official, "We must give the Cubans their independence, for we promised it, but I expect we shall have to take over the island again some day." So for a good many years there has been a period of limited self-rule with a great deal of American intervention. This may pave the way for the fulfilment of both the wish and the promise.

The Cubans themselves, like the inhabitants of other West Indian islands, are of all shades of colour, and this is a rough but by no means certain index to their social position. Most of the better class people, if not white, have but a small percentage of negro blood, but among the lower classes the negro element is on the increase.

The black is rather inclined to be a good-natured person, no matter what language he speaks, but the better class Cubans do not impress one so favourably.

They have the courteous phraseology which is inseparable from the Spanish language, but when you come to the region of deeds they appeared to me to be less "formal" than the Spaniards, the word being here used in its Spanish and not in its English sense.

Cuba, from having been one of the last colonial possessions of Spain, had acquired a great hold on the Spanish mind, and this may account for the somewhat too glowing descriptions of the place.

There had been much mismanagement in Spanish affairs, but this meant that high salaries and misspent public money had got into private pockets, and everyone who went to Cuba expected to make money.

Then there had been a guerilla warfare in the island for years, and this had given it a halo of romance.

Cuban songs had found their way into Spanish light literature. Some of these, in which there is a negro element, are comical, but some of the country songs or *guajiras* are beautiful, although they may seem rather too high-flown for English ideas, and I cannot help



thinking that many of them may have been written by Spaniards themselves, rather than by Cubans, whom one would never suspect of being so romantic.

The following *guajira* is evidently the lament of a lover whose sweetheart has forsaken him :—

"Tú naciste, vida mia,  
De una divina sonrisa,  
De un beso que dió la brisa  
En las orillas de un lago ;  
Naciste del canto vago  
De un Cubano trovador,  
De un beso que dió Maria  
En la frente del Señor."

"Thou wert born, my life,  
Of a divine smile,  
Of a kiss that the breeze gave  
On the shores of a lake ;  
Thou wert born of the roving song  
Of a Cuban troubadour,  
Of a kiss that Mary gave  
On the forehead of the Lord."

"Only one must not call a Cuban *guajiro*," said a Spaniard to me with a smile, and on looking out the word in a Spanish-American dictionary I discovered the reason, for it may be taken to mean boorish as well as rustic.

By this time it had become apparent that my lost trunk was not likely to be found, and although I subsequently wrote to three people in Cuba about it I never received any answer. One of my letters was returned through the Dead Letter Office, but the other two apparently reached their destinations.

As there was a small steamer leaving for New Orleans, I went to the office of the American company to buy my ticket.

"We cannot take you unless you have your health ticket," said the clerk at the shipping office, so I went to the place indicated, showed the medical man in charge a recent certificate of vaccination, which I found useful on subsequent occasions, and soon returned to the office to get my ticket.

"There's much more than that to fill in," replied the clerk, on examining the paper I had received from the doctor ; and as time was running short before the departure of the steamer, they sent a guide with me to another office. Here I found that "health ticket" was a euphemism for what in other countries would be called a pass or permit for a person to travel who was under Government supervision—something, in fact, like a "ticket of leave."

I was not asked whether I was a negro because this would have been considered too ugly a question to ask of even a "low down alien," if his skin were fairly white; but I saw the official headed my description with the words: "Of white race."

Some of the questions were hard to answer. I readily gave my height as five feet nine inches, but when I was asked my weight I replied, "How can I say? I have not been weighed for a long time."

"Might it be so many stone?" said the official.

"It might be," I replied.

The home or place of domicile also offered difficulties; I had not got any. I now returned to the shipping office and took a first class ticket, as I had to choose between first and third, being charged one dollar more than the usual passenger rate because I was an alien.

The short passage of three or four days to New Orleans offered little worth recording, except that I was introduced to the eccentricities of the colour question. The quartermaster of a black regiment



was on board. He was an officer and therefore travelled first class, but being a black man he could not be allowed at table with white people, so every day shortly before our usual mealtime he used to sit down by himself and was served in solitary grandeur.

A remarkable incident of this kind happened in Cuba shortly after my departure. A Cuban general, a coloured man, entered an hotel kept by an American, and called for drinks. The hotel-keeper refused to supply him on the ground that the hotel was for white people only. The general brought an action against the hotel-keeper and won the case, as it was tried before Cubans, with whom the colour question does not exist.

The American then appealed from the decision to the Supreme Court of the United States, and it was confidently expected that the decision would be reversed.

It certainly seems hard that a coloured general may not call for drinks in his own country.

Before reaching New Orleans we had to go about one hundred miles up the river Mississippi.

I do not think I am doing an injustice to this river in saying that it will be a disappointment to any one who sees it for the first time. The longest river in the world, and not broader, when you have only gone up its banks a few miles, than the Thames is in its lower part. The scenery is flat and uninteresting, and the river has to be kept in check by artificial banks, or else it would inundate the surrounding country.

On reaching New Orleans we were boarded by an official whom, for want of a better name, I should call a customs house agent. It was his duty to examine the passengers, and, in the event of their not being American citizens, to find out whether they were eligible persons to enter the United States.

Nearly all the passengers were Americans, and for such there was no difficulty about admission. One lady was a Canadian, and the officer asked her if she intended to remain long.

"I've only come here for a short time," she said, "to see some friends, and mean to return to Canada soon."

"Well, we'll put you down as a tourist," said the officer, and no more questions were asked of her.

He then approached me, and, soon finding out that I was a British subject, asked me how long I meant to remain. I told him that I did not know myself, but that, if I could get enough work, I might remain there a year or two.

"Then we can't put you down as a tourist," he said; "you're an immigrant and must fill up an immigrant's schedule."

"But," I said, "you can't call a professional man and a first-class passenger an immigrant by any just interpretation of the term."

"Yes," he replied, "by the laws of the United States any one is an immigrant who cannot give an assurance to leave in a short specified time. If you will promise to leave, say, in one month, I'll put you down as a tourist."

As I was unable to promise this I was taken to a deck-house where a long immigrant's schedule of questions was presented to me. I was too angry at the time to see the humorous side, but this presented itself to me afterwards.



The customs house official, who performed his offensive office in as civil a manner as he could, used frequently to make a soothing remark, somewhat after the manner of the chorus in a Greek play ; but perhaps the reader may not have this consolation when his turn comes. It would be too long to go through the whole list of questions, which can be found in any immigrant's paper, and I will merely mention a few of them, together with the soothing remarks that followed the answers :—

Question. Have you ever been in jail, and if so, how many times ?

Answer. No.

Soothing remark. Not likely he would ever go there.

Question. Can you read and write ?

Answer. Yes.

Soothing remark. Of course he can read and write.

Question. Who paid your passage money ?

Answer. I did.

Soothing remark. He paid it himself.

Question. Are you married ?

Answer. No.

Question. Are you a Mormon ?

Answer. No.

Remark (? soothing). Far from having many wives he has not even one wife.

In time we came to the last questions, one of which is whether you are a lunatic, and I began to think that coming to such a place was in itself a suspicious sign.

When it was all over the officer said, "You must not be offended at being asked these questions. If the Prince of Wales were to come here we should be obliged to say to him, 'We're very sorry, your Royal Highness, but if you do not wish to answer these questions you must really move on.'"

I was now allowed to land, and my baggage was examined in the customs house.

I had already stated that I had nothing to declare when an officer asked me what was in the bag on my shoulder.

"It's only a camera," I replied, never thinking I should be asked to pay duty on second-hand property that was not for sale.

"Oh, there's a heavy duty to pay on cameras," said the officer, and, after consulting a book of reference, he added : "Forty-five per cent. on cost price."

I was rather taken aback at the severity of the duty, which was almost equivalent to the value of a second-hand article, and remained undecided for a minute, when the official in charge of the immigrant's schedule gave me some advice.

"If you like to leave it in the custom-house there will be nothing to pay, except a trifle for storage ; but if you do not claim it within a year's time it will be sold."

"I'll leave it, then," I replied, "for I'm not sure how your country will suit me."

They had now finished with me, but the disheartened feeling which had ensued on the robbing of my trunk in Cuba, and from which I had not yet thoroughly recovered, returned upon me, and



I could not help wondering why we should be asked if we had been in jail, and be obliged to pay forty-five per cent. on personal belongings, while the Americans may enter freely into the countries under British rule. Whatever causes of discontent British subjects, whether Colonials, Irish, or Asiatics, used to have with the English Government, it had always been a consolation that the flag caused its subjects to be respected in foreign parts.

"We should ask the Americans the same questions," I subsequently said to a person of that nationality.

"Oh, they wouldn't like that," was the reply.

However, I had the consolation that my personal effects were rapidly decreasing; most of my instruments were with thieves, my camera was in the customs house, and the old clothes that remained would be less likely to give trouble as not being of sufficient value to interest those who exploit the traveller; and with these reflections I entered New Orleans.



## CHAPTER II.

## NEW ORLEANS TO THE MEXICAN FRONTIER.

THE wharf was rather a long way from the central parts of the town, to which we were conveyed by train. On arriving at the terminus I asked a coloured porter if he could tell me of any place to lodge at that was not too expensive. He recommended me to a house in Royal Street kept by an Italian, and he certainly advised me well.

The charge was two dollars by the day, but on my telling the owner a few days later that the price was too high for me, and that I should have to leave in consequence, he said he could let me have the same accommodation and food at one dollar a day if I became a weekly boarder, and, as one would hardly get decent accommodation at a lower price than this, I remained there until I left New Orleans.

Royal Street is just on the creole side of Canal Street, which is a principal thoroughfare that intersects the town. And what is meant by creole? Strictly speaking, it refers to white people, the descendants of colonists of the Latin-speaking languages, such as French or Spaniards, but it is a term largely used by people with a small amount of negro blood, who object to be called coloured.

The creole side of Canal Street is the centre of the French-speaking population, which is slowly but surely decreasing before the inroads of the English-speaking Americans. Here you will find people of all shades of colour, who speak French as their native language, but most know some English in addition, and many speak it well. There are, however, also a large number of English-speaking negroes in different parts of New Orleans.

It was winter when I arrived, and this time of the year does not show off the creole quarter to advantage, there being a larger number of old wooden houses on this side than on the more modern or American side of Canal Street. In a mild climate like this the winter is short, yet some of these houses looked rather damp and mouldy.

There was just enough cold to make you consider whether you would put on a greatcoat at night, and although there was often a slight crust of ice in the streets in the morning, it soon melted, and the weather was bright and dry.

In the central part of Canal Street, near Henry Clay's statue, the width of the street and the continual boom of the electric cars, of which there is a very good service, tend to make one think that this is in a very large capital, but on following the street a short way up from the river Mississippi you will find some blocks that have



not been built upon, and the country is soon reached. The town is long and hugs the river bank, and the population may be from three to four hundred thousand inhabitants.

One of the great summer resorts of the people is at Lake Pontchartrain, an arm of the sea that comes within a few miles of New Orleans. I went out to see it on one of the electric cars, and although the buildings on the shore were almost deserted in the winter, one could imagine that with the attractions of bathing, boating, and dancing, the place must be very lively in the summer.

In Havana the summer is perpetual, in New Orleans it is long but not perpetual, and this may partly account for the more sombre style of dress in the latter place, although much is due, of course, to the difference between Spanish and Anglo-American customs. The coloured person, who forms a large part of the population in both places, is the faithful index of the white people among whom he or she lives, and the lace and flowers frequently worn on the head by the coloured women in Havana give way in New Orleans to the more prosaic hat.

It had been forcibly impressed upon me that I was an immigrant and not a tourist, so I lost no time in asking the medical authorities what facilities would be allowed me to practise.

I now found that the thieves who stole my luggage had placed me in another difficulty. My diplomas were lost, and although I had managed to save my medical certificates, which would have been sufficient for British customs, I found great difficulty in persuading the faculty that a certificate was as good as a diploma, as it is a much less imposing document.

I was referred to the dean of the medical college, who was very civil to me, and gave it as his opinion that my certificates were satisfactory, and that I was eligible to be admitted to examination for the title of M.D., which would only cost me fifteen dollars.

In the meantime I visited the public hospital on several occasions, and however overbearing the American Government may be to the foreigner, I am bound to bear witness to the courtesy of the profession.

During my walks in search of a likely site in which to begin my practice, I became gradually aware of the large number of doctors in every quarter, and this caused me to consider whether I might not do better in a new state like Texas, where any one speaking English and Spanish might hope to be employed by both American and Mexican patients.

The idea grew upon me, the more so that my treatment on entering the United States compared very unfavourably with my reception in Spain, and made me feel inclined to try a place where the Spanish language and customs were used to some extent, and so in three weeks' time from my arrival in New Orleans I started for Texas by train.

At the railway station I was again reminded of the colour question. There were waiting-rooms and carriages set apart for coloured people, and you might sometimes see a girl, nearly white, sitting between negroes, for the smallest admixture of black blood exposes a person to all the disabilities of that race, although I suppose this theory could not be acted upon beyond a certain point.



To use the words of an American: "Yes, sir, if a white man marries a negress he will be put in the penitentiary; if he marries a mulatto or a quadroon they will do the same to him; if he marries an octoroon—well, I don't know whether they would trouble about it."

On the first day of my journey I only went as far as Lake Charles, which is in Louisiana, and near the Texan border.

I considered the lake ought to be worth seeing, for the poet Longfellow has written an ode to it, and I had just been told that it would compare with Alpine scenery.

The lake is perhaps from one to two miles across in its various dimensions, and is rather pretty, as almost any sheet of water would be that has trees growing down to its very edge, and even a few feet into the water in places, but it would take a vivid imagination to compare it with Alpine scenery, as there are no mountains within sight. In fact, the ground here, and for hundreds of miles over the Texan border, is very level; there is not a single tunnel and but few cuttings along the railway line.

The next day I arrived at Houston, one of the principal towns in Texas, and as I was now in the state where I intended to practise, I thought it would be worth while to see what this place was like.

Houston is a new town, peopled by English-speaking Americans, for it was far enough west to have left the French-speaking creoles of Louisiana behind, but not far enough to reach the Spanish-speaking Mexicans of Texas.

Here I put up for the first time at a genuine American boarding-house, and cannot say that it compared favourably with my creole hotel in New Orleans. It was not that the food was not good enough, but it was served in a style that showed no consideration for one's comfort.

For instance, all the courses, and there might be four or five, were put on the table at the same time, without asking what one would prefer. Some of the courses, not being liked, would be untouched or unfinished, and in the meantime the others would be getting cold. There was only one knife and fork to do duty for all the food, and the mixing of flavour that ensued was very disagreeable.

Of course this style saves much trouble, for the waiter merely puts the things on the table and leaves you.

The evenings in this place were dreary in the extreme.

There was a large, bare sitting-room at the entrance. Some chairs and a central stove, which was lit to lessen the cold, comprised the greater part of the furniture. Around the stove were grouped the lodgers, most of whom were commercial travellers, and who, when not talking shop, had not much to say.

Occasionally some street artists, jugglers, &c., would come in to enliven the despondent-looking inmates, and at the close of a performance, that one could not well help attending, the hat would be passed round.

I got so tired of seeing these exhibitions, however, that I used to go out in the cold streets for a walk, as it was too early to go to bed. One evening an animated cause for conversation sprang up in recounting anecdotes of the Civil War. Some of the older men could talk of



their personal experiences, and the great lapse of time since that period enabled them to talk without bitterness.

I felt very much outside the conversation, as the names of the people and places were almost unknown to me. The battle of Gettysburg was mentioned, and one of the talkers turning to me, said: "You know about the battle of Gettysburg?" I had to confess that I did not know much about it. "Greater than the battle of Waterloo," he replied, with a look of pitying contempt.

I wandered about Houston for several days. The town was so new that everything seemed to be in a state of transition. Many new wooden houses were being put up in the suburbs, and it was easy to see that the town was increasing in size, but it was difficult to judge from what I saw, or from the answers to my inquiries, whether there was any chance for a new doctor.

I called at what represented the Medical Council Office, but it seemed to be in a very rudimentary state.

The principal person only attended on certain days, and as he was not there I could not find out what I wanted.

After several days' indecision I made up my mind to go on to San Antonio, which I had already heard mentioned in New Orleans as one of the largest and best towns in Texas.

The country was still quite flat, and long before the train arrived at San Antonio we began to pass through miles of land that bore little vegetation except some long-thorned bushes, which appeared to be of the acacia family, and are called in Mexico *mezquite*.

The *mezquite* bush, which may grow from six to twelve feet in height, is generally found on poor and arid soil, and frequently in conjunction with the prickly pear and other cacti, as these plants will flourish on what will not support ordinary vegetation. When we were still many miles from San Antonio I heard a man who was working on the railway line speak Spanish, and I was glad to think that we were at last approaching the Mexican or Spanish-speaking population.

On arriving at San Antonio I was directed to an hotel, but finding that the charge was two dollars a day I left immediately, and was taken by a coloured boy to a boarding-house, where the charge was one dollar and twenty-five cents. It was rather a nice place, far better than the Houston boarding-house, and I determined not to change my quarters until I had made up my mind in what part of the town I should start in practice.

The first evening of my arrival I had a little adventure.

After supper the lady of the house asked me if I would accompany some American ladies to the Mexican part of the town, where they wanted to try a Mexican delicacy.

I was very willing to go with them, the more so because I wanted to know the town as soon as possible.

So our party of some four or five strolled through the principal part of the town into the Mexican quarter.

Here, in a dark open space, just off the road, was a large table dimly lit up, and two or three Mexicans were awaiting their customers.

The ladies sat down on a bench by the table's side, and asked for *tamales*. The *tamal* is a well-known Mexican dainty. Its basis is ground Indian corn made into a paste with lard, and flavoured with



those burning spices so dear to the Mexican palate. It is wrapped up in the maize husk, and is somewhere about the size and shape of a cob of Indian corn. Such a mixture would be an abomination to many people, myself included, but I must say that the ladies enjoyed them extremely.

The man who served us was a swarthy-looking fellow, and appeared to be a mixture of Spaniard and Indian in unknown quantities, as many of the lower class Mexicans are.

He spoke quite good English, with a slight foreign, but not American, accent. Presently one of the ladies said to me, "You say you can speak Spanish; try if you can make him understand you." I was a little anxious, for although I had found no difficulty in making myself understood in Cuba, the case was somewhat different here. Cuba had only just been separated from Spanish rule, but Mexico had been independent for the greater part of a century, and many changes might have crept into the language spoken by illiterate people in that period.

I was agreeably surprised, therefore, to find that he spoke good Spanish, and that we had no difficulty in understanding each other. But although he might be of Mexican descent he was living in the United States, and I could not resist asking him what his country was.

A slight smile broke over his face as he answered, "My father was an Irishman, my mother was a Cherokee, the Mexicans brought me up." And as he left me to decide from these data, I think it would be safest to call him a genuine American citizen.

The next day I lost no time in interviewing the medical authorities. In the United States, each State has its own law with regard to the medical profession. Many states require a foreign doctor to pass an examination before he is allowed to practise, but some states, especially the newer ones, will allow a foreigner to practise on his producing proof of his qualifications. My certificates were favourably received, and all that was required in Texas was to register oneself, for which a trifling fee of some two dollars was asked.

The town of San Antonio would impress most people favourably. It had not the oppressively new appearance of Houston, and was in fact an old Mexican town. The central parts were well built and it looked like a pleasant place to live in.

I walked about the town for the next few days, taking especial notice of the chemists' shops. For in the United States, and also in the West Indies, it is customary for doctors to see their patients at the chemists' at certain hours of the day. I was made somewhat anxious by seeing as many as five or six doctors' names in some of the principal chemists' shops. But I noticed that in the Mexican quarter there were fewer doctors' names, so I made up my mind to try that part of the town, and moved into the house of a Mexican family in Laredo Street, where I arranged for board and lodging at seven dollars a week. My next step was to arrange to visit a chemist who had not many medical men. I began by visiting two shops, but, as one of these had but little work to give me, I spent most of my time in the other, which was only visited by one or two doctors besides myself.

This chemist was a German Jew, who spoke German as his native language, English and Spanish because they were the languages of



most of his customers, and I found out subsequently that he could speak French when he did not want outsiders to understand what he was saying. He was a cheery good fellow, and I used to spend hours daily in his shop while I was waiting for customers. On my arrival there he would say, "It is cold, doctor, come up to the stove; seen the newspaper?"—doing all in his power to make me at home. I only wish for his sake as well as my own that we had brought each other more custom.

As I have made mention of Mexicans several times in connection with Texas, and with San Antonio in particular, it might not be out of place to say a few words in explanation of how these Spanish-speaking people come to inhabit a part of the United States.

A few years before the American Civil War Texas still formed part of the Mexican Republic. A good many American colonists settled there, and after a time they became impatient of Mexican rule, and declared themselves independent. The Mexican government naturally would not submit to this, and sent troops to fight against the rebels, but as Texas was far from the central parts and there were no railways in those days, the revolted colonists, who were hardy frontiersmen, maintained themselves for some time against the Mexicans.

Presumably, however, the colonists felt they could no longer endure the unequal contest, for they appealed to the United States, offering Texas to the Union.

This was too tempting a bait for the United States to refuse. They sent the required troops, vanquished the Mexicans, and marching right down to central Mexico, wrested from the unfortunate Mexicans a treaty by which they were obliged to cede not only Texas, but California, Arizona and New Mexico as well, to the Americans.

The Spanish-speaking population in these States is being gradually absorbed in the influx of Americans from the north, and many of the children can speak English as well as their native language, but the older people have still a dislike to the Americans and cling to their old customs and language. To use the words of an American, "The older ones hate us like poison, but the young ones have been through the schools and don't know the difference."

In writing about Spanish-America, therefore, one is justified in including parts of Texas. The further you go south-west in Texas, the more Mexicans there are.

In San Antonio, with a population of about eighty thousand, there were said to be over seventy thousand Americans and from eight to ten thousand Mexicans, but in the villages further south, near the Mexican boundary, nearly all the people speak Spanish.

The inhabitants of San Antonio were a very mixed lot, for it must not be supposed that all those who did not speak Spanish were Americans. On my asking a messenger boy to direct me to a certain street, he replied in very broken English, "Do you speak German?"

There were also a good many English-speaking negroes, but not so many as further east, for where the Mexican begins the negro gets scarcer, and where all the population are Mexicans there are no more negroes. For the latter is seldom rich and generally works for the white man, but the lower class Mexican, who is often little, if anything, more than an Indian, generally lives in a style considerably inferior to that of the American negro.



In the chemist's shop that I frequented there were more Mexican patients than those of other nationalities, but we had Americans and negroes as well, and taking them all round they were a very mixed lot, in more ways than one.

I do not think it would be betraying professional confidence to give a few examples. A woman had consulted me about a bad headache, which I partially relieved. She came to the shop and said she had no money to pay me, but asked me to accept the teacup she brought in her hand as a token of her gratitude. I declined with thanks, saying that I had no house or home, and that I could not carry a cup about with me. She left in a rather disconsolate state, and a few minutes afterwards a man came in from a neighbouring shop to say that a cup had been taken out of it, and he was evidently under the impression that it had been brought to the chemist's. Another time an American came in and asked me to spare no pains in examining him thoroughly, as he was anxious to know what was the matter with him. My patient gave the prescription to the chemist, and said he would pay us on his return for the medicine. He never returned. But the chemist had the advantage of me, for, knowing the unreliability of many of his customers, he often did not begin to make up the prescription until the patient had already returned for the medicine, when he would plead excess of work as an excuse for keeping his customer waiting, while I had always to risk losing my time.

We had also some extraordinary creatures who had the cocaine habit. Some of these were negresses, who used to come in late in the evening and ask for so many cents of "snowflakes."

I was once called to see a poor fellow who had broken a blood-vessel in coughing. He probably had consumption. On my third visit I was told that my services were no longer required, as their family doctor had returned.

I let the account run on for a short time, but, as I was already thinking of leaving San Antonio, I returned to the house to ask for my money. The patient's wife flounced away saying, "I will pay nothing until my husband is on his legs again." Then one of the daughters upbraided me in this manner: "If I were a doctor I should take pleasure in doing all the good I could, without any thought of recompense." "And who do you think is going to pay for a man's board and lodging, if he works for nothing?" I replied, rather indignantly, as I left. This family was not apparently poor, for they kept a decent-looking boarding-house, and sent their porter to call me.

I will finish with an oyster story, which if taken to heart may save a doctor's bill.

On my way home from the chemist's shop, where I had remained until closing time, near midnight, I had to pass by the house of another chemist, whose place I had sometimes frequented. The owner was at the door, and said to me:—

"Doctor, you have come in time; we've just had a message by telephone that a doctor is wanted at once, at a railway station, two or three miles out of town; you're to drive there, and I think there is money in it."

"But I have nothing with me but a little case of hypodermic



remedies," I replied. "Cannot I go home first and get some things likely to be useful?"

"Impossible," was the reply, "you must go at once."

So a hack carriage with a pair of horses was called, and I was carried off in a very despondent state. For I had naturally made up my mind that it must be a very serious emergency that should cause a doctor to be sent to a railway station at midnight.

My idea was that one of two things had happened. Either that a passenger had tried to commit suicide, perhaps by poisoning himself, or else that there had been a railway accident, in which case what good would my poor little hypodermic syringe be?

On arriving at the station I was slightly relieved to find that we were directed to the house of a railway employee, and began to hope that it might be an ordinary case after all. The door was opened by a woman who did not seem particularly anxious to see me, and I was shown into the room of the patient.

A man was lying quietly in bed, and I was so pleased with his tranquil expression that I could not help saying, "I'm glad to see that you do not appear to be in much pain, for on being sent to a railway station at this time of night I was afraid something dreadful had happened."

His answer was, "Well, I was in great pain a short time ago, when I sent for you, but they've been giving me household remedies, and I feel better now. I'm very fond of oysters, and ate a good many to-day, and I felt very bad after it."

I examined the man, gave the necessary directions and prescription, and then came that moment, awkward for both parties, when the anxious doctor anticipates reluctance on behalf of the patient in paying the required fee.

At length the patient said, "Could you not arrange with the doctor of my society so that your visit should cost me nothing?"

I replied that I did not see how that could be done. The patient's wife then said, "How much do you want for the visit?"

"Well, as there was not much for me to do," I replied, "I'll only charge you one dollar, but there are two dollars to pay for the hack carriage."

Of course, I ought to have asked at least two or three dollars, but then I might not have been paid. As it was, the three dollars for carriage and self were handed over to me, and I began the return journey.

The driver was bursting with curiosity to know the cause for such an urgent visit, and could not resist turning his face to the open window of the carriage with these words: "Say, doc, what was the matter with him?"

"He had eaten too many oysters," I replied, and the information was almost too much for the driver, who nearly exploded with laughter.

Of course, all my cases were not of this kind, but there were enough of them to make the practice very miserable, and during my three months in San Antonio there was not one week in which I earned the seven dollars to pay for my board and lodging.

In other respects the town was rather a nice one. The winter



climate was charming, with a slight frost occasionally at night, and bright dry weather in the daytime. But there were far too many doctors there already, for several who could not stand the rigorous winter in the northern States had come to settle in San Antonio, content to make a bare living for the sake of keeping their health.

There was a Dr. Robinson, a nice person who spoke very good English, but with a slight foreign accent. On my saying to the chemist that, although the doctor had a very English name, I did not think that English was his native language, the reply was, "Oh, of course his name was Rabbínovich, but he wished to anglicize it. 'Rabbi' is very like 'Robin,' and 'vich' means 'son.'" So the Rabbi's son became Robinson. And who after this can be too sure that a name is a true index of nationality?

If I had practised in the more central or American part of the town I should have been more likely to meet higher class patients than in the poorer Mexican quarter, but on the other hand I might have got no work.

Up to now I had kept so close to the chemist's shop or to my lodging in the hope of getting work, that I knew very little of anything outside my sphere, but as I had now made up my mind to leave San Antonio, I went about a little more, so as to get a general idea of the place. I took a trip in the tramcar to Fort Houston, in the opposite extremity of the town, and on my remarking to the driver that this part looked much neater than the part where I lived, he promptly replied, "No Mexicans here," as if their presence was quite enough to give a place an untidy appearance. There was a good deal of truth in the observation, but it was rather unduly severe, as I subsequently found out that there are better class Mexicans. There were certainly quite enough squalid-looking wooden houses in the quarter where I lived, however, to spoil the look of that part of the town.

I went to see the ostrich farm in another part of the suburbs, but was rather disappointed with it.

There were only a few ostriches in quite a small fenced-in place. I was told that the feathers just paid for the keep of the birds, and the profit lay in the money paid by the visitors to see them, for a good many well-to-do Americans go to San Antonio in winter time, on account of its mild climate. I was once talking to a representative man of this class, when he suddenly said, "Yes, sir, there's a great future for the United States—and Canada will belong to it some day," he added, bringing down his hand in a prophetic and ponderous manner.

"But they don't want to belong to you," I replied.

"I know, I know," he said in a peevish fashion; "but they'll find it to their interest to belong to us."

If, however, England is prudent enough not to slight her own colonies in order to flatter the United States, there is no reason why the interest should not be in the opposite direction.

One evening, just before I left, I went to a most extraordinary place of entertainment, which, if I recollect rightly, gloried in the name of the "Washington Theater." Most of the performers were females, who, after doing their turn at a song or a dance, were in the habit of sitting down among the spectators, by whom they were treated to drinks. The house closed at midnight, as the next day was Sunday;



but I was told that on other nights, after the stage performance was over, it was the custom to have a free dance in which the spectators joined, until the early hours of the morning. One of the performers, who was an Englishwoman, told me that such an entertainment would pay well in London. But I fancy that she reckoned without her host, who in that case would have been the London County Council.

The scenery in the vicinity of San Antonio does not present much attraction. Whenever I passed the last straggling huts in the suburbs I invariably found that the road was a mere cutting through the *mezquite* bushes which have been already mentioned, and they were sufficiently high to spoil whatever view the monotonous flat country afforded.

San Antonio would be a nice climate for an invalid to winter in, but offers more inducement to patients than to doctors, who were already in excess; and I now hardly knew where to go, for it did not seem worth while to return so many hundred miles to New Orleans on the chance of doing better there. I determined to push on towards the Mexican frontier, which was only about one hundred and fifty miles distant, in the hope that some small town or village would offer me that living which a larger town denied.

My Mexican landlady entreated me not to leave, and seemed to think that there was an opening for me as a hearse-driver, which to her mind, I suppose, seemed a natural adjunct to the medical profession. The idea was not as preposterous in the southern part of the United States as it would have been in England, for a patent drug vendor who came to the chemist's shop told me that I could discuss medicine freely with him as he was an M.D.

But I resisted all such inducements, and started by train for Cotulla, a small town or village, a little more than half way between San Antonio and the Rio Grande on the Mexican frontier. One does not often travel through such an extent of dreary, uninteresting-looking country as lies in this part, for between San Antonio in Texas, to near Monterrey in Mexico, a distance of about three hundred miles, the scenery presents the same aspect, flat or very slightly undulating ground covered with *mezquite* and prickly pear in varied proportions. These plants of course give the country a green appearance, but in the places where they grow thickly there is but little grass. Even in the less bushy places the verdure is often not grass, but a kind of plant or weed that grows at certain times of the year.

These places cannot exactly be called desert, as they support a kind of vegetation that cattle will live on, but they are very poor and barren, and the animals that graze on them do not seem ever to get fat.

On arriving at Cotulla I went to an American boarding-house near the railway station, and then walked about the little straggling settlement to see what chance there was for me. In the central part where I was lodging there was an attempt at forming a road or street, for the small wooden houses, generally only one storey high, were ranged in a straight line on either side of the sandy waste that thus became the road, but the greater part of the settlement consisted of straggling houses, of which the outlying ones were half hidden in the surrounding bush.



Most of the central houses were inhabited by Americans, but the greater part of the population were Mexicans, and there were very few negroes.

I introduced myself at the chemist's shop and soon found out that there were already two doctors practising here, one of them being the chemist's father. This old gentleman received me in a friendly manner, and asked if I would like to accompany him next day, when he was going to visit a patient who lived some twenty-five or thirty miles away in the bush. I willingly accepted the invitation, as it offered me an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the country and people, and we started towards the middle of the day in a buggy drawn by a pair of small but good horses. I soon found out one reason why I had been asked to come. The surrounding country was intersected by fences in several places, and there were gates to open, so it was very desirable for the doctor who was driving to have a companion.

During the whole drive the country presented the same appearance, flat or slightly undulating land dotted with *mezquite* and prickly pear, and covered in places with a weedy kind of herbage rather than with grass. One could never see any distance ahead on account of the flatness of the country and the height of the *mezquite*, which might often reach to some twelve feet.

My companion was genial and communicative, and regaled me with several stories of the Civil War, when he had been a doctor in the Confederate army. He put the attitude of the negro at that period in a quaint manner, by saying that he had heard a black man speak thus to his companions about the war, "Fellow-citizens, this is a quarrel in which we have taken no part, *but freedom is very susceptible.*"

The doctor himself, like many, if not most, of his countrymen, had a decided idea about the superiority of American customs, for, while talking about things in general, he suddenly turned round and said with emphasis, "Yes, sir, we're a free people here; we can't stand kings."

"But," I replied, "your president has a great deal more power than a king."

"Yes, but we choose him ourselves," was his answer.

"And a nice way your country is upset over it by bribery and corruption every few years," I retorted.

The doctor remained silent for a time after this, and the conversation then changed.

The little horses travelled at a good trot, and some time before nightfall we arrived at the house of the patient, who seemed to be a fairly well-to-do American farmer.

The case was of a chronic nature, so we were able to have a good night's rest, and drove back next day. I was on the look-out all the time to see a *coyote* (Mexican wolf), but rabbits were the only wild animals that showed themselves. Cattle were feeding here and there upon the foliage, but they seldom got beyond what might be called a store condition, when they were often shipped by train to be fattened in the Indian Territory north of Texas.

Within the next few days I gradually became aware that the size



of the settlement could hardly be expected to support a third doctor, and I was advised to try a little place called Encinal, which was on the railway line, a few stations further south.

Encinal was rather like Cotulla, but on a smaller scale. It did not boast of even one central street. The small wooden houses were built here and there at irregular intervals in the sandy waste where the scrubby bushes had been cleared away, and on the outside of the settlement the *mezquite* and prickly pear were still growing.

Here also was an American boarding-house where I lodged on my arrival, but nearly all the inhabitants of the settlement were Mexicans, and there were no negroes. Although Encinal could not exactly be called an inviting-looking place, there were indications that a living might possibly be made in it.

I had at last hit on a place where there was no doctor, and even a chemist, who but too frequently usurps the functions of a medical man in these out-of-the-way parts, had not thought it worth his while to start in practice.

There were some American officials here, such as the railway station-master, the postmaster and the sheriff, whom the Mexicans called the *sherife*. A few of the principal storekeepers belonged to the same nationality, but as nearly all the people were Mexicans I thought it would be better to make my home among Spanish-speaking people. An old woman called Anastasia Flores was introduced to me as a suitable person, and I arranged for board and lodging with her at four dollars and a half weekly. She was a friendly sort of person, a little better off than the usually very poor Mexican, and lived in her own wooden house with two little children, Crispin and Josefa, her great nephew and niece, whom she had adopted. Besides my bedroom I had a little room on the outside of the house to keep my drugs in. The house fronted the sandy track that did duty for a road, and there were not many near neighbours, so I was fairly contented with my quarters. As no doctor had lived in this settlement for some time a good many patients came to see me soon after my arrival. But most of the cases were of just the kind that a needy medical man would wish to avoid—the chronic ailments of very poor people which might be alleviated but not cured. By degrees, however, as I became known, I got the usual run of the acute illnesses and minor accidents that make a living for the general practitioner. Sometimes I was brought out on horseback a few miles into the country, and it was thus that I was introduced to the Texan saddle, which is of the kind used by cowboys, with a large metal peak in front for the use of the lasso. I used to think at first that it was the same as the Mexican saddle, from which it has evidently been adapted, but the peak in front of the Mexican saddle is much shorter and broader, and is made of wood, and there are many other minor differences, for the primitive Mexican saddle has merely green hide tacked over a large wooden frame, whereas the Texan saddle has generally a leather covering.

Both kinds of saddles have a long narrow opening in the centre of the seat, somewhat after the manner of the slit in the leather of a bicycle saddle, only larger, the two sides being only joined at the peak in front and for a short distance at the hinder part. This is very



good for the horse, for it makes it almost impossible to cause a sore on the backbone. I now began to understand the reason for wearing those huge leather overalls that one frequently sees in the pictures of cowboys; for ordinary leggings would not reach high enough to protect the body from the thorns of the *mezquite*, but the overalls reach up to the waist, where they are fastened. The whole covering fits quite loosely, so that it is cool and easily detached when the cowboy gets off his horse. In addition to this a leather jacket is frequently worn, and when thus equipped the rider can gallop among the thorny bushes that would otherwise tear his clothes and skin. Even the foot is protected, for the stirrup is generally encased by a thick leather toecap.

Life at Encinal was very monotonous. When not visiting my patients I used to stop at home until the afternoon, so that I might easily be found if wanted, and then go out for a walk when the heat of the day had passed, for winter was now over, and the Texan summer is oppressively hot.

The settlement did not extend in most directions as far as a mile from where I was living, and beyond this the road was a mere cutting through the *mezquite* and prickly pear. Once, when I was out at nightfall about two miles from home, I heard at some distance a yelping that could only have been caused by a pack of *coyotes*. It made me feel anxious, as I was on foot and unarmed, so I quickened my pace and breathed more freely when I was well within the settlement. Towards dusk I would frequently visit one of the principal American stores, where they used to let me sit down and read the newspaper which was published in San Antonio and sent here by train daily; and although the local news did not interest me greatly, it occasionally contained news of the great world from which one was so isolated.

The food that I got at home was of the simplest description: bread, common vegetables, and the meat was generally inferior goat's flesh; but Doña Anastasia always behaved in a kindly manner and made me feel at home.

One evening at dusk I passed from the central room into the little wooden chamber in which I slept. There was no light, but wishing to wash my hands, I groped for the tin dish of water that was standing on a chair, for the furniture was of a primitive description. As I dipped my hand in the water I felt a violent pain, and I called Doña Anastasia to bring a light. A scorpion had fallen into the bowl, and not being able to get out, had naturally stung me when I touched it. I was very anxious about the result, as I was unable to scarify my own hand properly and had heard of fatal results from such accidents. But beyond a pain, not greater perhaps than that caused by a wasp's sting, nothing happened to me. Perhaps the scorpion, being a female full of young ones, was in a weak state and had not a normal amount of poison.

But I can look back on Encinal with friendly feelings, as one of the places that sheltered me during a period of misfortune. Here was a little settlement that almost afforded the living that a pretentious town like San Antonio denied me, for I was just able to earn something like the amount that my board and lodging cost—four and a half dollars weekly; and was only out of pocket in the wear and tear of my



clothes, which in such an out-of-the-way place did not amount to much.

I used to charge my patients half a dollar for advice and medicine when they visited me, and one dollar when I went to their houses ; but I had a good many bad debts, and there were some necessitous people whom I never expected to pay me. But many of these were not so poor as they pretended to be, and I was given an instructive lesson how a quack may make money where a medical man would starve.

A poor woman had come to consult me soon after my arrival. I was apprehensive from the start that she had cancer, and told her after one or two visits that I did not think I could cure her. A quack came to the settlement soon after this, and I heard that she had been to see him and that she felt much better after his treatment. I was greatly surprised, but as the information was given me by credible people, I began to lose confidence in my own diagnosis and to think that I might have mistaken a simple sore for something of a graver nature. About a month had passed when one night, just before bedtime, she came to see me as she could bear the pain no longer.

The quack had evidently deadened her suffering with opiates, but the large bottle he had given her before he left the settlement was now finished, and the pain had returned. He had received about sixteen dollars from her, and had gone off before his fraud was discovered.

The cancer had now eaten deeply into her face. There was a Mexican hospital on the frontier, the other side of the Rio Grande ; but, as she would not remain there, I had to attend to her occasionally while I was in Encinal, and she did not live many months after my departure.

I had now been about three months in this place and was already considering whether I would remain or leave, for I was not making quite enough to support myself ; as I had all the practice that the little settlement afforded, I did not see my way to increasing my business.

About this time a little boy, the son of one of the few well-to-do American settlers in Encinal, got a severe attack of erysipelas. His father was naturally rather doubtful about trusting to the diagnosis and treatment of a stranger, and sent for a doctor from a distance to consult with me. This gentleman behaved very fairly to me, for he told the boy's father that I was acting in a competent manner, and that the services of another medical man were not required.

Although the poor child died, the father was so convinced that I had done my best, that he offered to lend me a substantial sum of money to start a drug store in Encinal. Perhaps I ought to have accepted this, for drug-selling might have paid better than strictly medical work, and both would have been compatible with each other in these parts, but I thought that if I accepted I might be tied to the place, whether I wished to go or not. So I declined with thanks and made preparations for leaving.

Old Doña Anastasia acted as a friend to the last in a manner that will show how strongly the religious relationship of co-godfather or co-godmother is felt in these parts. An American, who lived near, was married to a Mexican woman and, as is generally the case in these mixed marriages, the wife's nationality pervaded their household, so



much so that the man himself preferred to talk Spanish when I visited them.

Don Charley, as he was quaintly called by his Mexican friends, owed me a small account which he did not seem likely to pay. He was, however, co-godfather (*compadre*) with Doña Anastasia to some person unknown to me, so she sent her little adopted child Josepha to ask for payment for me, with the result that a part of the money was brought.

Being unable to hear of any likely locality on the Texan side of Mexico, I determined to push on into the latter country, as I had heard that foreign doctors were allowed to practise there; and during the six or seven months that I had been in Texas I had already learned the semi-medical terms that Spanish-speaking patients were accustomed to use.

I had no means of finding out what part of Mexico would offer most inducement to a stranger, so I resolved to work my way towards Mexico City, where I arranged to have a little money sent in case of bad fortune. But I determined to try several places as I went along and to remain for a considerable time in whatever locality a decent living could be made.

Before leaving Texas, I should have liked very much to have spent a short time on a cattle ranch, so as to compare the way of working cattle there with that in British colonies where I had been. But, although I almost asked one man for an invitation, I could not get it, and the spirit of colonial hospitality, so warm in some English-speaking countries, seemed quite cold here.

Perhaps the fault lay partly in myself, for most people do not want to have anything to say to a person who does not appear prosperous, and the very fact of trying to make a living in this locality would be sufficient to stamp one with poverty.

So, with a cordial farewell to Doña Anastasia, I left Encinal by train and arrived in a few hours at Laredo, the frontier town on the Rio Grande. The channel of the river is large enough to justify its name, but the body of water is small in proportion, and the same dreary *mezquite* vegetation grew on either side of its steep banks with a complete absence of larger trees.

The river is the boundary between the United States and Mexico, and the town lies on either side of the river, being connected by a large bridge.

I lodged at an hotel on the American side that night, and determined to go next day as far as Monterrey, a large town in the State of Nuevo León, some hundred and fifty miles over the Mexican border.



## CHAPTER III.

## MEXICAN FRONTIER TO CUAUTITLAN.

**I**T was with a feeling of deep interest that I entered Mexican territory the next morning. My reception in the United States had been harsh enough, and I now hoped that the courtesy of Spanish customs would afford me, even in far-off Mexico, that civility which an unoffending stranger has a right to expect.

The train stopped at the customs house on the Mexican side of the river and the passengers' luggage was examined, but everything was done in a civilized manner, and no attempt was made to force an immigrant's schedule on any one, or to ask offensive questions.

The United States railways only carry one class, but in Mexico, like most other countries, there are usually three, and I was now travelling in a second class carriage.

We passed over the same kind of arid, flat country, green, but with thorny bushes and hardly any grass. Here and there was a small Mexican village, with its brown walls made of mud or sun-dried bricks. And now and then one would see a poor Mexican family travelling on the road near the railway line. Whether riding, or driving in a dilapidated cart, their appearance was generally squalid and Indian-like, and their animals, either mules or ponies, were nearly always thin. The man, when mounted, often carried a child in front of him, and a gun slung over his shoulders, and the woman rode after him, perhaps carrying one or two babies with her.

A railway journey is not generally an eventful one, and on arriving at Monterrey I lodged for the first time in a Mexican inn, which was close to the railway station, but I cannot recollect whether it boasted of the more pretentious name of hotel or whether it was content with the more humble title of *fonda* or *mesón*.

The rooms presented a general resemblance to Spanish customs, with their white-washed walls and that meagre appearance that insufficient furniture gives to a second-rate place of this class.

Early in the morning I was awakened by the greatest noise of cock-crowing I have ever heard. A large number of wicker cages full of fighting cocks had been piled in the *patio*, or central courtyard, and the birds were screaming defiance at each other. In Mexico the sport of cock-fighting is carried on to a great extent, and you may often see a well-dressed man proudly carrying a handsome fowl in his arms.

Mexican food is very different to that used in Spain, but the meals bear the same names. There is the early *desayuno*, or frugal meal of a cup of coffee with bread, the *almuerzo*, or late breakfast towards



midday, and nothing after this except the supper, which is generally taken between six and eight in the evening. The long interval without food in the afternoon is most uncomfortable for those not accustomed to it, but it suits those who cater for the public, as it gives less trouble, and if you want anything to eat between meals they make you pay extra for it.

After my coffee I went out to explore the town, which has a population of about fifty thousand inhabitants, and is one of the principal places in northern Mexico.

The summer in southern Texas had been oppressively hot, as the flat country bordering on the Gulf of Mexico is almost on the sea level, but on approaching Monterrey there is a gradual ascent, and in its vicinity there are large mountains, so there was a grateful freshness in the air, although it was quite early in August.

It has become a favourite visiting place for American tourists, and it must have been in honour of them that the band was playing scarcely anything but a selection of American airs in the *plaza*, performing indeed with such good taste that it almost succeeded in making the commonplace tune of "Yankee Doodle" sound pleasant to the ear.

So many of the business places in the central parts were American that one was often uncertain whether one ought to speak Spanish or English.

The town is handsomely built in the solid Spanish style, and there were several nice-looking hotels, but my slender means obliged me to remain at the inferior house near the railway station.

I went to a bull-fight in the afternoon, but the sport was shorn of many of its native splendours.

The solid stone or brick amphitheatre in Spain is ill-replaced in most Spanish-American countries by an ugly wooden structure, and, as a rule, the best bull-fighters are those that come from the mother-country.

On this occasion there was a Mexican bull-fighter in the arena, and it was the first time I had ever seen the *torero* overtaken by the bull. The unfortunate man fell, and his body seemed to be driven a yard or two along the ground by the bull's head before another bull-fighter engaged the enraged animal's attention.

The fallen fighter, however, behaved pluckily enough, for on getting up he waved his assistant away and eventually killed the animal. But with a Spanish bull the consequences of a fall would probably have been more serious.

Perhaps what chiefly makes a Mexican bull-fight look tame as compared with a Spanish one is the almost complete absence of well-dressed women.

In Spain very beautiful dresses and bright-coloured silk shawls (*mantones de Manila*) are worn on these occasions, whereas in Monterrey most of the women present were clothed in the sombre every-day dress of the lower class Mexican woman, and frequented the cheapest seats.

There were only about three well-dressed women in the better seats. Two of these were close to me in the crowd as we left after the function was over.



"Wal," said one of them to the other in a strong nasal accent, "how did you like it?"

"Not for me, not for my money," was the reply of the other American lady.

Sad experience had already taught me that the largest town does not always offer the best chance for making a living, so I interviewed several people with a view to finding out whether there was any opening here, and the general opinion seemed to be that Monterrey was well supplied with doctors.

On my asking whether they could recommend any place, some one said there was a small town called Mazapil, further south, that was in need of a medical man, so I started for that place after having been only two or three days in Monterrey.

Mazapil is in the State of Zacatecas, and about fifteen miles distant from the mining town of Concepción del Oro, through which I should have to pass.

A town whose name ended in *pil*, situated near another whose name ended in gold (*oro*), seemed to augur well, and without being superstitious I could not help hoping that the conjunction of the two words might be favourable. To arrive at Mazapil I had to follow the main railway line as far as Saltillo, a large town further south. From Saltillo there was a small private railway belonging to a mining company that would carry me as far as Concepción del Oro.

As one travels south from Monterrey to Saltillo the scenery becomes typical of a large part of northern Mexico. There is a gradual ascent to the high tableland that makes the interior of Mexico so cool in spite of its warm latitude. Instead of flat country abounding in thorny bushes, the railway winds through barren valleys with mountains on either side. The region is desolate enough, and there is little attempt at cultivation, but it is a mining district that has been successfully worked for many years.

Saltillo is a good-sized town, although considerably smaller than Monterrey. On my arrival at the railway station I was rather perplexed about where I should lodge, for there appeared to be no suitable place close to the railway station, and the people who offer their assistance at such times are but too often the touts of the most expensive hotels in the town.

So I had to take the porters into my confidence, and ask them if they could recommend me a decent place that was not too dear.

They consulted with one another and one of them said, "We will take him to La Sevillana."

It could easily be seen that the little hotel or inn was not a first class house, but this did not displease me, as I was obliged to study economy. On speaking to the landlady I noticed a geniality in her manner that is rather uncommon in Mexico, where the Indian element has left a rather sombre impress on most of its people.

I was both surprised and pleased to hear that the place was called La Sevillana because she and her husband came from near Seville in Spain. A year had not passed since I had been there, so we had much to talk about in common. Her husband wore the short jacket with that large display of shirt front that is affected by bull-fighters as a kind of undress uniform, and I found that such had really been his occupation.



I remained here one or two days, principally to verify my information about Mazapil, for the nearer one approaches a place the more likely one is to know the truth about it. The account given me was still good, but not so glowing as before. The size of the town had now shrunk, and people were doubtful whether there were as many as three thousand inhabitants. I also ascertained that another doctor was already established there, but was consoled by hearing that he was not much good, and that I was certain to get plenty of work.

I had no desire to waste time in Saltillo, and started in one or two days for Concepción del Oro, taking with me a card of introduction which my host the ex-bull-fighter had given me to some one in that place.

I left by the small railway belonging to the mining company. It only followed the main line as far as one station further south, and then branched off towards the west. The distance to Concepción del Oro was about seventy miles, and all the scenery in these parts presented the same general features—chains of mountains with valleys between them, almost unpeopled and uncultivated.

On arriving at Concepción del Oro I was brought to a dirty lodging-house, and went to a little *fonda* for my meals, as I feared the expenses of the hotel.

I then presented my card of introduction from the bull-fighter, and found that it really was of some use, for the person to whom I was introduced advised me about how I should have my lighter luggage carried to Mazapil, and kindly allowed me to leave my heaviest trunk in his house, as I thought it would be better not to bring such a cumbersome thing along a rough mountainous road until I had proved that there was a living to be made in the out-of-the-way place to which I was going.

A large English company had its smelting works in Concepción del Oro, and was supplied with ore in buckets from the neighbouring mountain range by means of a cable, which was stretched about the height of a telegraph wire from the ground. These buckets were filled in the vicinity of the mines some seven or eight miles away in the direction of Mazapil, and moved at the rate of a slow walk towards the smelting works. Apart from these works there was nothing of interest in this rather dirty town of about five thousand inhabitants. Among its most repulsive features were the miserable hovels of the men engaged in mining occupations. Most of these people did not live in any street, but were camped in what appeared to be temporary shelters in the broken hilly ground on the outskirts of the town, without any sanitary arrangements. If you tried to pass in that direction it was almost necessary to carry a good supply of stones in your hands to protect yourself from the fierce hungry-looking dogs that guarded the shanty dwellings of their Indian-looking masters. Yet these men were receiving about a dollar a day in Mexican money, which is three times as much as the ordinary *peón* or labourer would obtain, and although their dollar is only worth about two shillings in foreign countries that have a gold basis, it has a very fair buying power in its own country, perhaps fully equal to four shillings.



On making further inquiry about Mazapil, which was now only fifteen miles away, I was greatly disappointed to find there was a further shrinkage in the number of its inhabitants, which were now stated not to exceed two thousand.

Lest any one should think it strange that it did not occur to me to try the larger and richer mining town where I now was, instead of going further to a smaller and poorer place, it may be mentioned that miners are generally "deadheads" as far as a new doctor is concerned, although they are profitable people for the storekeeper. Every mining company is obliged by law to have its own medical man, who receives a fixed salary, and the employee must be very prejudiced against him to pay extra to an outsider for services that have already been provided.

However, I was now nearly at my journey's end, and was anxious to prove what Mazapil was like, so after some two days I started for that place on muleback with a mounted guide, having my two lighter trunks packed on another animal. The ascent of the range was rough and stony, but the hardy animals bred on such country will travel easily where those accustomed to level ground would fall. Before we had half finished our journey we had already crossed the range, and could see Mazapil in the valley beneath us. It looked rather well in the distance, and the mosque-like dome of its church, built in the style common to Spanish architecture in the sixteenth century, gave an interesting and oriental look to the town. On descending the range we had to travel several miles along the valley, which was hemmed in by mountains on either side. It wanted but little experience to see that the soil was barren and unfertile. The few stunted trees, some of them being that kind of palm which grows in a cool climate, and the short sour-looking grass that grew sparingly, attested to its poverty, and, of the few horses and mules feeding at large, scarcely one appeared to be in good condition. But the wealth of this district lies in its minerals.

The rock showed out here and there through its shallow covering of soil, and the outskirts of the town looked dismal, with large piles of the dark-coloured slag made in reducing the minerals.

As we clattered along the main street, paved with large stones, the town presented a rather deserted appearance. Presently we arrived at the Hotel de las Diligencias, almost the only place in the town that could accommodate a better class traveller.

The white-washed rooms, on either side of a passage paved with rough stones, were built in the usual solid Spanish style, and the interior, although sparsely furnished, was clean; but the very name of the hotel spoke of the decadence of the town, for although there used to be coaches there were none now. The people who were in charge of the nearly empty hotel were a family of four. The father, who was an armourer and locksmith, was generally absent at his shop during the daytime, and his wife and daughters looked after the house.

I arranged with them for board and lodging at one dollar a day, and then went to the Government office to arrange for permission to practice. On payment of one dollar I received a slip of paper which entitled me to practise "lucrative professions" for one month, and the stamp which was affixed to this document cost me a few cents besides.



I subsequently found out on reaching the more central parts of Mexico that this permission was altogether informal for medical practice, and that the petitioner should write directly to the governor of the State, who alone has power to give the required permission. But the officials in this out-of-the-way place did not appear to understand their own laws, and I had no further trouble about the matter.

I now arranged my small supply of drugs to the best advantage, and awaited my patients. On the very next day I was delighted to hear that a *señora* had called to see me, but was much disappointed to find that it was only a poor woman who wanted to cook for me, and I dismissed her promptly, telling her that I had already arranged with the people of the hotel.

Within a short time I found out that I had been altogether misled about the place. Instead of a town of three thousand people without a doctor, it was in reality a town of some fifteen hundred people with two doctors already in practice, and probably neither of them would have been able to make a living by his practice alone. One of them received a subsidy from the Government, and the other owned the only chemist's shop in the town.

It was very disappointing to have come so far to such a hopeless place, and I soon got tired of waiting at home for patients who never came. In my rambles in the outskirts of the town I often visited the small native smelting works. In Mexico, many of the large smelting works belong to foreign companies and use complicated machinery that an inexperienced person might find hard to understand, but the process used in most of the small places here was quite simple, and no machinery was used, unless a bellows used to intensify the heat may be dignified by that name.

On entering the small solidly built building there was a primitive furnace, which was fed with brushwood by one or two men. A man on the outside of the wall worked a large bellows with his feet, after the manner of a treadmill. The nozzle of the bellows projected through a hole in the wall, and all the part which was exposed to great heat was built of fireproof clay. A large trough built of this material sloped downwards towards the centre of the back wall of the room. This trough was supplied with ore broken up into small fragments by two men with hammers, and was generally mixed with lead to make the fusion more easy. The melting mass glided down to the lowest part, where it was received in a hollow that was soon a shining lake of liquid metal.

The head man stood watching this process at a few yards distance, armed with a long iron bar that was flattened at one extremity. When he considered that the right moment had arrived he would call to the man on the other side of the wall to stop working the bellows. The silver, according to the well-known principle of assaying, had already got into the centre of the liquid metal, surrounded by the lead. But when the great heat was no longer maintained by the blast of the bellows, the silver in the centre would show signs of solidifying, while the surrounding lead was still quite liquid. At this juncture the head man would run the flattened part of his iron bar under the precious metal and lift out the silver, which would flatten out into a large button about the size of a circle made by the fingers and thumbs, some five inches in diameter.



The whole of this process might not last one hour, but was repeated over and over again day and night for some three weeks, when the smelting was stopped for two or three days so that there might be a general cleaning up before the work was started afresh.

In the silver thus obtained there was a very small quantity of gold, which they were unable to extract.

The owner of one of these small places told me that a good living could be made by this work, but that there was no large amount of money in it; and this seems probable enough, for silver is worth little as compared with gold, and much labour had to be employed, for it took about six men to work the process, and of course the same men did not work by day and night. The occupation was not without the dangers of lead poisoning; I saw one man with bad lead paralysis and was told that colic was not an unusual thing.

Some of the larger and more scientific smelting works must have used ore which contained a larger percentage of gold, for I saw on different occasions stones streaked with those blue and green colours that are generally caused by copper, and this metal associates itself with gold much in the same way that lead does with silver.

Mazapil was essentially a mining town, although of the poorer sort, for besides those employed in the smelting works, many of its inhabitants were employed in the large mines on the range about half-way to Concepción del Oro, and these hardy fellows would trot down hill to their homes, some six or seven miles away, when their day's work was over. The dress of these men, whether miners or smelters, hardly differed from that of the ordinary *peón* or country labourer. There was the same high conical-shaped hat, made of *petate* or cabbage-palm, the same white upper garment that did duty for shirt and coat, and trousers of the same colour and material. They wore the same kind of *guaraches* or sandals, bound to the ankle with stout thongs, of which the smelters often used a larger quantity to protect the instep from the hot metal.

I will not attempt to describe the different kinds of shawl or blanket-like coverings that the men wore, thrown over one shoulder when travelling in fine weather, or worn poncho-like, resting on both shoulders, after the wearer had passed his head through the centre, when the weather was wet or cold. The *zarape* was the most pretentious, and might be worn even by an upper class Mexican, but the little *cotón* was only used by the poorer working people.

There were several other kinds with slight distinctions and different names, but foreigners would be inclined to call them all "blankets."

The most extraordinary and Indian-like covering was a mat made of palm leaves, which was often thrown round the shoulders in very wet weather.

The pointed leaves sticking out everywhere made the wearer's body look like a porcupine. It was generally known by the Spanish name of *capisayo*,<sup>1</sup> but in one place I heard it called by the Indian-sounding name of *nahual*.

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter xi, p. 132.



Apart from the smelting works the little town was devoid of interest. There was, of course, the inevitable *plaza* with its bandstand, which even the smallest place thinks it necessary to have.

The simple performers, who in country districts often have a considerable strain of Indian blood, generally play with good taste, and would compare favourably with a village band in England.

Occasionally you may hear them play a lively Spanish *zarzuela*, but the nature of Mexican music is mournful, and in accordance with the Indian blend in the people.

As a Spaniard said to me, "*El indole de los mexicanos es triste*" (the disposition of the Mexicans is sad).

One Sunday night I went to the *plaza* to hear the band play. Even in August it was quite cool owing to the considerable altitude, and I had but little inclination to rest on the stone seats, but several Indian-looking men seemed quite comfortable there, wrapped up in their blankets. Most of the audience, however, preferred to walk round at a brisk rate, and it was customary for the men to go in one direction and the women in the opposite direction. A mixed party generally went the same way as the women.

Before I had been long at the hotel I found that they were not giving me enough to eat, although I only asked for the simplest food, and would not touch the dishes flavoured with the burning *piquantes* that are so much liked by the Mexicans. I expostulated with my host the armourer, who replied thus: "I also have often been short of food when I was travelling, and could not get anything to eat, although I had the money to pay for it."

"But that's altogether a different case," I said. "If you got nothing to eat, you paid no money, but I am paying a dollar a day and am not getting enough."

"If you want more to eat, you must pay more for it," was his answer, and as I now saw that my stay here would be very limited, I consented to give twenty or twenty-five cents a day more, on condition of being given plenty of food.

Almost the only permanent lodger in the hotel besides myself was the young *juez* or judge of the town.

In Mexico this title often corresponds to magistrate rather than to judge, for in the country parts the *juez* is often not even of the legal profession, but only a prominent man entrusted with keeping law and order.

This young *juez*, however, had lately passed his examinations, and was sent to officiate for a short time in this out-of-the-way place, presumably as a stepping-stone to something better. He was a nice companionable fellow, and one of the few educated people in the town.

One day he asked me if I would like to go with him to the prison, which he was about to inspect. I was only too glad of the chance of seeing something new, so we left his public office together and walked along the stony street to the jail.

The semi-military police who guarded the door presented arms as the judge approached. A Mexican country prison is little more than a strong stone building, almost devoid of furniture. A quantity of



beans were stored up in a kind of stone font, for the principal food of the lower classes are *frijoles* and *tortillas* (beans and Indian corn cake).

The judge inspected the beans by raking them about with his hand. He then made every prisoner pass in rotation in front of him, and asked each one whether he had any complaint to make. But they all, prudently perhaps, said they were quite satisfied with their treatment.

It was instructive in the courtesy of the Spanish language to notice that the meanest Indian-looking prisoner was addressed in the polite third person of *usted*.

About this time I became aware that a rather decent kind of man of the mining class was lodging at the hotel. He was something above the ordinary miner, for he had a small contract and was employing the services of several men under him.

I thought this would be a good opportunity for going down into a mine, as up to now I had only been in the smelting works. He kindly consented to take me with him, but warned me that the consent of the manager would have to be obtained before I went below.

So he called me at dawn, about half-past five in the morning, and waited impatiently for the quarter of an hour that it took me to dress; for we had some six or seven miles to travel, and he had evidently a very poor opinion of my capabilities, and was afraid I might make him late for his work. On our way out of the town we were joined by two or three others. We started along the valley, but soon began the oblique ascent of the mountain chain, and my companions seemed surprised to see the middle-aged doctor take the lead up the stony track, instead of lagging behind as they expected.

On arriving at the mine I asked for the manager, who came out of his office to speak to me, and to my great disappointment he said that it was against rules to allow any outsider to descend the mine.

So I accompanied my companion to a rocky recess a few yards away, where we began to eat our frugal early breakfast before I returned home.

To my surprise the manager followed us and asked me if I was a miner.

I replied that I knew nothing about mining and that it was only from curiosity that I had come.

"Then," he kindly said, "the rule does not apply to you," and he immediately gave me leave to enter, and put me in charge of a competent guide.

I now found I had an arduous piece of work in front of me, and began to understand why the companion of my walk had entertained doubts about my being able to descend this mine.

Instead of going down a straight shaft in a cage, as I probably expected, the mine was a succession of chambers, one underneath the other. There was an opening in the floor of each, and the descent to the floor of the chamber below was made by means of a stout pole, placed diagonally and notched for footholds, something in fact like the poles one is accustomed to see in a bear den, except for its oblique position.



The Indian-like miners had a great advantage over me in descending, quite apart from their familiarity with such exercise, for the flexible soles of their sandals gave them a more delicate sense of touch and a firmer foothold than I could possibly obtain with thick walking boots.

In some places the notch for the foothold was nearly worn away, and, if your foot slipped out, the whole weight of your body fell with a sudden strain on your arms. The height of each chamber might have been some fifteen or twenty feet, quite far enough for a dangerous fall on hard rock.

I persevered in my descent until I reached the first party of miners drilling a hole about half-way down the mine, and then told my guide that I did not want to go any further. The ascent was rather easier, and I was well satisfied to get back without hurting myself.

I cannot say that I learnt much from my subterranean expedition, for the fear of falling and the difficulty in keeping myself clean in the damp places below had distracted my attention too much.

Piles of mineral lay on the ground near the mouth of the mine. As is often the case, some of the most glittering pieces that seemed full of precious metal were worth but little, and I was shown some plain friable specimens of carbonate of lead which were said to contain much more silver.

This was an old mine which had been worked in the time of the Spaniards, who were said to have obtained a large amount of silver from it.

Presently the manager came up, and courteously invited me into his office to take late breakfast (*almuerzo*) with him. The mine may have belonged to a foreign company but the manager was a Mexican.

This was the best breakfast I had eaten since I came to Mazapil. I began to try the dishes very cautiously as I feared my mouth might be burnt by the horrible *piquante* without which a Mexican thinks his meat is insipid.

To my surprise there was no condiment in the food, and on my making this remark to my host he said rather ruefully, "I too am very fond of *piquantes*, but I get such a dreadful indigestion after eating them that I am obliged to do without them."

I subsequently found that this burning food is a very common cause of indigestion among the Mexicans.

Miners have only a short day's work in this part, for they did not appear to begin until about eight in the morning, and at two in the afternoon the mining tools were delivered to the caretaker, the men, who all lived at a distance, returning home. My friend the miner and myself went back at a brisk walk, but several of the younger men passed us at a trot and might have arrived at Mazapil in an hour's time.

My companion was so favourably impressed by my walking capabilities that he thought I ought to be worth something as a doctor, and brought me the only patient I had during my stay in this place.

But one patient will not make a practice, and I was just considering when I should leave when an unexpected event happened.

About this time the young *juez* left Mazapil. He was probably being sent to some better appointment. I missed him very much,



especially in the evening, as there was hardly any permanent lodger in the hotel except myself.

But we had once some animation for a few days in the shape of Hungarian gipsies. These extraordinary people, in Mexico at any rate, live in a style decidedly lower than the Indians, who have at least a respectable occupation and a hut, however squalid it may be.

The gipsies, on arriving at a country town in their carts drawn by mules or donkeys, do not hire any house or room, but rent the use of some yard, which in this case was the yard belonging to the hotel. Here they pitch a few large tents in which they pile their belongings, such as clothes and babies. They frequently have tame bears, which the men make dance, while the women assist by telling fortunes.

A few days after the judge had left, I was entering the hotel one afternoon when I heard a scuffle in one of the rooms which were ranged on either side of the stony passage. Presently there emerged the armourer who was in charge of the house, and he was held on each side by a policeman, while a superior officer followed and superintended the proceedings.

They marched him off to the jail. When they had gone a short distance the prisoner's wife followed, but never returned, and I presently heard that they had imprisoned her also for using abusive language to the police. One of the daughters then followed, and I was agreeably surprised when she returned in safety.

The police said that the armourer was drunk in his shop and was discharging firearms to the danger of the public.

The culprit said that he merely discharged a pistol which he had repaired, to prove that it was in good order.

Either version may have been correct, but as this affair happened so soon after the judge's departure, it looked as if that personage had been a protecting influence to the house. As host and hostess were now in prison, a married daughter came to take charge of the hotel.

A few days afterwards I left Mazapil, having been there three weeks, during which time I had one patient and had earned one dollar.

Before leaving I went to the jail to say good-bye to my landlady, with whom I left a supply of cigarettes to console her.

I returned to Concepción del Oro in a rather desponding frame of mind, but was pleased to find that the large trunk I had left there had been well cared for.

My bad luck had given me an unfavourable impression of this part as a field for my labour, and I now made up my mind to go right on to Mexico City, in the hope of better things in the more central parts of the Republic.

Another urgent reason impelled me to go on, for I had not counted upon earning nothing, and my supply of money was running short. Fortunately, I had a little English gold, which the English smelting company kindly changed for me into the paper and silver currency of the country.

They readily changed the few sovereigns, but I had great difficulty in inducing them to change a half-sovereign, and I knew I should want all for the long journey in front of me, for Mexico City is about eight hundred miles from the Texan frontier, and as yet I had hardly travelled more than a quarter of that distance.



I had now to retrace my journey as far back as the first station south of Saltillo, where the mining company's railway branches off from the main line.

I was landed here late in the afternoon, and I had to wait at the railway station until the early morning for the train to Mexico City.

It would, of course, have been more comfortable to return that night as far as Saltillo, and to start fresh from an hotel in the morning, but my means were running so short that I did not dare to retrace my journey any further than was absolutely necessary, and by stopping at the railway station I also saved the expenses of a hotel.

I had brought a little food with me, and ate my frugal supper under the cover of the railway station. The station-master seemed a humanely disposed man, and probably understood that want of means influenced me in not returning as far as Saltillo.

On finding out that I was a doctor, he had a long talk about his own ailments, and perhaps I was able to give him some useful information.

He kindly brought a mattress for me to sleep on, and promised to have me called in time for the train, which was due about daylight.

He also advised me only to travel in this train as far as Celaya, and to change there on to another railway company, as it would carry me the rest of the way at a cheaper rate.

As I had barely enough means to carry me right through, and did not know whether my money had already arrived at Mexico City, I thought it would be better to stop at a small town called Cuautitlan, some eighteen miles on this side of the capital, where the cost of living would probably be less.

So I left at dawn, having only taken my ticket as far as Celaya, where I intended to change for the other line.

I still went second class, for if a stranger travels third class in Mexico it causes him to be much noticed, and he will probably feel out of place when jostled by Indians carrying fowls and cumbersome bundles.

We passed through the same kind of arid country, with frequent mountain ranges, arriving towards the middle of the day at San Luis Potosi, where the train stopped to allow the passengers time to eat.

I did not venture to enter the expensive-looking refreshment-room, but got some cheap food outside.

South of San Luis Potosi the aspect of the land changes for the better, and one gradually enters a region where there are more signs of water and cultivation.

Before nightfall we arrived at Celaya, where I changed for the other railway line, following the advice of my friend the station-master.

I had already bought a second class ticket, which I had then to show to the man who weighs the luggage, for a passenger is allowed to carry an amount, which varies according to the class, free of charge.

I was extremely perplexed to find that my excess was so great, owing principally to my heavy medical books, that I had not enough money to pay for my luggage, and had the mortification of having to return to the ticket office, where I was obliged to tell the official before



all the people that I should be much obliged if he would change my second class ticket for one in the third class so that I might have sufficient money.

Spanish customs, frequently but not invariably followed in Mexico, are more lenient to the poor than in England.

The ticket seller said little or nothing, but took back my ticket and gave me one for the third class, refunding me the balance between the two prices, so that after paying for my luggage there now remained one Mexican dollar, and the best part of another in small change.

I was sorry that this last stage of my journey had to be travelled by night, for I could see that the character of the country was improving as we reached the more central parts, but was only too thankful to have been able to go through with it.

And in return the half-Indian peasants, who crowded into the third class carriage, were less likely to notice a stranger by night than by day.

It was little more than dawn when I arrived at Cuautitlan. The railway station was on the outskirts of the little town, which had a deserted-looking appearance, like Mazapil. I was recommended to go to the Mesón del Sol, so had my luggage carried there.

In Mexico the term *mesón* is used to mean a lodging-house, which may or may not supply you with food, but where there is always a large yard with sheds at the sides so that traveller's beasts of burden can be sheltered at night, while the word *fonda* is used in the sense of a place where you can get your meals, and where there may be no yard for animals.

The Mesón del Sol was typical of its class. The ponderous door at the side of the street received alike people and animals. Within the door, the passage was at first somewhat narrow, with rooms on either side, but after passing the few rooms the passage opened out into the large yard.

The people of the *mesón* were friendly, and on my remarking that the town had a deserted appearance, they said that such was the case, the place having greatly deteriorated since the railway had come there. In the old times large numbers of beasts of burden used to camp here, on their way to and from the capital, and the food and shelter that they and their drivers required caused money to be spent in the place. But the train had done away with much of this business, and the town had suffered in consequence. I obtained a room in the house, but was advised to go to the *fonda* for my meals, as this *mesón* who lodged in the shed of the yard with their animals, for people of only supplied the *frijoles* and *tortillas* that formed the food of the *peóns* this class seldom hire a room.

I determined to make my headquarters here, and not to visit Mexico City until the next day, as I was somewhat tired by my night's journey, but more so from the anxiety I suffered from want of sufficient means to travel comfortably; and if the money that I had sent for had not arrived when I went to the capital next day I should be in great distress.



## CHAPTER IV.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MEXICO CITY.

**I**T is some eighteen miles from Cuautitlan to Mexico City, and the train brought me there next morning in about three-quarters of an hour.

I went prepared for the worst, for in case my money had not arrived I carried with me my second watch and a good photographic lens, which had been wrapped up among my clothes when my camera had been seized at New Orleans.

On my way to the mercantile house where I expected my money to be sent I looked out wistfully for a pawnbroker's establishment, and noted one of these useful places, which, under the names of *casa de empeño*, *monte de piedad*, *monte pío*, or even *banco del pobre*, flourish in Spanish-speaking countries, but to my intense relief the money had arrived, so I was not obliged to part with either watch or lens.

As I was likely to remain in the central part of Mexico for some time I asked the representative of the house where I received the money if he would allow my camera to be sent there, for it was now some nine months since I left New Orleans, and if the camera were not rescued from the customs-house before a year had lapsed it would be forfeited and sold. Consent was kindly given, and I wrote immediately to the owner of the hotel where I had been in New Orleans, asking him to find out what charges there were on the camera so that I might pay what was due and have it sent to me without further delay.

I now spent a few days in exploring the city, partly from natural curiosity, but more so with a view to finding out whether it might be a suitable place to practise in.

The central parts present a good appearance and are worthy of a place which contains about half a million inhabitants. In these parts a stranger could almost persuade himself that he was in a Spanish town, but, when one has got outside the best localities, the unsavoury smell of the *pulquerías*, where the native drink *pulque* is sold, and the Indian look of many of the people, would undeceive most observers.

There is a good deal of Indian blood in the slums of Mexico City, and on my making this remark to a Spanish lady who was acquainted with the Capital, she said scornfully, "*Meros indios*," but this, I think, was an exaggeration due to Spanish prejudice. "Mere Indians" do not as a rule live in the large towns in the central parts of Mexico, but *mestizos* or cross-breeds often inhabit the poorer quarters.

These localities present a certain amount of squalor even in



European countries, but reach a lower level in Mexico City, probably from the inferior race that is here mixed with that of the white settlers.

The whole town, even to the crowded courtyards and passages where the poor are herded in small rooms on either side, is built in that solid Spanish style which prefers masonry to woodwork.

The *plaza* and public gardens are set off to advantage by the fine climate of this part of the high tableland, which is mild enough to produce some tropical vegetation without the intense heat which is generally found in such places.

But this luxuriant foliage almost vanishes when you get clear of the city and its suburbs, partly because the elevation of the capital, some seven thousand feet, is somewhat less than that of most of the surrounding country, and partly from Nature here being largely assisted by artificial means. One of the most beautiful of these plants is a creeper with bright tinted flowers that is called the *Bogambilla*. This word, according to my informant, comes from the name of a Frenchman called Bourgainville, who admired the creeper and introduced it into his own country, where it was called by his name. It thus became more noticed in its native Mexico, where its French name was modified into a Spanish-sounding word.

I walked about the streets for a few days, with the result that the following idea became impressed on my mind: that if I wanted to live in the better part of the town it would require more money than I could afford, and the poorer quarters were so squalid that I should be better off in a country town.

On my return to Cuautitlan every evening I had always to hasten to the *fonda* in case I should not be in time to get any dinner, for in country towns it becomes rather uncertain whether you will get anything to eat much after seven. On arrival one evening I asked diffidently, "*Hay huevos?*" for I had not yet got into the Mexican custom of calling eggs *blanquillos*, but called them by their correct Spanish name.

"*Huevos no hay*" ("There are no eggs"), was the answer.

"*Hay pan?*" I anxiously continued.

"*Pan no hay*," was the answer. I could not even get bread.

"Then what do the people eat here?" said I, losing all hope.

"*Frijoles y tortillas*," was the reply, and I went away sorrowfully, for I detested beans and did not care for Indian corn cake.

The people of the *mesón* where I lodged, however, took pity on me and sent for bread; for it could be bought in the village, but the person who kept the *fonda* did not think it worth while to oblige me. They also gave me a cup of coffee, so I did not go to bed hungry.

As I had now given up all idea of practising in the Capital I began to look out for a location in its vicinity, as I was tired of travelling, and my small means were steadily decreasing. Some one suggested Toluca, the capital of the State of Mexico, for Mexico City is the Capital of the whole Republic and not of the State of that name. I therefore packed up a small trunk and went to Mexico City, whence I took the train for Toluca, some forty-five miles distant in a westerly direction. The journey to that place is picturesque, and really does present some resemblance to Alpine scenery, for there is a gradual ascent from the already considerable altitude, and the train winds along the



sides of the mountains, which are often clad with those trees of the pine family that only grow in cool climates, and here and there may be seen a panoramic view of the valley below.

On arrival at Toluca, which is a neat town of some twenty thousand inhabitants, I began to make the same kind of inquiries that I had got into the habit of making in Texas and in the north of Mexico, as to the size of the town, the number of medical men already there, and the chances of success.

A chemist informed me that there were already about twenty doctors there, and I considered the number prohibitive.

I then made excursions in the neighbouring valley, and went a journey of fifteen miles in a coach to a small town in this mountainous district, where the roads are so bad that five or six mules will sometimes be unable to drag three or four passengers, and everybody has to get out and walk until the road improves. In one place the bough of a tree got between the spokes of the wheel and could not be extricated until it was cut to pieces with a hatchet.

But the result was always disheartening. Every place of any importance had at least as many doctors as it required, and even a wretched hamlet would generally have a chemist or unqualified person who did medical work.

After about a week in Toluca and its vicinity I returned to Mexico City. On arrival at the railway station, an unusually large crowd of people were all moving in the same direction. I was told that they were going to Chapultepec, a place in the suburbs, for it was the sixteenth of September, which is kept as a national holiday in honour of the independence of Mexico.

In case I might be too late to accompany the people if I took my luggage to an hotel, I left it at the railway station and walked with the crowd.

Chapultepec is truly national and Indian in its name and associations, for nations, as well as people, must have ancestors, and if they do not like those on one side of the house, they have to claim those on the other side. So, as Mexicans do not as a rule feel very cordial towards their Spanish kinsfolk, they are obliged to claim relationship with the Indians, whose blood has been mixed with that of their conquerors; and occasionally a Mexican of seemingly Spanish descent will call himself an Indian from a patriotic motive, while he would deeply resent being so called by another person.

The name Chapultepec is said to mean "the grasshopper's hill," the affix *tepec* so often seen in Mexican words being the Spanish modification of the Indian word *tepetl*, which signifies mountain or hill. The Indian emperors used to have a residence here, and the presidents of the Republic now have one, so the place is closely connected with the history of the country; for this reason it seemed a suitable place to spend a national holiday.

The walk to this place is a succession of fine avenues, and some of the people stopped to picnic on the grass at the side of the road, but the greater part went as far as the gardens that surround the president's house. The public were freely admitted to the gardens, but not, of course, to the house, which was guarded.



The people took their holiday quietly, and there was no attempt at singing or dancing, as there would have been at a Spanish festival.

We entered a place where there were a few wild animals in cages, and it was amusing to notice how ignorant the townspeople were of the animals of their own country, for on seeing a panther, one person said to another, "Is it a coyote?" One can hardly imagine that even a London costermonger would mistake a panther for a wolf.

On my return to Cuautitlan I told my friends at the *mesón* of my ill success, and some one suggested that I should try a place called Huehuetoca, which is on the railway line a few stations further away from the Capital than Cuautitlan.

As this is a very Indian name I may here say that *huehue* (pronounced way-way) means old.

After about a day's rest I went to inspect the place. Its appearance was certainly not attractive. There was only one line of houses worthy the name of a street, which possessed in a full degree that bare and somewhat squalid appearance but too frequently found in small towns and villages in Mexico. I inquired at one of the principal stores about the number of inhabitants, and was told that there were some five hundred. My hopes fell still further on hearing this, as the number would be quite insufficient for a living unless one were also patronized by some of the rich country houses (*haciendas*) in the neighbourhood.

It was now breakfast time, so I went to the *fonda*, where I hoped to get food and information at the same time.

The *fonda* in a Mexican country town or village presents almost the same general appearance everywhere. There is the same kind of whitewashed wall abutting on the street and the same scantily furnished interior, with one or two coarse unvarnished tables for the customers, and some straight-backed wooden chairs.

There may be a dresser at the side of the room, to hold dishes, plates and other crockery, but there is seldom any other furniture. This is the eating-room, which opens into the street. The cooking is generally done in the room behind this, where, raised from the ground, so that the cooking can be done without stooping, is a little brick furnace in which, Spanish style, charcoal is burnt, and the amount of cooking that can be done with such limited space and fuel is almost wonderful. At these places one can generally obtain bread, meat and coffee, which were all I required, for I would never eat their beans and would only take the Indian corn cake if there were no bread. It was always safer to say beforehand that I did not like the meat flavoured with their burning *piquantes*, which will make a stranger's mouth feel sore for days. A meal of the kind I required would generally cost from twenty-five to thirty-five cents, which is a proof that Mexican money has fair buying power in its own country, although only worth about half its nominal value in countries which have a gold basis, for twenty-five Mexican cents would represent about one shilling in its own country, and a substantial meal of bread and meat with a cup of coffee would probably cost about one shilling at an eating-house in England.

The woman who kept this *fonda* seemed to be an honest and out-



spoken person, and on my asking her if there were a living to be made in Huehuetoca, she replied promptly, "*No hay sopa para un médico*" (there is no soup for a doctor), and further informed me that a doctor had already tried the place but only held out for three months.

I noticed that no water was put on the table, and asked for some, but was told that the water was brackish. In Mexico the term brackish (*salobre*) is frequently used to mean undrinkable, for I tasted the water, which was bad, but had not a saline taste. This made me inquire how the people managed when they wanted to drink, and the answer was, "We take no notice of the water here, we all drink *pulque*."

As the native drink *pulque* will be described later on, I will merely remark here that it is slightly alcoholic and not very wholesome, and would be decidedly inferior to lager beer as a substitute for water.

I was now quite convinced that Huehuetoca offered no inducement and returned to Cuautitlan.

The next place I was advised to try was Pachuca, a large mining town in the neighbouring State of Hidalgo.

After my previous experience of Mazapil I did not feel very sanguine about mining towns, but nevertheless I started out. It was in a different direction to my previous excursions, and I was told that I should have to change the train after going about half the distance.

At the railway station I asked as usual for a second class ticket, but when the train stopped there was no second class, but only first and third.

The train does not stop very long at small stations, so after a slight hesitation I got into a first class carriage, as I thought it was unfair that a person with a second class ticket should have to travel third class.

Soon afterwards the American conductor asked for my ticket, and I explained why I had entered the first class. On seeing it he looked hard at me, but said nothing.

Presently a gentleman, evidently English, addressed me in that language:

"You seemed to have some hesitation about what carriage you should enter?"

I repeated the reason I had previously given, when to my surprise he said, "Now I will not allow that man to sell second class tickets when he knows we run no second class on this train. I'll report him."

It was the inspector of the Company who was speaking to me. He then called the conductor and asked him if my ticket was for the second class.

"No," replied the conductor dryly, "it is a third class ticket."

I was quite taken aback at hearing this, for I had certainly asked for a second class ticket, but perhaps the ticket seller had misunderstood me, for it appears that he had only charged me the price of a third class ticket, which I had never closely examined as the distance was short.

I made my excuses as best I could, and got up to go into the third class, but the inspector kindly said that he saw it was a mistake,



and asked me to remain ; but when I had to take another ticket for the second half of the journey, I naturally got one for the first class.

On arrival at Pachuca I began my usual inquiries about the number of doctors in practice, and soon found out that there were at least twenty.

Considering that a large part of the population were miners, and that each mine already had its own doctor, as required by law, the hope of success did not look very bright.

I then interviewed an Englishman who was one of the principal mining people of the town, who candidly told me that he did not think it would be worth my while to remain, and I was grateful for what seemed to be timely advice.

Before leaving Pachuca on the following morning, one of the chemists with whom I had talked wrote down the names of three or four towns that might be worth trying.

One of these places was called Calpulalpam, and could be reached by a roundabout journey on the way back to my headquarters at Cuautitlan, so I determined to inspect it at once.

The distance was only a few hours by rail, and the train approaches the town through open valleys where is grown the *maguey*, or plant from which the native drink of *pulque* is made. The station is on open ground in the plain just outside the town, and the walk to the central parts did not impress me with the idea of a rich or stirring place.

As is usual in those parts of the high tableland where wood is scarce, the outlying houses of the poorer people were often made of brown sun-dried bricks, whose uneven and crude surfaces present a primitive and untidy appearance, but the central parts, as in other Mexican country towns, had generally whitewashed walls.

I put up at the neat little Hotel Hidalgo, which, although it had the usual plain white surface, looked better than most places of its class, through having a profusion of flowers, principally roses, in the little central courtyard, this being surrounded by the rooms of the one-storeyed building.

There were two chemists' shops in Calpulalpam, both in the *plaza* ; and by chance I made my usual inquiries at the house that was not patronized by the only doctor in the town.

The answers obtained here, and at two or three of the leading business places, were not altogether decided, but seemed to indicate that there was some chance of success.

I was told that the doctor was frequently away in the country, as he was employed by most of the surrounding *haciendas*, and that during his absence there was no medical aid in case of an emergency ; and some even went as far as to say that a second doctor was required.

By this time I had travelled sufficiently in Mexico to be well aware that I was not likely to find a town like Calpulalpam, which contained some three thousand people, without having opposition, for the medical profession is a favourite pursuit of educated Mexicans. The town was the *cabecera*, or chief of the district, and was the residence of the *jefe político* or prefect, who is supreme in power and is only accountable to the governor of the State.



There was a rather imposing-looking *palacio municipal*, with the customary officials, and there were rich *haciendas* on the neighbouring plains.

The State of Tlaxcala, in which the town is situated, must be considered in a central position, as it borders on the State of Mexico, and I found out afterwards that Calpulalpam itself had originally been in the State of Mexico, but at the request of its inhabitants it was transferred to the State of Tlaxcala, as the distance to their former capital Toluca had caused them inconvenience.

I resolved to try this town, but had first to return to Cuautitlan to bring my heavier luggage.

It was with regret that I said good-bye to the people at the Mesón del Sol, as they had been kind to me, and I now spent a few days in Mexico City, as this was a more direct way of returning to Calpulalpam.

Up to now I had never stayed a night in the Capital, so I thought I was entitled to a little sight-seeing before starting for a country town where existence would probably be dreary enough.

While here I did not happen to see an ordinary bull-fight, and was not particularly anxious about it, as I had seen one in an important town like Monterrey. However, I saw something amusing of its class which might horrify those scientific lovers of the bull-ring who do not like their favourite sport to be turned into ridicule.

I went one evening to see "La Feria de Sevilla" at a kind of amphitheatre, and was curious to know what the show would be like, as I had been in Seville in Spain, and had seen some of its fairs.

The performance began with a burlesque of a fair and that class of rather time-worn merriment which one is accustomed to see in pantomimes, such as people stealing vegetables and pelting each other with them.

But after this part of the entertainment was over, a strong fence was put up around the arena, and a fierce little bull, only about two years old, was allowed to enter.

The *picadores*, instead of being mounted on horses, were on foot in the centre of hobby-horses that seemed to be made of wood or some light material, and sufficiently large to protect the men. The brave little bull charged all the hobby-horses, and finished by smashing them up and knocking the men over, but there was enough wreckage left to prevent the animal's horns from touching them.

The bull became so enraged that when the performance was over he refused to leave the arena, and had to be hauled out with a rope.

If one wants to see anything national it is better not to go to high-class entertainments, which tend to be cosmopolitan, so I asked if there were any *cafés cantantes*, as these places are deservedly popular in the south of Spain, where the beautiful and interesting Moorish style of music still lingers.

I was told that there used to be *cafés* of this class in Mexico, but they had had to be suppressed owing to the frequent disturbances in them, when people were sometimes shot.

This testifies to the morose temper of the lower class Mexican, for such occurrences would be most unlikely in Spain.



The *jacalón*, merely meaning a theatre of the lower class, is a popular place of amusement in Mexico City.

I went to see a few performances at these places. One night I had sat down on one side of a row of empty seats, when one of the policemen on duty came to my side. I thought he wanted to pass and stood up to make room for him, when he said, "I do not want to pass, but have come to tell you to take your hat off." I would never have offended in this manner only the whole show was so inferior that it had not occurred to me to treat the place with the respect due to a theatre.

But the hat business was not finished yet.

A good-looking young woman, who wore one of those large hats with feathers which are the pride of their owners and the despair of those whose view is obstructed, was sitting almost in the same line as myself, on the other side of the central passage.

The first play had been a comedy, and after it was over the principal comedian walked down the passage with his hat on, and sat down immediately behind the lady with the hat. Before long the people called out to the man, "Take your hat off." He then looked round and said in an aggrieved voice, "And why does not the *señora* in front of me take her hat off?"

She gave him such a look of contempt as she answered, "Because I do not choose to do so, coarse one" (*grosero*), that he made no further attempt to annoy her.

Perhaps she was an actress or was personally known to him, for he would hardly have dared to hold an ordinary stranger up to ridicule.

The next play was of a more serious nature, and it was interesting to notice on this and subsequent occasions that an intensely national country like Mexico has hardly any drama of its own, but has to borrow its plays from classic regions in that Spain with which it has so little sympathy.

Another remarkable thing was that all the actors pronounced the letter "c" as if it were "th," as indeed is done in Castile, but not as a rule in the south of Spain or in Spanish-America. I was so curious to know the reason of this that I asked the ticket seller at the *jacalón* if all the actors were Spaniards, as their pronunciation would indicate. The man laughed as he replied, "They must do it" (*es de obligación*). This is considered a classic way of speaking, and I was told that some actors could not do it thoroughly even while on the stage.

There is a considerable foreign element in the capital, for when I was taking a cup of coffee at a refreshment place near the suburb of Chapultepec I heard English spoken on one side of me and German on the other; presently a carriage drove up, and there emerged from it three well-dressed Chinese, being escorted to a table by a cosmopolitan waiter, who made a face behind their backs to show his contempt for such guests.

Still further out in the same direction and connected with the capital by a good tram service is Mixcoac, which is a pleasure resort planted with beautiful trees, where gambling and cock-fighting can be enjoyed by those who care for them.

Although I had no leisure or inclination to see all the sights, generally overrated, that a stranger is supposed to visit, I took a



hurried trip in a canoe from the suburbs to the *chinampas*, or floating gardens, but could see nothing floating except the canoe, the gardens being of the prosaic vegetable description, intersected by dikes through which the canoe passed.

A visit to the museum would have been more desirable, as it contains some interesting Indian antiquities.

Before closing these few remarks about Mexico City it might interest the reader to know something about the cost of living.

I was able to obtain a miserable room that had no window, and was but dimly lit by a skylight, for the price of fifty cents daily, but a nice one could scarcely be rented at less than one dollar of Mexican money (fifty cents U.S.A.).

A good plain meal might cost from thirty-five to forty cents, so that two such meals and early bread and coffee would come to nearly one dollar. At this rate one may say that the bare cost of living for a stranger would be about two dollars daily as a minimum, but a Mexican would of course be able to live cheaper.

It may not be out of place here to say a few words about the dress of Mexicans generally.

The men have three distinct costumes, which roughly indicate their social condition.

The *catrín* dresses in the same way as the upper and middle classes in Europe, with a tendency naturally towards the Spanish style. He represents the better class Mexican and might be an owner of property, a professional man, a merchant, clerk, or official, or any one of the educated classes, especially those whose occupations are sedentary, and not rural.

The *charro* dresses in a peculiar style much affected by the country people, partly because it is a national costume, partly because tight-fitting clothes are suitable for riding in, and partly because this kind of dress lends itself to adornments not tolerated by other styles.

The word signifies churl in a Spanish dictionary, but is generally used in Mexico, without any offensive meaning, to indicate the wearer of this costume.

The social condition of a *charro* is not so high as that of a *catrín*, but a rich *catrín* will often use the dress of a *charro* as a riding costume, when he will show off his tight-fitting trousers, sometimes adorned with silver buttons, his short jacket, and his high-crowned felt hat with a shining metallic band around it. The *catrín* removes this costume when at home, the true *charro* does not; therefore if the latter is a man of humble means this everyday dress is often quite plain, and merely tight-fitting without any attempt at adornment.

A revolver is often worn in the belt, but this weapon tends to disappear when the *charro* has passed a certain age, which shows that it is carried more from a love of display than from a necessity for its use.

The spurs which accompany this riding costume are of that ponderous nature seen in ancient pictures, and when the *charro* dismounts he must take them off if he wishes to walk comfortably.

The man who always dresses as a *charro* might be the owner of a small piece of country land, the overseer of a *hacienda* or a man engaged in country pursuits generally, and who was above the condition of a *peón*. A country-town tradesman or small storekeeper



might dress thus, especially if he were of a sporting disposition, and it would be a likely costume to wear at a cock-fight.

The *peón* dresses as has been described in the preceding chapter. *Peón* and Indian are almost synonymous terms, for most of the *peóns* are Indians or cross-breeds, but occasionally a poor man of apparently European descent will be found thus dressed. The *peón* also wears the national high-crowned hat, but in his case it is of palm leaves and may hardly cost half a dollar, while the gaudy felt hat of the *charro* may cost twenty dollars. He seldom wears boots, but his feet are generally protected by sandals.

The *peón*, as his name implies, is essentially a pedestrian, seldom riding, unless he is in charge of his employer's horse.

Of course these three costumes are not always thus sharply defined, and two of them may become somewhat mixed. A slight blending of *catrín* and *charro* does not look bad, but if an ambitious *peón* were to abandon his somewhat broad white trousers for the dark, tight-fitting garments of a *charro*, the result would be most unpleasing to an experienced eye.

The women also may be said to have three distinct costumes, but the subject of feminine dress is so intricate that few foreigners would care to do more than touch upon it lightly.

They may be classified according to their head-dresses into the classes of the hat, the *mantón* and the *rebozo*, and the same person often affects two of these classes.

The ladies who wear hats form a large class in the Capital, but in the smaller country towns even those of the best families more frequently wear the *mantón*, or black shawl-like covering, although they might have a hat for great occasions.

Those who wear the *mantón* form a large part of the middle class. The girls and young women wear the *mantón* thrown round their shoulders and go bareheaded, except for a few flowers in their hair; those who are older generally draw the *mantón* over their heads.

In country towns most keep a *rebozo* as well, like the class beneath them, for use near the house or for bad weather, although they might not wish to wear it in a public place.

In the Capital, where people are more dressy, a poor person, as a milliner or apprentice, wears the *mantón* daily; while in country towns a person of the same class would be more likely to wear the *rebozo* daily and the *mantón* for best.

The woman of the poorest class, whether Indian or not, almost universally wears the *rebozo*, which is also a shawl-like covering, but of a bluish colour, and of a material that can be washed. It is a serviceable garment, being generally worn over the head like a hood when its owner is out walking, and thrown about the shoulders, like the *mantón*, when she is at or near home.

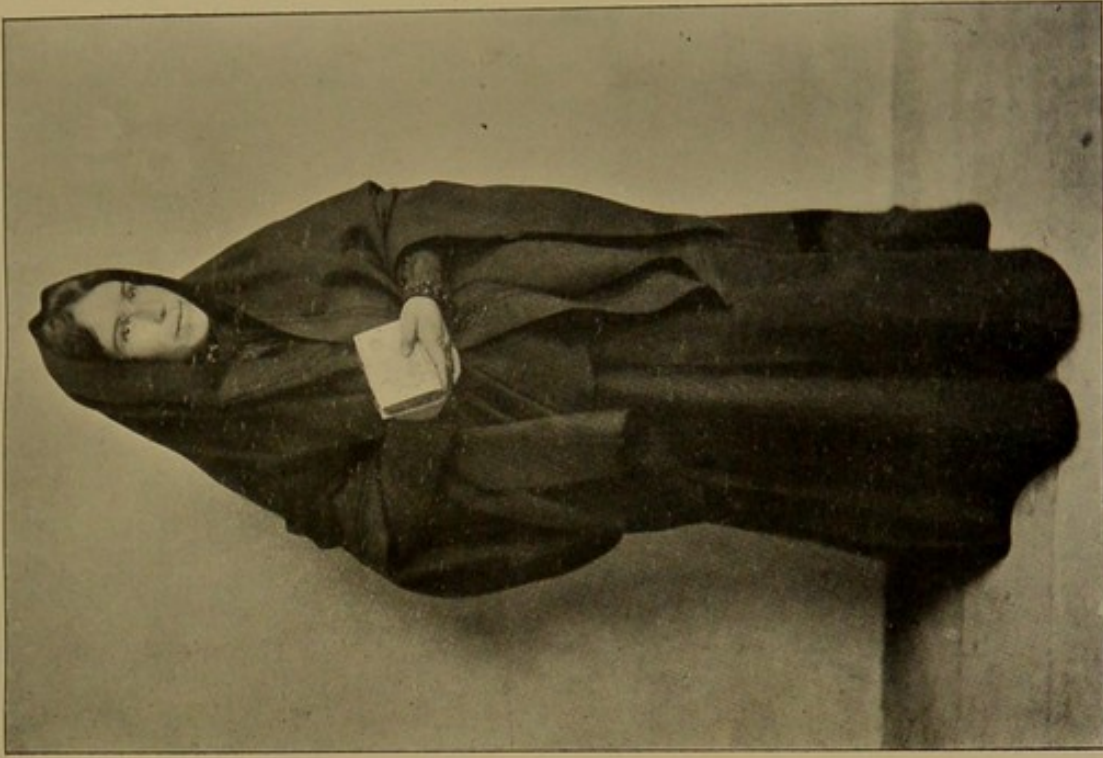
As the women of this class are more exposed to the sun than the classes who only go out in the cool of the day, even the *rebozo* on their heads is hardly a sufficient protection, and country women frequently wear palm leaf hats, similar to those worn by the *peóns*.

In some primitive parts the Indian women wear a peculiar garment, which is called a *huipil*.



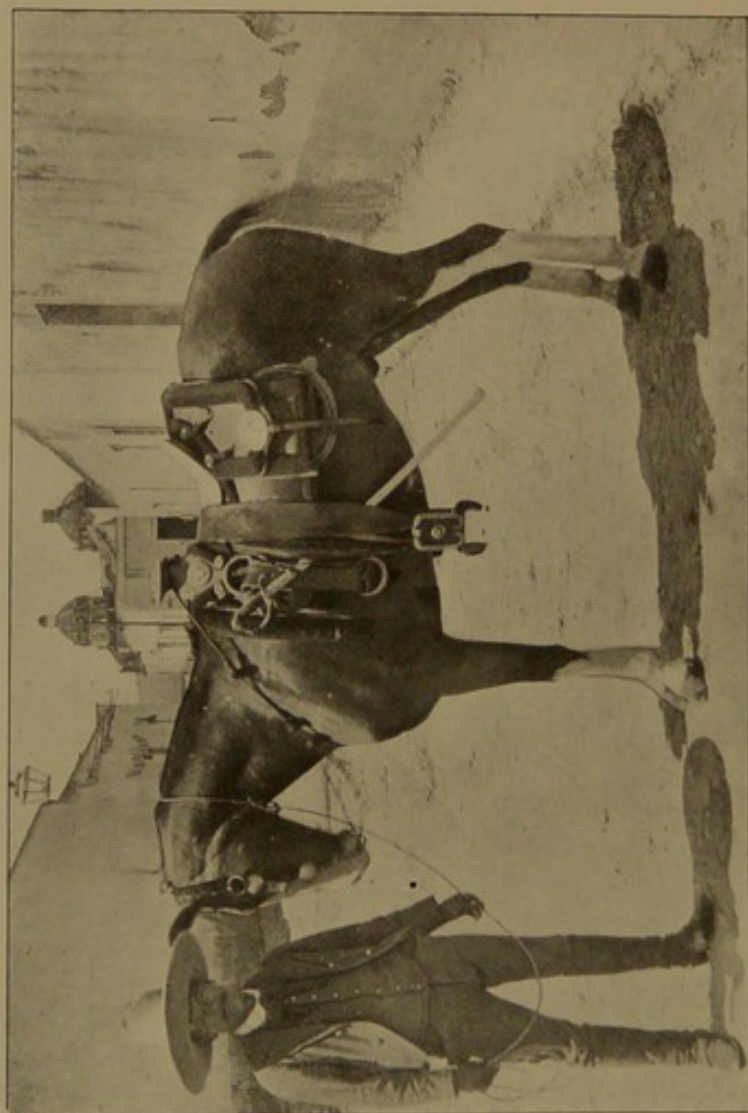


Village Girl wearing a Rebozo — (p. 48).



Lady wearing a Mantón — (p. 48).





Charro Costume : Rural (Soldier) with Officer's Horse—(p. 47).



Most of the country women wear plain dresses of washing material and all the poorest ones walk barefoot.

Although subsequent chapters may tend to show that the life of a stranger is somewhat insecure in some of the country districts of Mexico, this reproach cannot be fairly laid against the capital or, as far as I am aware, any of the largest towns. These places have a good supply of police officers, and, in the unlikely event of a person being assaulted merely because he was a stranger, the aggressor would be promptly taken in charge.

The newspapers describe cases of stabbing and shooting in the *pulquerías*, and in the slums of the Capital, but a careful stranger would not frequent these places at night without a competent guide.

It is comparatively easy to avoid these risks in a town, but not so simple if your work takes you by day and night to remote country places, among a people whose lowest class has a deep-rooted dislike of foreigners.

I was now about to enter on the third stage of my journey through Mexico.

The first and longest part, from the frontier of the United States to near Mexico City, some eight hundred miles in a southerly direction, had only taken about one month, as, with the exception of three weeks at Mazapil, I had only remained a few days at different places.

The second part, within a radius of some forty or fifty miles of Mexico City, had also taken about a month.

I subsequently spent nearly four years at different places between Mexico City and Veracruz, so there was ample leisure to correct any crude ideas I might have formed.

In Mexico, and in many other parts of Spanish-America, it is necessary to specify distances rather vaguely, as the straight line bears a somewhat remote relation to the line followed. In the present instance the distance between Mexico City and Veracruz is as follows:—

In a straight line it hardly exceeds two hundred and ten miles.

By the so-called Mexican Railway it is stated as two hundred and sixty-three miles.

By the Interoceanic Railway it is stated as three hundred and thirty-nine miles.

I now prepared to leave the Capital for Calpulalpam, where I hoped to be able to make a living and to have a rest from my wanderings.



## CHAPTER V.

## IN CALPULALPAM.

UNTIL the traveller reaches the eastern side of Mexico City he can form no idea of that interesting region so closely connected with the history of the Spanish Conquest.

For this was the lake district, on the shores of which was built the ancient Aztec capital. In those days the lake was an important adjunct to the city, owing to the facility of water carriage, and the means of defence which a large body of water supplies, especially if it be artificially intersected.

The great Spanish conqueror Cortés, whose success was due to a combination of courage and caution, rarely combined, was well aware of the difficulties in besieging such a place, and made no serious attempt to reduce the city until he had built a small fleet of warships to dominate the lake.

But when the place became a modern capital, the frequent floodings caused so much destruction of property that it was finally decided to drain away the water, and the once beautiful lake Texcoco now appears like a gigantic swamp, with reeds growing round its shallow margin.

The scenery is now spoilt, but it must have been a pleasing sight once, for the hills or mountains on the eastern side of the modern swamp attest to the former beauty of this spot when the lake lay under them, and its shores had not been denuded of trees, as they now are.

The train soon carries one beyond the marshy ground, and winds along the open country to avoid the hills.

Country scenes in most parts of this high table-land are inclined to look bare, if they are not in the vicinity of ground so steep or impracticable that it cannot be utilized, for whenever it is possible to grow crops of any kind all the timber is cleared away, and even the owners of the largest *haciendas* seem only to think of the profit that can be got out of the land without paying any attention to its appearance.

But the hills that are continually in sight, and an occasional peep at a snow-capped mountain, prevent the naked appearance of the plains and valleys from looking too tame, and remind the spectator that he is in a vast continent.

No tropical vegetation grows on this, or on most other parts of the table-land; the ground is all cultivated with plants suitable to a cool climate, such as maize, beans, and barley.

The most handsome of the few wild trees that still exist in the open country in these parts is the Arbol del Perú (Peru tree), which



is thus appropriately called, as it grows on the same kind of elevated dry country in Peru.

Its drooping leaves have a graceful appearance, and the clusters of its spice-tasting berries are worthy of being utilized.

There are hardly any rivers or streams in this part of the table-land, and no attempt at irrigation is made, but the heavy thunderstorms in the summer seem to be sufficient for agricultural requirements.

By the circuitous course of the Interoceanic Railway it is nearly seventy miles from the Capital to Calpulalpam.

This railway winds on both sides of the more direct line, and connects towns that would otherwise be isolated with the Capital and the port of Veracruz.

The train reaches the *pulque* district long before it arrives at Calpulalpam, for the *maguey* is said to grow best on the plains of Apam, which is not far from Irolo, where the train passes.

In this region all other agriculture sinks into insignificance compared with the growth of the *maguey*, for the manufacture of the national drink is a profitable employment and nearly all the *haciendas* in the district devote themselves to it.

The open valleys or plains are here studded with these plants, and there is practically no timber for miles around until the sides of the hills are reached.

Here and there at distances of a few miles apart may be seen a *hacienda* with its surrounding buildings for the manufacture of the *pulque* and the housing of the many *peóns* who are employed in this business.

On arriving at Calpulalpam I arranged with the owner of the Hotel Hidalgo for board and lodging at six dollars and a half weekly, which was a moderate price and would not have been more than thirteen shillings in English money. Besides my bedroom I had the partial use of a sitting-room for my patients. It may appear strange that I did not hire private apartments instead of living in a hotel, but rooms of this kind are very hard to obtain in a country town, and if obtainable are generally bad and unfurnished.

For the Mexican country town is a primitive place with very little floating population, and almost any room or house that is not in constant use is allowed to fall into bad repair and soon gets into a ruinous condition.

My next step was to visit the *palacio municipal* in the *plaza*, in order to ask the *jefe político*, as the prefect is generally called, for permission to practise my profession.

Among the many failings of Mexicans, want of courtesy from officials cannot be included. They may do nothing for you and may waste your time, but in a public office you will generally be received with a courteous "*Sentese, señor*" (Sit down, sir), and your petition or complaint will be heard at full length. This gentleman, to whom I showed my certificates, received me affably, but informed me that he had no power to give me the required permission, which could only be obtained from the governor of the State of Tlaxcala.

This was another provoking delay, but there was no help for it. I therefore returned to the hotel, and with the help of Don Julián



Cortés, its proprietor, who was an educated person, I wrote a petition to the governor, and put on it the customary half-dollar stamp, without which no petition is in due form. In a short time I received an answer to the effect that the governor would be disposed to grant permission when my papers had been duly verified, and the *jefe político* informed me at the same time that he had been directed to tell me that I had been given provisional leave to practise, pending the investigation.

This was very satisfactory, and I now distributed some notices of my arrival in the town and awaited my patients.

And some came. Within the first few weeks I was earning something like three dollars weekly, with a tendency to increase, and even this trifling sum gave me hopes. I charged them at the same rate as my patients in Texas: half a dollar if they came to my room, and one dollar if I went to their house.

Texas had the advantage of a gold basis, while the silver basis of Mexico involved a loss of about one-half when changed into gold currency; but, if the earnings only equal the expenses, the basis is of no consequence, while if they are less the silver basis is rather an advantage.

Before long I made the acquaintance of the Mexican doctor already established in the town, and although it was unfortunate that I should have had to encounter well-established opposition, I must admit that his conduct towards me was courteous and professional.

I soon found out why he was so frequently absent in the country. He had contracts with most of the neighbouring *haciendas* to visit them once or twice weekly, and received from each a monthly salary, which varied according to the size of the place; so that the country visits were more profitable than the work in the town, which was poor.

It was most desirable that the *haciendas* should have regular medical attendance, for most of the *peóns* employed in the manufacture of *pulque* were of a very ignorant and Indian type, and, quite apart from motives of humanity, it was to the interest of the estates to have some medical supervision over the number of squalid workers who were generally miserably housed in a yard close to the main buildings of the place.

As a proof of the manner in which the *peóns* of this district abuse their health, it may be stated that of the few surgical cases with which I came in contact here, two of them were gangrene from neglected injuries.

According to generally received ideas, an hotel should be a stirring place, but life in the Hotel Hidalgo was essentially quiet, as it is in most small country towns in Mexico.

The proprietor of the hotel owned some land that produced Indian corn, and, as he had to have a house for himself and his family, he thought it was worth while to build some extra rooms and to call the place a hotel. The few spare rooms were generally vacant, but now and then there was a commercial traveller or some other chance visitor for a short time.

The family went to bed unusually early, even for Mexico, so that the evenings were somewhat dreary for a stranger.



I generally took my frugal dinner or supper alone, by the light of a piece of tallow candle in the neck of a bottle that was placed on the table.

The candle was timed to last about half an hour, and if I sat by the table towards eight, at which hour the family usually went to bed, the expiring flame would fall into the bottle; so I generally blew it out in time, and retreated to my room, or remained in the central courtyard that had the pretty rose trees in its centre, until I wished to go to bed. Of course I occasionally had night calls, but these were not frequent.

By degrees I fell into my old Texan habits, and remained in the way of my work until the cool of the afternoon, when I went out for a walk in the country.

The climate in this part is very good. The summer mornings are generally fine, but heavy thunder-storms frequently take place towards the middle of the day or in the afternoon.

There is not, however, any continual drizzle, and when the storm has passed the sun shines brightly again.

The heat is not oppressive in the daytime, and the summer nights are cool.

The winter climate would be even more agreeable, only for the uncomfortable way in which the people live.

The days are almost cloudless, and the combination of sunshine and cool, but not cold, weather make it a pleasure to be out of doors in a temperature that does not necessitate warm clothing; but, when night time approaches, one feels keenly the want of fires.

For, with the exception of the little furnaces in the kitchens, such as have been described in the *fonda*, I have never seen a fireplace of any kind in the table-land.

The Mexicans themselves suffer from the cold, which is not intense in most parts, but they prefer their time-honoured remedies against it, such as blankets thrown over their shoulders, charcoal braziers, or refuge in bed.

For a person in these parts not infrequently says, "It is too cold, I am going to bed."

The charcoal brazier is a most objectionable way of heating a room. It certainly causes warmth, but the noxious carbonic fumes cause a sense of drowsiness that soon impedes mental work. As, however, few of these country people study by night, this objection does not affect them much.

The monotony of everyday life in this place was rarely enlivened by any amusement. But occasionally there was a dance, and I was invited to three of them on different occasions.

The first was rather a grand affair in the upper story of the *palacio municipal*, and that great personage the *jefe político* was present. My host, Don Julián Cortés, who was a good dancer, brought me there with him. There was practically no evening dress among the men, but they wore neat dark morning costumes.

The ladies had a curious custom of bringing their Indian servant women into the dancing room with them. Several of the same family would enter, followed by a girl or woman with her head wrapped up in her *rebozo*. The ladies, when not dancing, sat down on chairs at



the side of the room, as in other countries, while the servant sat on the floor beside them.

On a subsequent occasion, at a dance at the Hotel Hidalgo, where there was naturally much less restraint and ceremony, an amusing incident happened in connection with this custom.

A lively young fellow, little more than a boy, whose fair hair and blue eyes denoted northern ancestry, stepped up to a girl of this class, and taking her by the hand, led her out into the dance. He capered about to an unusual extent, evidently with the intention of showing up her ignorance of dancing, and his face wore a mischievous expression.

But the Indian-looking girl kept time and step with a most solemn countenance, and the attempt to make her look foolish proved a complete failure.

Most of the dances were of the modern everyday kind, with some innovations, and there was little attempt at anything in the Spanish style.

On another occasion, however, the words *Los Gachupines*, as the Spaniards are nick-named, were called out, and several people made a poor imitation of a Spanish dance.

Sometimes there were horse-races of a peculiar kind. The people assembled just outside the town, and horses were galloped at full speed from start to finish for short distances of about two to four hundred yards along the level, straight course that the road furnished, and it was customary to ride barebacked.

Now and then there was a cockfight, which here is a legal and respectable amusement, and I have seen the *jefe político* in the *plaza* watching one of these performances, which generally end fatally for one of the birds, from the wound of the long steel spur attached to one of their legs.

The *plaza* was generally empty enough, as the photograph represents, but sometimes, as on market days, it was very crowded. For Calpulalpam was a poor and unambitious town that had only one *plaza* for all its requirements. Most towns of any pretensions have two of these places, one for the market and the other for promenades and music.

The lower-class Mexicans are very religious, and naturally the women more so than the men.

I went to the church with some friends on Christmas Eve, and it was a remarkable sight to see the eagerness of the women and children to kiss the hand or foot of a lifelike figure of a baby that was carried through the church in commemoration of the event.

In church every woman must wear something on her head, and if she is of the poorest class that has no *mantón*, she uses the *rebozo* for this purpose, and generally kneels down on the hard ground throughout the service.

The country roads have *capillas* or shrines at intervals that seldom amount to many miles apart, and an Indian-like *peón* is frequently seen at his orisons here, but not often a better class man dressed as a *catrín* or *charro*.

Until recently Passion plays used to be enacted in Calpulalpam, and many people came from a distance to see them, but the archbishop had now forbidden their performance, as the devout Indians



had caused sacred things to appear ridiculous by their uncouth treatment of them.

I went to the churchyard on the day of the benediction of the animals. A few thin mules were present, which certainly looked as if they wanted a blessing, but no cattle had been brought, as on former occasions.

Most of the creatures were fowls or small domestic animals which were carried there by their owners, who were generally women.

When the priest came to the door of the church all the people held up their smaller possessions to be blessed. A short woman next to me had a pigeon in a cage, and could not lift it high enough to be seen. So I held it up for her, and hope it received its due share.

The solemnity of the scene was somewhat marred by two boys who were inciting their fowls to fight while they were waiting for the priest to come, but of course they did not venture to let the angry birds rush at each other.

In this rural town there was one small glass manufactory, and its manager, M. Lassus, a Frenchman, had become acquainted with me. On a winter's afternoon, when the sun was failing, it was a pleasant place to frequent, for the heat of the furnace kept the room warm. It was also interesting to watch the work.

The boys dipped their vessels in the central furnace, and carried the melted glass to the side of the room. Here were some stamping machines for making glass-ware.

The man in charge of a machine lets a boy pour the semi-liquid material into the mould, until he thinks it is full enough. He then cuts off the fluid stream with a large pair of scissors, and brings the stamper down on the soft glass in the mould, which thus forms the shape of the finished product.

It requires some experience to know when to cut off the fused mass, for if it is done too soon there is a gap in the glassware, from insufficiency of material, and, if done too late, the excess of glass causes an excrescence, and in either case the product is useless and has to be melted again.

I was allowed to make a few common tumblers, and, as I did so, could not help thinking that one has a much better chance of seeing and doing something new in out-of-the-way parts of the world than in the centres of civilization where everybody runs in their little groove, without space to get out of it.

The ordinary workers at the machines got about one dollar a day, but a few of the more artistic ones, who were capable of shaping the still soft article into forms that could not be obtained in the mould, might have earned from two to three dollars.

As I had unfortunately plenty of spare time I was very pleased to give M. Lassus some lessons in English, and we did our work through the medium of the Spanish language, which was now much more familiar to me than French.

This gentleman informed me after a time that he knew of a place called Altotonga where I could earn much more money than in Calpulalpam, but I was now so tired of being sent to impossible places that I did not feel inclined to go any further while there was a chance of making a living here. I was now sometimes able to earn five or six



dollars a week, but even these highest figures did not quite pay for my board and lodging.

The poorer Mexicans are adepts in the art of making a doctor work for nothing. They are very early risers, and some of my patients would call between six and seven in the morning, just to tell me how they were getting on, and did not consider that a friendly visit of this kind required payment. Others would call me *doctorcito*, an endearing form of the word doctor, when they met me in the street, and would stop to tell me of their ailments—and, of course, one could not charge for a street consultation. So that the work, little as it was, represented considerably more than the price paid.

As a rule, the Indian *peón* only goes to the doctor as a last resort. He first tries household remedies, and, if they do not succeed, he goes to the *botica* or chemist's shop, and consults the chemist. If the drugs bought from the chemist do not cure him, he may finally go to the doctor, when he will frequently say that he has spent all his money without obtaining relief.

There is no Government supervision for such necessitous people, and, although there are public hospitals at great distances apart, most of these needy patients will say that they have no money to go in the train, and some would be unwilling to go even if they had the money, so it is hard to know what to do with them, especially when one is in poor circumstances oneself.

While I lived in this part it was a rare thing to be called to visit a patient in the country. For there were hardly any small landowners or people of the peasant-proprietor class. Most of the houses were large *haciendas*, and had already contracted with the other doctor for medical attendance.

On one occasion, when I had to go some four or five miles, a donkey was sent to carry me. I looked at the animal doubtfully, as it did not seem professional to get on him; but, when we got into the country, I jumped on his back, and he walked as fast as most horses.

In Mexico, at any rate, large properties did not seem to be a blessing to the country people, for the condition of the *peón* on these *haciendas*, where he was herded with many others in wretched buildings close to his employer's house, was infinitely worse than in districts where his hut stood apart in the country, surrounded by his piece of land which produced Indian corn and vegetables.

In neither case were there any sanitary arrangements, for in this respect the *peón* is dirty, like too many of his fellow-countrymen; but the isolated hut had only its own dirt to contend with, and the surrounding foliage mitigated that squalor which is seen to its utmost extent when a number of low-class people live side by side.

In appearance also the *peón* who works in the *pulque* industry is hardly up to the low enough standard in other parts, and the amount of *pulque* they drink cannot be to their advantage, for I was told that they were allowed so large a ration of it that they often sold what they could not consume.

There were a small number, perhaps about a dozen, of *rurales* or country soldier-police quartered at Calpulalpam during most of the time I was there. If the generally short and Indian-like *peón* in the *pulque* district is below the average, the *rural* is decidedly above



the average of the country people. He is generally of fair stature, showing few, if any, signs of Indian ancestry, and is altogether a serviceable looking fellow, well adapted to the requirements of the country parts.

He is of the mounted infantry type, and wears plain grey clothes of the *charro*<sup>1</sup> style of dress, the brass buttons on his jacket and the regimental number on his tall felt hat being almost the only signs of military uniform.

The *rural* serves on horse and on foot, as soldier and policeman. He marches on foot to the railway station of the country town, to keep order at the hour of arrival of the train, is ready to go miles on horseback with his comrades if any outrage has been reported, and represents armed authority at the command of the *jefe político*, but he is essentially a soldier and takes his part in the yearly reviews.

The weapon with which he is generally armed is the carbine, but I was told that they were experts with the lasso that most Mexican saddles are adapted to use. I never got the chance of seeing much work with the lasso, but its use is attended with some danger.

On one occasion, I was driven to a neighbouring *hacienda* to see a man who was suffering from an accident of this kind. He had caught his horse's head in the loop of the lasso, together with the animal he wished to catch. Man, horse, and beast came down together, and the man received such a blow on his head that he became unconscious and died soon afterwards. And even when a quiet cow was lassoed for the mere purpose of my taking a photograph, a slight misadventure happened. The saddle had not been girthed tightly enough, and the strain of the lasso caused it to turn on one side of the horse's back. The horse resented this, and began to buck jump, when the man had to fall as the saddle was gradually turning round, but fortunately no damage was done.

As photographs will now frequently accompany these pages, I must relate how I regained possession of my camera, which became the companion of my travels.

The reader may recollect that on arriving in the capital I had written to New Orleans to ask the owner of the hotel where I had stopped if he would release my camera from the customs-house by paying the storage fees, and send it to the mercantile house in Mexico city.

He kindly consented to act as my agent, and on my forwarding the necessary expenses, I received an answer that it had been sent by a well-known carrying company, but, unfortunately, he neglected to enclose the invoice.

I asked the company, who had an office in Mexico City, if the camera had arrived, but they replied that they knew nothing about the matter.

I then wrote urgently to my agent, representing that no efficient steps could be taken until I could produce a proof that the company had received my property.

To my satisfaction he sent me the invoice, and on reading it I saw there was no time to be lost. The date was already about two months

<sup>1</sup> See p. 47, rural of Calpulalpam.



old, and, according to the rules of the company, all reclamations had to be made within three months of the time of issue.

I then wrote somewhat more stiffly to the office of the carrying company, informing them that I had the invoice, and asking them what they were prepared to do. The company now made such strenuous inquiries to avoid the consequences of losing property entrusted to their care, that in about a week's time I received an answer that the camera was at their office in Mexico City, and at my request it was immediately sent to the before-mentioned mercantile house.

Probably some dishonest official had purposely mislaid it, hoping to profit by its loss after a certain time had lapsed.

The camera had received rough treatment; one of the dark slides was damaged, and the ground-glass mirror was smashed to pieces. By rare good luck the glass had nowhere perforated the bellows, so that the cost of repair was slight.

At this period the difficulty in making a living, and events that will soon be related, caused me to pay but little attention to photography, but on a subsequent occasion when I returned to Calpulalpam to take views of the *pulque* industry, I walked about three miles to a neighbouring little town called Cuacula, with the son of Don Julián Cortés, and took the photograph of the sun-dried brick building with the *nopal* or prickly pear, which sometimes grows in this tree-like form. House and tree are typical of their kind, and could have been obtained in Calpulalpam, but perhaps not so well.

This will give an idea of the miserable look of some buildings in the outskirts of the country towns; and the people here depicted are not Indians, but white Mexicans, although they might have some admixture of Aztec blood. But such a building would not be tolerated in the central part near the *plaza*, where the walls are generally white-washed if not made of good bricks.

The houses of the poor in Mexico tend to be built of three distinct materials, and the people choose what is cheapest and easiest to get.

On the plains and open valleys of the tableland, where wood is scarce, the houses are generally built of sun-dried bricks or of mud.

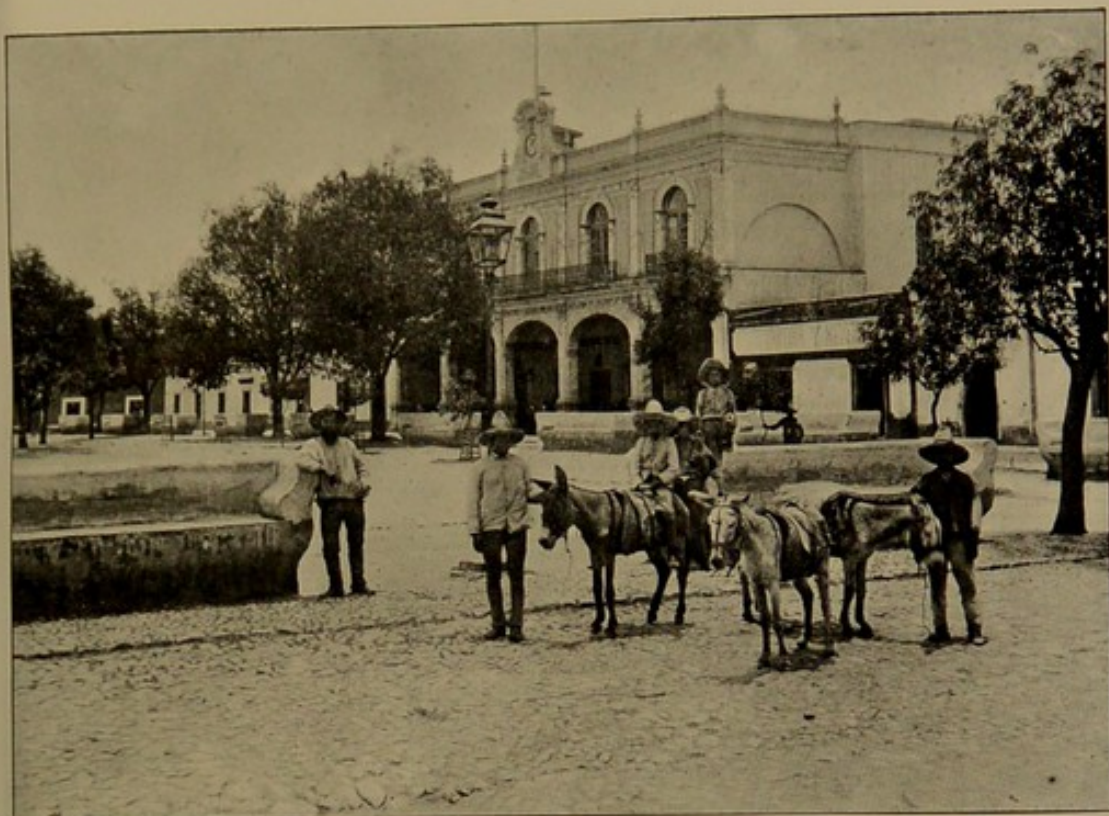
In mountainous districts of the tableland, or in the broken country between the tableland and the *tierra caliente* below, in which regions timber is generally plentiful, the houses are generally made of wood.

In tropical parts, near the sea-level, bamboo is frequently used, but if it be an arid and barren district the inhabitants may have to use clay or mud in some form or other.

This, of course, only refers to the houses of the *peón* class. Most of the houses of the *haciendas* in the neighbourhood of Calpulalpam were made of good fire-baked bricks, and although little taste was generally exercised in their construction, and still less in the dirty surroundings of the employees, they were large and serviceable buildings, with the appearance of manufactories, such as indeed they were, rather than of country houses. For the system of the management of large country estates in Mexico is quite different to what it is in many parts of Europe.

In Europe a rich landowner generally lets most of his land to farmers, while in Mexico he nominally farms it himself, although the





Plaza of Calpulalpam, showing the Palacio Municipal—(p. 54).



Buildings of sun-dried Bricks in the Suburbs of Cuauila—(p. 58).







real supervision is generally done by a manager, for the owner is often absent.

In the meantime a notice had been sent from Tlaxcala, the Capital of the State of that name, informing me that the governor would give me permission to practise on my paying the sum of twenty dollars, which I already knew was the maximum sum prescribed by the law. This was not altogether good news, for my means were so small and my earnings so meagre that I had always hoped that the authorities would have been content with much less. So instead of paying the tax, I wrote to the citizen governor, as is the term in this republican country, petitioning that this sum might be reduced on account of the smallness of my earnings and the poverty of the town.

I informed the *jefe político* that I had petitioned the governor to reduce the amount of my assessment, and was told that I had the right to do so.

I never received any answer to my letter, and I think the reason probably was that I had neglected to affix the half-dollar stamp to the document. So I continued to practise, awaiting a reply that never came.

Market days and Sundays were the only times when there was any animation in the town.

On market days the generally empty *plaza* was full of people from the country, selling their vegetables, fruits, and other wares. It is quite the custom for a middle-class lady in a country town to put on her *mantón* and go to the market-place, followed by her servant-girl with a *rebozo* over her head and a basket on her arm, to carry the provisions that her mistress chooses.

On Sundays there was naturally some attempt at dress, especially among the younger female inhabitants. On such occasions most middle-class girls aspired to have clean dresses, shoes with pointed toes, flowers in the hair which fell behind in a simple central plait, a *mantón* or shawl of some kind on the shoulders, and perhaps some powder on the face.

Women and girls of the poorest class almost invariably wear their hair in two side plaits, which hang down behind; and although they like having a clean print dress and a good *rebozo*, they do not as a rule trouble about wearing boots or shoes, even on Sundays or holidays.

On Sunday afternoons the family of the hotel frequently went to a *frontón*, or wall, adapted for a game of ball like fives, that belonged to them, in the outskirts of the town. It was a small source of income to them, for men were admitted to play on payment of a trifling fee. This is almost the only athletic sport to be seen in the country towns.

I was generally the only person in the hotel who had not gone to bed by nine at night, after which hour the streets in these places are almost deserted.

Once I had for a companion a travelling photographer, who remained some two or three weeks, and as I took an interest in his work, we were often together. We took a trip in the train to a *hacienda* some two or three stations from the town, and were both hospitably received and given some breakfast, but he was more fortunate than me in getting work.



This young man despised Calpulalpam as a poor place, because he did not make more than about twenty dollars in the week, out of which sum, of course, must be deducted the price of photographic material. But even making liberal allowances for the price of working plant, he must have received more than double what I ever earned here.

We also had a poverty-stricken doctor for one or two nights. He could not pay Don Julián, and had to ask to be allowed to send the money afterwards.

About this time I had an instructive instance of the manner in which Mexicans avoid the troublesome obligations forced on them by their Government. A decently dressed middle-class man came to me and asked for a certificate of ill-health, as he had been lately appointed *juez* or judge, but was unable to do the work. I admired the honesty of a man who wished to decline an honourable and lucrative employment because his health would not allow him to do justice to his duty, and asked what was the matter with him.

He replied, "*Pulmonia*" (inflammation of the lungs).

After examining attentively I said, "I cannot find any signs of lung disease. Have you got a cough?"

"Oh yes, I have a cough," he replied, and coughed at the same time.

"Have you got a pain in the chest?"

"Yes, I have."

"Well then," I said, "I cannot give you a certificate that you have lung disease, but if you like I will say that I am treating you for cough and pain in the chest."

He took the certificate and medicine and paid my fee, and for a time I heard no more of the matter.

But one day, when I was invited to a neighbouring house, one of the guests said, with a knowing kind of smile, "Oh, Don — is your patient, is he not, and you are treating him for lung disease?"

I replied that my patient had informed me that he had this complaint, but that I had never said so.

Then I found out that the certificate even for treatment of cough and pain in the chest had availed him to escape from a duty which I now found was unpaid. For in the country a *juez* is not even a lawyer like the judge at Mazapil, but merely a kind of magistrate, who is often appointed without his inclinations being consulted in the matter.

So in the future I was very careful about giving certificates, as I found out that many unpaid duties were forced on unwilling people, and their first recourse was to try to get a medical certificate of ill-health.

The following is an example of another kind.

A man who had been appointed to some unpaid kind of police duty had been sent after some malefactors. They had beaten him so unmercifully that his skull had been broken, and a piece of the bone had evidently been removed.

The poor fellow asked me for a certificate to enable him to escape from this duty, which was still forced on him, and I willingly gave it.

I had now been a good many months in Calpulalpam, and had remained on terms of friendship with the chemist, Don Castulo



Malvaez, whose shop I frequented, and was the means of bringing him some custom, for the other doctor patronized exclusively the opposition shop.

I had also kept on good terms with the doctor, and had even accompanied him to the little hospital in the town to give chloroform to a patient while the doctor performed an operation.

I have already spoken of the morose temperament of the lowest class of Mexicans, who not infrequently cut one another with their *machetes* or cutlasses, and shoot each other with their revolvers, which fortunately are so bad that the wound is not generally fatal.

The object of the hospital was twofold—to give surgical aid to those who had been wounded, and to have an expert witness, as a medical man, to testify to the extent of the injuries inflicted, so that the aggressor might be duly punished. But all medical or surgical aid was confined to police cases, otherwise no sufferer would be admitted, except by the express command of the *jefe político*, whose word was law.

These particulars are mentioned in connection with a remarkable case that influenced my life in more ways than one, and was indirectly connected with my leaving Calpulalpam, and this must be my excuse for breaking the rule about avoiding professional details.

An unhealthy Indian-looking lad had consulted me some two months previously about a pain in the region of the liver, but as he said he felt better after very little treatment and never returned afterwards, I naturally thought he had recovered; one day, however, his mother called and said she had brought her son into the town to see me, as he had become very ill.

I found he was in a very serious condition. A large amount of effusion bulged over the ribs on the right side, and for a short distance below them.

The lungs were also implicated, and as he had heart disease as well, the outlook, for patient and doctor, was not cheerful.

Of course a case like this ought to have gone to the hospital, but as it was not a police case the patient was not eligible.

I had nothing suitable to draw off the effusion, but felt I was within my right in asking the other doctor to lend me his instrument, as the case was one for charity rather than for profit.

He consented, and finally aided me to operate, as the responsibility would have been very great by myself.

A large quantity of matter was let out, and for a good many days the patient seemed greatly relieved.

When, however, the foetid odour and the character of the discharge proved that irrigation had to be employed at all risks, I found it was impossible to buy a piece of rubber tubing suitable for washing out the place with some antiseptic fluid.

Thus a few valuable days were lost, and nobody would help in the matter until M. Lassus kindly gave me a piece of rubber suitable for a syphon tube.

I now heartily repent that I had not asked the chemist to send to the Capital to buy tubing on my account, or that I had not broken up a small instrument of mine that contained rubber of this kind.



It certainly seems inconsistent that a doctor should spend his time, and, as events proved, risk his health over a non-paying patient, and at the same time grudge the cost of trifling necessities for the sick person ; but I was in such reduced circumstances myself that I resented being obliged to do gratuitous work in a town where there was a hospital, for I only received one dollar, which I afterwards returned on hearing that the patient had not sufficient money to buy suitable food.

Before long I found that I was easily affected by putrid smells, for I began to show signs of lung poisoning, while the patient's mother was unaffected, although she was constantly with her son, who had been carried to an empty out-house at the back of the hotel, so as to be constantly under my care.

I now washed out the wound regularly, but the patient and myself gradually became worse, and I knew not how to escape from the dangerous illness forced on me.

Finally, I told some of the leading people that if the patient were not carried to the hospital I would leave Calpulalpam immediately, in spite of my illness, as I did not think that a stranger of small means ought to be called upon to perform duties which more rightly belonged to the public institution in town.

I suppose that the *jefe politico* must have considered that the good name of the place called for his interference, for shortly afterwards two men with a stretcher came by his orders and carried the unfortunate lad to the hospital, where he died a few days after his removal, and for many weeks I suffered from lung trouble with severe cough that prevented me from resting at night.

When I began to recover, I found the solitude of the evenings in the hotel so uncomfortable that I removed into the house of a family who lived in the neighbouring street. Its owner, Doña Maria G. de Cisneros, was an elderly person with a grown-up family.

She had inherited a large house with out-buildings and courtyards, but had very little besides, and eked out her small income by keeping a shop in the only room that opened into the street and by letting the large courtyard at the entrance, together with some of the out-buildings, to the *rurales*, who were quartered in the town.

The shop did not close until eight, after which hour the family had supper ; so they did not go to bed early, and as they were nice people I was glad to have some companionship in the evening.

There was one great drawback to the house for a doctor. With the exception of the shop, all the rooms opened into inner courtyards. The main entrance, occupied by the *rurales*, was always closed after a certain hour, so it was difficult to be called at night in case of an emergency.

But as I was not yet very strong, and was now thinking of leaving the town, this circumstance did not trouble me very much.

For M. Lassus had frequently advised me to go to Altotonga, and at last I made up my mind to try the place. I had never been able to earn quite enough to live on here, and felt unsettled after recent events, so I only waited to get a little stronger and to take a few photographs before I left.

Up to now my camera had been stored at the mercantile house in Mexico City, where I had directed it should be sent.



I returned to the Capital to get it, and some photographic material at the same time, and to buy an assortment of drugs to carry to Altotonga, where I thought medicine might be hard to obtain, as the town was about twenty miles distant from the railway station.

I could not resist remaining in the city more than a week, as it was a change after having been buried alive in a country town for more than seven months.

While in the Capital I met one of the *rurales* who had been quartered at Calpulalpam, but these men never returned while I was there, and on a subsequent occasion I had a difficulty in getting even one to photograph.

They had come to take part in the review of the fifth of May, which is kept as a national holiday, in honour of the Mexican victory over the French near Puebla.

Although Mexicans and French are now on good terms, it will appear later on that some of the lowest class Mexicans still bear resentment, and, even in the Capital, the commemoration of the victory brought out national feeling.

I was standing in front of a foreign shop, probably American, which had a large picture in the window.

The hero of the picture was a mounted soldier, going at full speed across a battle-field, bearing in front of him a wounded companion, and ready to shoot if occasion required.

Several men, besides myself, were looking at the picture, and it slowly occurred to me that the hero did not appear to be dressed in Mexican uniform, but in that of some other nation.

At last I turned to a young man beside me, and said :—

"But that is not a Mexican soldier?"

"No, he is a Frenchman—but he lost, he lost. *Bon soir, monsieur, bon soir,*" said the man in a mocking tone of voice, as he went away.

He evidently thought I was a Frenchman, and wished to remind me that the unpopular hero of the picture had been defeated.

In connection with my purchase of medicines an incident occurred tending to show how the decentralization of the Sovereign States of Mexico causes them to appear almost like different countries in regard to their relations with each other.

I was buying my assortment of drugs at a large wholesale house in the *calle* Tacuba, to which the chemist Don Castulo had given me a letter of introduction. One day, when in another part of the town, I got a violent pain, and went into the nearest chemist's shop to ask for some laudanum.

The chemist asked me if I had a doctor's prescription. I replied that I was a doctor myself, but that if he preferred I would write down what I wanted.

He then said, "Are you inscribed here?"

"No," I replied, "I am practising in Tlaxcala."

"Then I cannot let you have any!" said the chemist.

And I had to return to the wholesale house, where, of course, I got what I wanted.

But it seems a strange anomaly to be easily able to buy large quantities of drugs to be consumed by other people in a neighbouring State, and to find great difficulty in obtaining a few drops for your own urgent use.



This ridiculous state of things, however, would only apply to the foreigner, who gets his local permission to practise from the governor of that State, and not to the holder of the Mexican diploma, which suffices for all the States.

Among my purchases were photographic plates and paper, which are imported from the United States, for practically no manufactures of this kind are made in Mexico.

The American dry plates cost in Mexico City rather more than double what an English plate would cost in its own country.

Good work can of course be obtained with American plates, but I have not found them to be so reliable as English ones.

I now returned to Calpulalpam with my purchases and the camera, and intended to take some typical photographs before I left for Altotonga.

But an unforeseen circumstance hurried me away when I had hardly taken any views worth having, except that of the *plaza*, and more than four years elapsed before I was able to visit the place again.

One day, shortly after my return from the Capital, a Señor Espejel called to see me. He was aware that I was soon going to leave the town, and had come to suggest that I should go to a place called Huamantla, where his brother had a chemist's shop, and could put me in the way of doing good business.

This sounded rather like a chance, and I consulted M. Lassus about it. But that gentleman was still of opinion that Altotonga was a better place for me.

Huamantla was a town of some ten thousand people, which would be reckoned large in a lightly populated country like Mexico, but it was poor, and other doctors were there, while Altotonga, although only containing some three thousand people, about the same number as Calpulalpam, was richer for its size, and had only one man in medical practice, and he was stated not to be popular.

A few days afterwards, while I was still undecided, Señor Espejel called on me again and urged me to try Huamantla, saying that his brother hoped I would go there without delay, as there was an opening for me at once.

Fortunately both towns lay in the same direction towards the eastern coast, Huamantla being in the east of the State of Tlaxcala, while Altotonga is in the west of the seaboard State of Veracruz, so I decided to try Huamantla on my way to Altotonga, and to remain a longer or shorter time in the former place, according as it treated me.

So saying good-bye to the few friends I had made during about eight months' residence in Calpulalpam, I started with all my belongings for Huamantla, which is on the main railway line to Veracruz.

Before closing my account of this district I must say a few words about the people of Calpulalpam and its vicinity, and intend to devote a short chapter to the *pulque* industry, which well deserves mention from its peculiar and national character, and still more from the way in which it forms an intrinsic part of the country life in these parts.

"The Indians are all gone," was an expression heard by me with reference to Calpulalpam and the surrounding country.

For they are a retiring race that dislike intrusion, and readily fall back even before the lethargic innovations of their countrymen of white descent.



But their disappearance seems greater than it really is. If the pure race tends to decrease, the cross-breds increase, and even in the space of four years, when I returned to Calpulalpam, it appeared to me that the *peóns* were discarding those loose clothes generally associated with an Indian costume for the tighter garments of the class above them.

Costume, however, and even language may be changed, but not type of countenance, and this proves that much Indian blood remains.

I do not know if any of the country people still use an Indian dialect here, but I never heard it spoken. For most of the Mexican Indians are bi-linguists. They will talk Spanish to you, and Indian among themselves, so unless you listen to them when they are together you cannot know which is their mother tongue.

The better class townspeople, here as elsewhere, were usually of fairly white descent, with an occasional Indian strain, but their servants and the poor people in the outskirts of the town had plenty of Indian blood. As the climate is good, the people of white descent often have a fresh complexion, and even in the cross-breds a warm tint is sometimes seen.

During the whole time I lived here I was never attacked, although I frequently took lonely country walks. Two reasons may be suggested to account for this, either that the lower classes were less savage than in some other places, or that, as they almost all worked on large *haciendas*, they could be kept under control more easily than in the parts where many were peasant-proprietors.

It is a remarkable fact that hardly any of the poorest *peón* class, who are to a large extent of Indian descent, have retained an Indian surname.

As they are very religious, one would have expected a Christian name, but with some Indian patronymic following it.

The latter is almost universally absent. All the cross-breds, and most of the Indians here and in other parts where I have been, have adopted Spanish surnames, and those Indians who have not done so remain without an equivalent.

For example, a man brought his little sick daughter, whom he addressed as *Mariá Madalena de Dios* (Mary Magdalen of God), and on being asked what surname followed, he replied, "*No hay más*" (there is no more). But in this place I had one patient who had a regular Indian sounding surname that ended in *titla*. She could not write, but got her daughter to write the name for her.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PULQUE INDUSTRY.

THE manufacture of *pulque*, the Mexican national drink, has been handed down from the prehistoric times of the Indians, when the Queen Xochitl is said to have been the discoverer of the process. It is natural, therefore, that many terms connected with this industry should be of Indian origin. *Pulque* is made from the juice of a plant called the *maguey*, which bears a great resemblance to the aloe, although most writers are of opinion that they are not identical.

At any rate, they are so much alike that few observers would perceive the difference between them.

The *maguey* is grown in symmetrical rows, and at distances of a few feet apart, over many miles of country in the vicinity of the plains of Apam, where it is considered to thrive best.

But, like the ordinary aloe, it is so hardy that it would probably grow anywhere, for the ground never appears to be fertilized, and the plant itself will endure its juice being tapped daily for months before it dies.

When the young plants are put in the ground, they grow with little or no care until the tall central stem has reached a certain stage, at which period it is cut short, and the stump is hollowed out into a bowl-like form, so that it may fill with juice.

This juice contains about ten per cent. of sugar, and from its sweet taste is called *aguamiel* (honey water). The *aguamiel* is fermented, and the finished product is called *pulque*.

The *peón* who collects this *aguamiel* is called a *tlachiquero*. He starts early in the morning from his hut near the main buildings of the *hacienda*, or from some out-station.

His invariable companion is the donkey that carries on a rough pack-saddle the barrels or skins that are to be filled with the juice of the plant. Barrels are preferred now, but the anciently used skins may still be seen.

The *tlachiquero* is frequently, but not invariably, accompanied by a member of his family, generally a woman or a small boy, to lead the donkey, otherwise he loses time in going from plant to plant, and possibly having to tie up the animal each time.

His tools are the *acocote* and the *raspador*.

The *acocote* is a hollow gourd, which has a hole at each end so that suction can be applied with the mouth, and is shod with a piece of horn at the narrow end, which is immersed in the juice which has collected in the hollowed-out stump of the plant.

The *raspador*, as its name implies, is a small rasp, for refreshing the plant's wounded surface, so as to insure a continual supply of juice.

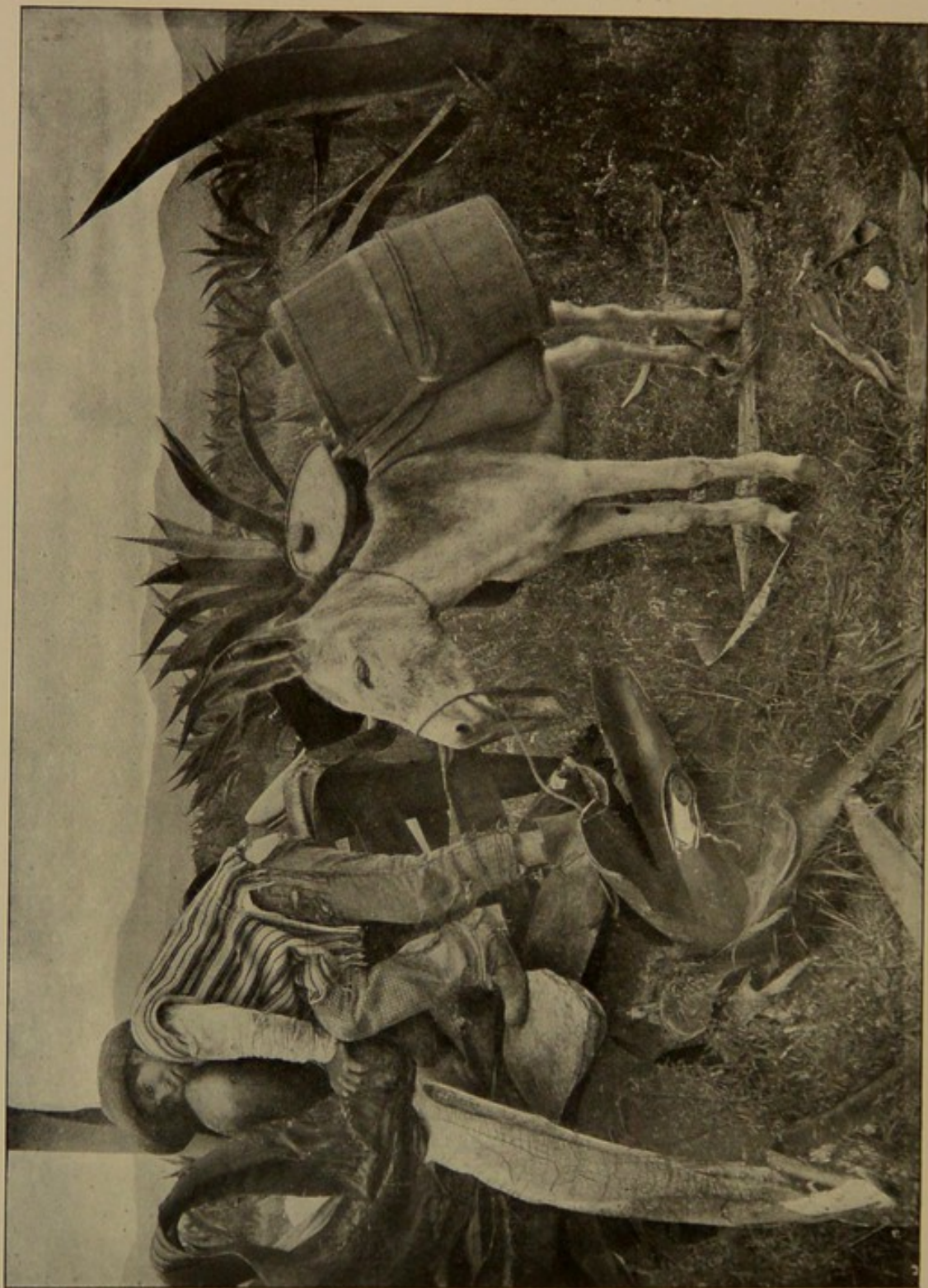
When the *tlachiquero* has sucked the gourd more or less full he





Tlachiquero with Gourd, beside the Maguey Plant—(pp. 66-67).





Tlachiquero sucking the Juice of the Maguey into the Gourd—(pp. 66-67).



applies his finger to the small opening at the narrow end, so that the liquid may not be lost, until he empties the juice into the barrels or skins on the donkey.

Before he leaves the plant, he covers the bowl-like shape of its wounded surface with a piece of *maguey* leaf, so that the hollow may not be filled with rain water, for it is in the wet summer weather that the plant produces most juice.

Thus the *tlachiquero* passes from plant to plant over a considerable extent of level or slightly undulating land, where few, if any, trees are to be seen nearer than the slopes of the neighbouring hills, and it may be towards ten in the morning before he arrives with his donkey at the *tinacal* or building where the *pulque* is made.

This is generally situated close to the house of the hacienda, but if the property is a large one there may be an out-station.

When the *tlachiquero* reaches the door of the *tinacal* the barrels, or skins, are removed from the donkey's back and the patient animal will drink any liquid that has been upset, for he well knows the sweet taste of the *aguamiel*.

The *tinacal* presents the unusual appearance of a manufactory without machinery, for, on entering the substantial but severely plain brick building, the only noticeable objects in sight are the rows of bull-hide vats in square wooden frames that are arranged along the length of the room, with one or more passages of the gangway type between them, so that the men may be able to pass with their loads.

The vats and their frames present an appearance something like that of washing-basins in their stands, but on a gigantic scale, all the hair having been removed from the bull-hides, which are said to be the only ones strong enough for the purpose.

When the *aguamiel* is poured into the vats, a coarse strainer is interposed, to prevent extraneous matter, such as pieces of leaves, from entering, but the pulpy fibre of the plant passes with the juice and forms an essential part of the drink.

After the *tlachiquero* has aided in carrying the *aguamiel* and has done whatever else the overseer may think necessary, he and his donkey take a well-deserved rest during the heat of the day; when they go out again in the afternoon, the work is a repetition of what they have done in the morning.

The period of time that the *aguamiel* would take to ferment is much hastened by artificial means.

A small quantity of the juice that has already reached a certain stage of fermentation, the so-called *semilla* (seed), is kept for this purpose, and is mixed with the fresh juice, which in a few days loses its sweetness, and assumes the peculiar taste and milky colour of *pulque*.

No time must now be lost in putting the finished product into barrels, so that it may be forwarded to its destination, for it soon becomes rank, and will not keep for more than a few days.

And here comes the greatest anomaly connected with its manufacture.

The *haciendas* that produce this crude Indian drink are provided with an excellent private train service up to their very doors, so that this perishable but well-paying article may be sent to distant towns and sold before it becomes undrinkable.



The conductor of this train lives in some country town close to the railway station of the main line which he uses as his centre, and the private lines of the *pulque* service converge at or near this place.

There are only a few vans attached to the engine, and a few assistants besides the engine driver.

Starting from the railway station, the train soon branches off the main line, and winds for several miles through the open country, where little except the *maguey* grows, until it reaches the *tinacal* of a *hacienda*.

Here the train comes right alongside of the building, which has a raised platform at its side, after the manner of a railway station.

The barrels of *pulque* are rolled into one of the vans by the *peóns*, who certainly look out of place in connection with any railway work, and the train begins its return journey. On the way back there may be another *hacienda* to visit, or perhaps it may be necessary to leave a van at some *tinacal* that is only a few hundred yards distant from the main line.

In this case, when near the connection, the points are turned, and the van is shunted towards the building, with a brakeman in charge of it, and, when the points are again connected with the main line, the train pursues its homeward course.

This service is quite distinct from that of the ordinary traffic, and its purpose is only to carry the *pulque* to a railway station, whence it is conveyed to its destination by the ordinary train.

It is difficult to describe what *pulque* is like, for there is probably no other drink of the same nature.

In colour, it is somewhat white, of the shade that might be expected in milk that had been largely diluted with water, and the liquid appears thick, from containing an amount of the pulpy fibre of the plant, which sometimes sticks to the lips of those who drink it.

Perhaps a mixture of small beer and cider, to which a certain amount of gum had been added for thickening purposes, might give a faint idea of its taste and character.

Its odour is not obtrusive while the drink is fresh, but when stale it has that repulsive smell usually noticed near the *pulquerías* where it is sold.

The amount of alcohol that it contains is not large, although sufficient to intoxicate those who can drink a great quantity, but even an Indian might become sick before he arrived at this stage, and there is little doubt about the effect that a large amount would have on a stranger.

The habitual use of this drink causes a considerable amount of indigestion among the natives of both European and Indian descent. The people themselves are well aware of this defect in their favourite drink, and those of the better class sometimes mix bicarbonate of soda with it to counteract the acidity.

Notwithstanding all these defects a stranger can acquire a liking for it in the course of time.

A foreign gentleman who resided in Calpulalpam frequently had *pulque* on his table, but said that it had taken him one year to get accustomed to it.

The following story is a further proof.



An English coachman, employed on a *hacienda*, could not drink his ration of *pulque*, and was given a small allowance of money in its place.

At the end of six months he is stated to have asked his employer to let him have the drink instead of the money.

The manufacture of *pulque* must be a very profitable business, but it appears to be more adapted to those who can work on a large scale, and, as a matter of fact, most of the *pulque* is made on large *haciendas*.

For the perishable nature of the article requires a good train service, which, in a sparsely inhabited country like Mexico, may not be obtainable unless the man at the head of the concern has both means and enterprise.

The retail price of the drink is cheap enough. An ordinary tumblerful can be bought for one cent of Mexican money, and three cents will purchase the contents of a huge beaker that few foreigners would care to negotiate.

But the capacity of the lower class Mexicans for *pulque* is very great, and it would be rash to attempt to define how much they can consume.

Grapes will grow in many parts of Mexico, but it is said that their juice will not produce good wine.

As, however, inferior wine would be preferable to *pulque*, it must be taken for granted that the people are prejudiced in favour of the national drink, and it would be impossible for wine to compete in price with *pulque*, which is made in a few days' time from the juice of a large and hardy plant that furnishes a continual harvest.

A considerable amount of foreign wine is sold in Mexico, but almost entirely in the large towns and to the richer people. In those parts of the country that are too remote from where *pulque* is made, rum is much used, and plenty of sugar-cane is grown for this purpose in the tropical climate that lies between the table-land and the coast.

As the inhabitants of wine-making countries are generally considered to be more light hearted and genial than those who live in countries that make their alcoholic drinks from other sources, it might not perhaps be too imaginative to suppose that the surly temperament of the lower class Mexican has been somewhat influenced by the national drink, although the principal cause is probably due to the large percentage of Indian blood.



## CHAPTER VII.

## IN HUAMANTLA.

**I**T is but a few hours by rail from Calpulalpam to Huamantla, for both towns are in the State of Tlaxcala, which is not a large one ; and, in spite of my previous bad fortune, I felt in fairly good spirits.

My health had now quite recovered, and I was not going to try new fields as an entire stranger, but was on my way to a place where good business was awaiting me ; and, in case it should not come up to representations, there was the more distant town of Altotonga to fall back upon, with letters of recommendation from my friend, M. Lassus.

Although it was late at night when I arrived at Huamantla, I could not help noticing that this town was much larger than Calpulalpam, for the difference between three thousand and ten thousand people is very apparent.

The chemist, Señor Espejel, had been told by his brother that I was coming, and met me at the railway station.

He insisted that I should live in a spare room behind his shop, and I willingly consented, as it saved the expense of hiring a lodging, besides having the advantage of being so near my work. And when I saw my new quarters I was well pleased with them, for the shop was in a fairly central place, near the *plaza*, and my room opened out behind into a nice courtyard, which had a fountain and small ornamental trees after the Spanish style, which is often copied by the better class houses in Mexico.

The next morning Señor Espejel brought me to a *fonda*, where I arranged with its owner for the customary meals at the rate of five *reales* a day.

There are eight *reales* in a Mexican dollar, so my food at this rate would not cost me quite four dollars and a half weekly, and as there was no charge for my room my expenses were thus more than two dollars less than in Calpulalpam.

It may here be mentioned that although the decimal monetary system prevails in Mexico, with a hundred *centaros* in the *peso*, or dollar, after the manner of the United States, most of the common people refuse to reckon in *centaros* or cents, and make use of the old-fashioned methods of counting, which are very inconvenient, as representing amounts that contain fractions of cents, which, of course, cannot be paid.

For example, the Mexican *peso*, or dollar, contains four silver pieces of twenty-five cents, which are commonly called *pesetas*. But instead of estimating the value of the *peseta* in cents, they prefer to divide the *peseta* into two *reales*.

The *real* is an imaginary piece of money of the value of twelve



cents and a half, that is to say, there is no such coin, nor can its value be made up by any combination of coins, for there are no half cents; but, in spite of this, the term *real* is largely used in the business transactions of the poorer classes. For by common consent it is understood that, if the price of anything is one *real*, the seller is contented to take twelve cents as an equivalent.

But as two *reales* make twenty-five cents, and are paid in full by the *peseta*, a ridiculous discrepancy takes place, which sometimes causes disputes.

For example, a man entered a chemist's shop and wished to buy two *reales* worth of drugs, which in the ordinary course would have cost twenty-five cents. But, knowing that twelve cents were commonly received for one *real*, he asked for one *real's* worth. After paying his twelve cents, he asked for another *real's* worth, thus getting his purchase at twenty-four cents instead of at twenty-five cents, and the chemist who had been given the trouble of weighing the drugs twice instead of once, with the result of losing one cent for his extra work, naturally became angry.

And if half-cents are awkward sums, smaller fractions are still worse, for the people make use of the terms half a *real* and a quarter *real*, thereby introducing fractions of one-quarter and one-eighth of a cent, which are never paid, as the half-*real* is accepted as six cents and the quarter-*real* as three cents.

Of course this mode of reckoning would never enter higher class transactions, and the ordinary tourist might never come into contact with it.

On the two days following my arrival a few patients came to see me at the *botica* or chemist's shop. For Señor Espejel was determined to let the people know that a doctor was practising at his place, and when he proudly showed me an announcement of my arrival posted on an adjoining wall, where I was described to be a foreign specialist who was exercising his profession with the permission of the governor of the State, I felt that uncomfortable feeling of degradation that a medical man might be expected to experience on falling for the first time to the level of a charlatan.

But the advertisement had been made without my knowledge, and such kind of notices are frequent in Mexico.

On the third morning after my arrival Señor Espejel informed me that the *jefe político* wished to see me, and we went together to the *palacio municipal*.

I had no idea why that great personage desired my presence, and, fondly hoping that he wished to consult me professionally, I carried my stethoscope with me.

On entering the official room we were received with formal courtesy, but, as it appeared to me, rather more stiffly than is usually the case on such occasions, and the *jefe político* somewhat curtly asked me to produce my permission from the governor to practise in the State.

I was quite taken aback by such a demand, for the reader may recollect that while in Calpulalpam, I was given a temporary permission to practise, pending the investigation of my papers, and that, after they had been verified, I was informed that the usual official permission would be granted me on payment of twenty dollars.



But, as this was the maximum sum that could be imposed, I had petitioned that it should be reduced, and my letter had never been answered. Some eight months had lapsed, during which period I had been working without having paid anything in the shape of a tax, so I now found myself in the unfortunate position of a person who had not complied with the law of the land.

I had, however, carefully kept the notification that the governor would allow me to exercise my profession on payment of twenty dollars, and putting on the best face I could under the circumstances, I told the *jefe político* that I would bring him the permission he required, and went to the chemist's shop for it, leaving Señor Espejel in the *palacio municipal*.

On my return, I handed the official document to the *jefe político*, who after briefly taking in its contents, informed me that it was worthless as a permission to practise, and worked himself into a temper in describing the conduct of people who deceived the public.

I had to bear all this patiently and began to think that the great man was going to have me arrested, so I was somewhat relieved when he turned to me and said, "I cannot allow you to exercise your profession without the permission of the governor; if you want to practise here you must get leave from him."

I promised to obey and left the *palacio municipal* in a very dejected state, telling Señor Espejel, who had been present during the whole scene, that his inconsiderate action in posting the advertisements had probably precipitated matters, and that I was so annoyed that I would leave immediately if it were not for the shame of being turned out for practising without permission.

So about two days after this event I started by train for Tlaxcala, the Capital of the State of that name, refusing in the meantime to attend to a single patient, lest I might get myself into further difficulties.

The railway did not come within two or three miles of the town, and the connection of this last stage was made by a tramcar drawn by mules.

It seemed strange that the Capital should only contain two thousand inhabitants, while another town in the same State should be so much more populous.

As Tlaxcala was the centre of the Government of the State, the *plaza* presented a creditable appearance, with its fine trees and some good public buildings in its vicinity, but the houses only extended for a short distance, and on one side of the *plaza* it was but a few steps to the open country.

I put up at what appeared to be the only hotel in the place. The owner appeared to have done good business in his *casa de empeño*, or pawnbroker's house, at the side of the entrance, and it certainly looked as if the funds for the new one-storeyed buildings round the central courtyard had been obtained from the unredeemed pledges.

I now set about thinking how I should approach the Government officials relative to my business, and the affair was not altogether an easy one.

For it was not so much the case of a person asking for a customary permission and tendering a customary tax, as of explaining why a legal impost had remained unpaid for so long, and I was already aware that



the reason why my last petition on the subject remained unanswered was probably because I had neglected to affix a half-dollar stamp to the document, in which case the fault lay on my side.

While I was still uncertain how I should proceed, I saw Don Manuel Covarrubias, a gentleman with whom I had been on good terms in Calpulalpam, where he used to reside.

He was a lawyer by profession, and had lately been promoted and transferred to the Capital of the State.

He kindly said he would help me, and was a serviceable friend on this occasion. He wrote out a form for me to copy, in which I pleaded for a reduction of the impost of twenty dollars on account of the smallness of my means, and, when the half-dollar stamp had been affixed, he accompanied me to the Government office. After speaking to the officials on my account, he informed me that there was a difficulty in the matter, as by some mistake the impost had been described as paid in the Government book. But I heard him say to one of the officials in the quiet tone of a man who has some influence, "Do me the favour of putting this matter through for me," and I was directed to return to the office next day, when I was well received, and was given a formal permission with the seal of the State on it, to exercise my profession by permission of the governor.

I think the reduced impost amounted to ten dollars, but it would have been much better for me to have paid the full amount of twenty dollars on my first application many months previously, and have saved myself this disagreeable incident, besides incurring the expenses of remaining in the town of Tlaxcala for two or three days, which, together with the railway fare, probably accounted for whatever money I might have saved by the transaction. But for the accidental meeting of an influential friend, the matter might not have been so easily settled.

There was not much worth seeing in the little town, except the *plaza* and the market, which were both good of their kind, and I passed a good many hours during my short visit to this place in the pawnshop belonging to the owner of the hotel, and he certainly had a large assortment of unredeemed pledges.

Among these were tall felt hats of the *charro* type, revolvers, spurs, women's dresses, and arranged on the ground were such a large quantity of smoothing irons, that one could not help wondering how the washerwomen of the town were able to complete their work, with so many of their belongings out of their reach. And I was told that there was another room for the storage of tools and agricultural implements that were too large to be kept here.

The owner of the shop informed me, what seemed a self-evident fact, that the profits of pawnbroking were very considerable, but said that the heavy Government imposts prevented the business from paying as well as it should.

I now returned to Huamantla with a lightened heart, and I need hardly say that my first visit was to the *palacio municipal*, where I showed my permission from the governor to the *jefe político*, who now received me more graciously, and said "*Muy bien.*"

There was now no danger of my being molested by the authorities, and I soon fell into my old habit of hanging about the shop during



the greater part of the day, and going out for my walk late in the afternoon.

Every country town has its weekly market day, and in Huamantla it fell on Wednesdays, when the country people used to come in to sell their produce, and to buy their supplies. Many of these people were Indians, and it was on one of these occasions that I heard the Aztec language spoken for the first time.

One day, when I was behind the shop, either in my room or in the courtyard, Señor Espejel came to tell me that there was a family of three Indians in front, and I might be able to make an arrangement for taking their photographs. I went into the shop immediately and offered to pay the three of them—a woman, her son, and her brother—for permission to take their likenesses.

When the bargain was made we went into the courtyard behind, and I began to arrange the camera, but just before everything was ready the woman became very restless, and at last said in Spanish, "Tell me if what they say is true, that when one has one's picture taken the soul is drawn out of the body?"

I assured her there was no danger of such a misfortune, and perhaps succeeded in making her smile too much while her likeness was being taken. Her brother, on the contrary, bore a determined expression, as if he defied all consequences, while the little boy, with his palm-leaf hat slouched over his face, appeared quite unconscious of exposing himself to peril of any kind.

It was fortunate that I availed myself of this occasion, for I subsequently found out that the Indians of Huamantla are even more morose and intractable than those in most other places, and that it would be a dangerous experiment to photograph them in the country, or even in the more retired parts of the town. For on a following Wednesday I happened to be at the door of the chemist's shop, when I saw two young Indian women, one of them a very good type, on their way out of town, after doing their marketing.

I was already aware that it would be useless for a stranger to speak to them, so I asked the chemist's younger brother if he would kindly come with me, and ask for permission to take a photograph. They were walking fast and had already got outside the town before we reached them.

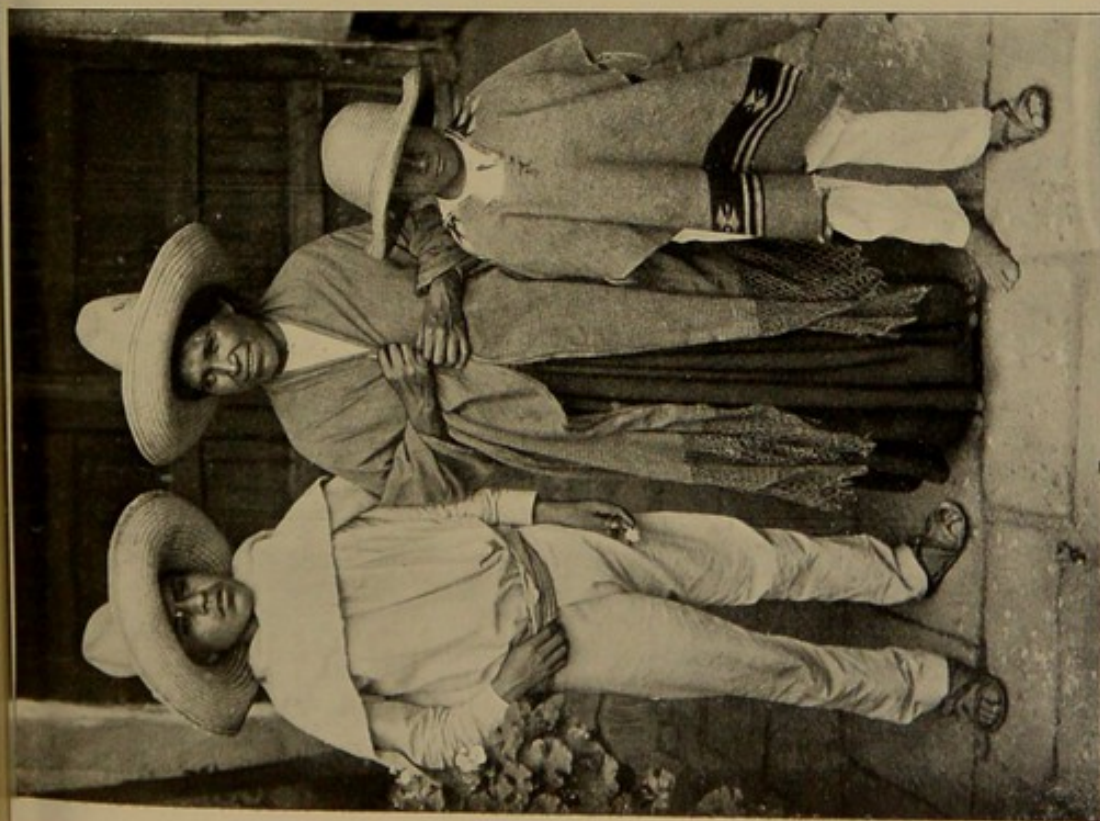
The chemist's brother was a young man dressed in *charro* style, with a tall felt hat on his head, so there was no doubt about his being a fellow-countryman; but directly he began to speak to the one I wanted, she screamed, and crying out, "I will tell my husband," ran off without giving him a chance of explaining what he wanted.

And on another occasion I was taking a stroll late in the afternoon, and was smoking as I walked along the road about one mile outside the town.

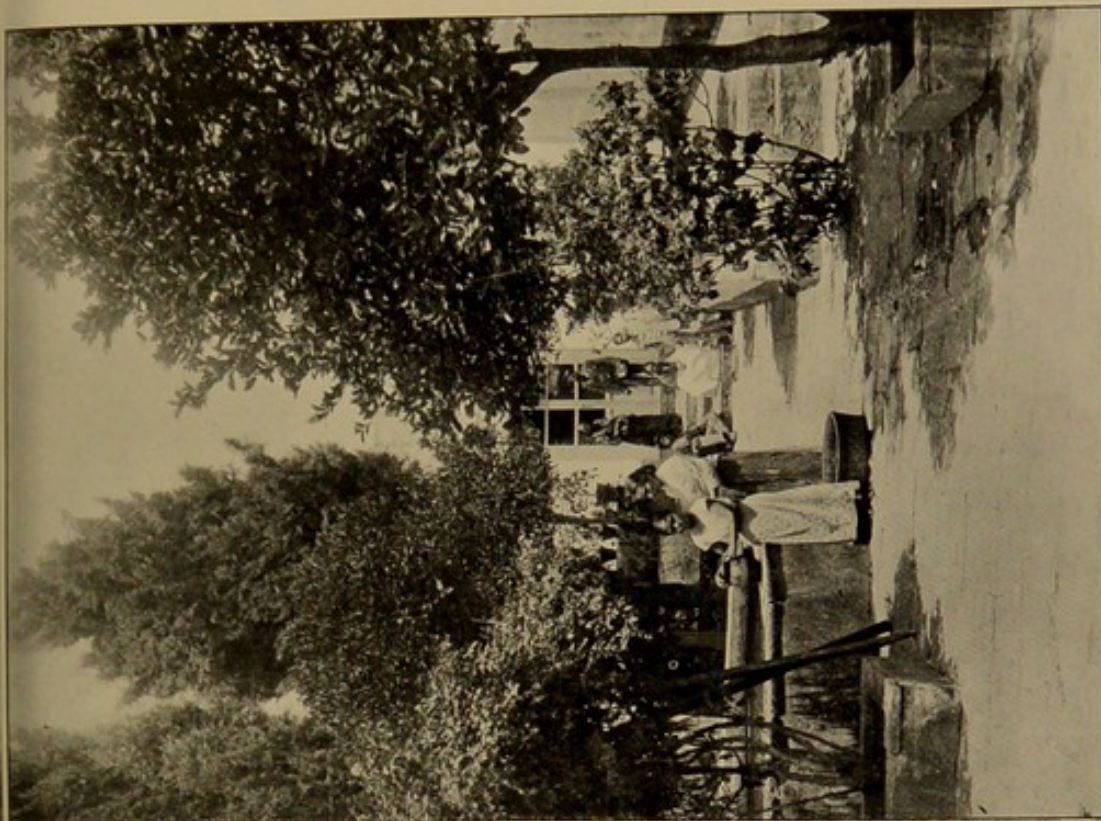
The country was fairly open and the only thing to obstruct the view was a hedge of the aloe-like *maguey* plants on either side of the road.

I happened to look behind me and saw an Indian woman who was going at a jog-trot in the same direction as myself. After a short time I began to wonder why she had never caught me up on the road,





Indians of Huamantla—(p. 74).



Courtyard behind the Chemist's—(p. 74).







as she appeared to be going much faster than myself, and on looking round again I could see nobody.

While I was still trying to account for her disappearance I got a glimpse of her, running in the field at my side, under cover of the *maguey* hedge, and when about two hundred yards ahead of me she ventured to return to the road.

For the dislike, often amounting to hatred, which the Indians have for foreigners, is naturally mingled with fear in the case of the women.

Another time I was walking in the vicinity of the town, when I stopped to look at a hut near the roadside.

A man came out and asked in a very surly voice what I wanted, and appeared ill-satisfied with my explanation that I was only looking at his house because I thought it would make a pretty picture.

But the following event which happened only a little more than a week after my return from Tlaxcala showed me clearly the attitude that Indians can assume when drink has loosened all restraint to their animosity towards foreigners.

One fine Sunday afternoon I was going out for a walk, and was crossing the broad bed of a dry creek that bounded one end of the town. Several other people were crossing the creek at the same time as myself.

All at once I heard a loud voice uttering abuse in the Spanish language, but in those terms peculiar to lower class Mexicans and Indians. Thinking it was a quarrel among some of these people that did not concern me, I did not even look round, but went on walking.

When, however, the noise appeared to be only a few yards behind me, I turned round and saw a young fellow with a good supply of stones in his hands.

After shouting out some words which I only partially understood, and which in any case would be unmentionable, he added: "*Es usted francés, yo soy indio*" (You are French, I am Indian).

I was quite unarmed, except for a light walking-stick, which was of no service against stones, and of doubtful value for defence of any kind, so I threw it on the ground, thinking that my legal position would be better if I were altogether without any weapon, and awaited events.

He came nearer and nearer, threatening me with the stones which he never threw, owing I suppose to his somewhat drunken condition.

When I saw he was just within reach, I seized both his wrists with my hands, and had to jump at the same moment to avoid the stones, which fell close to my feet.

The suddenness of the shock caused him to fall on the ground, and I asked the bystanders, not one of whom had offered to interfere on my behalf, if they would kindly prevent him from following me, as I did not desire to be mixed up in a police case.

I continued my walk and considered the incident as ended, but, on looking back when I was from half a mile to a mile further on the road, I saw him following me at a jog-trot, with his arms again full of stones.

The next scene was practically the same as the first; my assailant fell on the ground, and I began to walk homewards rapidly, as the affair now looked more serious. I naturally looked back frequently



now, and soon saw him in pursuit, and in the act of picking up more stones.

It flashed across my mind that if I ran I might reach the town before he could overtake me, but I was ashamed to run from such a miserable creature, and merely continued to walk fast.

He soon overtook me, and on this third occasion when he fell I put him between my legs, and held him down.

For, although I had been much subdued by misfortunes lately, the lust for blood in self-defence was beginning to take possession of me, and I could hardly trust myself.

I now thought that the best plan would be to hold him down until I could give him in charge to someone who might be passing on the road, and in two or three minutes' time a *peón* came up, whom I asked to detain my assailant a short time to enable me to reach the town.

"I will help you if you pay me," was his answer.

"It is your duty to help anyone who is attacked," I replied; "look at the stones that I have had to force out of his hands."

As, however, I would not promise to pay anything, the man passed on, and perhaps I may think myself lucky that he did not take part against me.

In a few more minutes, during which time I had to hold down my struggling assailant, two more men came up, and on my explaining the circumstances to them, they took my Indian in charge, and I reached town without any further misadventure.

But I did not let this affair trouble me much, for it was the first time that I had been attacked, and I looked upon it as a drunken assault that might never happen again.

The work at the chemist's shop was far from coming up to expectations. Indeed I soon found out that Señor Espejel was not doing a good business, and that the real reason he had sent for me was in the hope that his trade might improve through having a doctor attached to his place.

Still there was some work, much of the same kind as in Calpulalpam, and as my expenses were very light, I was disposed to give the town a good trial.

The pretty courtyard with trees at the back of my room was a pleasant place to frequent. The shop, yard, and adjoining buildings belonged to an old lady, Doña Sacramento, who had let the shop to the chemist, so we had the use of the yard, while the rooms that she occupied opened into it on the other side. The photograph, with the two Indian servant-girls at the fountain, will give some idea of what the yard was like.

Huamantla is called the town of churches. There are, I believe, more than twenty, including the small chapels, and this must be an unusually large number for ten thousand inhabitants.

Otherwise there is nothing very remarkable about the town, which is laid out in that rectangular manner so prevalent in America.

The surrounding country is less level than in the vicinity of Calpulalpam, and the *maguey* is not cultivated here in large quantities, for the *haciendas* in the neighbourhood devote themselves to other kinds of agriculture.

About a week after my adventure with the Indian, I went out one



afternoon with the camera for the first time since my arrival at Huamantla to take a view in the outskirts of the town. When I was at the upper end of one of those long empty streets that offer so little photographic inducement, I was considering in what direction I should point my machine, when a small Indian-looking man came up and began to speak to me. I could not quite make out what he wanted, but there was no doubt about his manner being offensive, and I could hear him muttering bad language in an undertone. So I merely replied that I did not intend to take any photograph in that place, and leaving the man in the street, I turned into a side road where the town ceased and the country began. Here there were only a few mud or sun-dried bricks, huts, and a small chapel in the distance.

I had planted the camera on the road and was looking at the view on the ground-glass, with the black cloth over my head, when I heard a thud on the road near me, as of some heavy object falling. I looked up quickly, but could see nothing.

A few seconds afterwards a large stone passed within some two yards of my head, and I could see a man partially concealed among a few *maguey* plants at a little distance. Just then a boy, who had been employed at the chemist's shop, passed along and cried out, "Run, run, they are bad, they are going to do you harm." For, as I afterwards found out, there were two men stoning me. But one cannot run much with a camera arranged on its stand, and I would not leave it behind me, so I carried it as quickly as I could to a little hut near the roadside, and entered without asking leave, for the stones were falling around me. Almost the only occupants of the hut were a big girl with a miserable looking child in her arms, and I briefly explained to her why I had entered, and asked to be allowed to shelter there, to which she readily consented.

One of the men who were attacking me now stood out in the open, some twenty or thirty yards in front of the door of the hut, with a good supply of stones. It would have been too risky for an unarmed man to run at him in the open, for these Indians can aim well, and but for their caution in remaining at a distance and the heaviness of the stones they used, they would already have hit me, so I remained in the hut, looking from time to time over the door, which was hardly five feet high, with an opening above it.

A good many people were watching the scene, but nobody interfered. No more stones were now discharged, for they were being reserved until I left the shelter of the hut.

After a short time I heard a slight noise outside the door, and I braced myself for an attack at close quarters, for I thought the hut was being rushed. I was much relieved to find that it was a young Mexican, dressed as a *charro*, who appeared not to approve of the outrage, for although he did not interfere with my assailants, he civilly told me that if I would get out at the back of the hut, he could show me a place where, by climbing a wall, I might get away by another road. I willingly followed him to the wall, which was only a few yards at the back of the hut, and as the camera was now packed up, there was not much difficulty in taking it over with me.

I thanked my friend, and returning to the centre of the town,



went immediately to the police station to give information. The police did not seem much disposed to do anything, and informed me that nothing could be done without the order of the *jefe político*. I then went to the *palacio municipal* to inform that personage, but as the afternoon was now advanced he had left, and I was not able to see him until next morning. On my stating the facts of the case, he said to some one, "Apprehend me these men." But in company with Señor Espejel and another man, I had already been to the house where my assailants lived at the extremity of the town, and we were told that they were not at home.

My impression is that they just kept out of the way for a short time, and that little or nothing was done to them in the way of punishment, for I heard nothing more of the matter, nor was I called upon to make any formal declaration or statement in writing. And this town, in addition to the ordinary police, had a detachment of *rurales* who could have scoured the country for miles around!

I do not know whether this attack was made from hatred to a foreigner, or in revenge for the discomfiture of my former assailant. Some people suggested that I had been taken for an American, in which case I said that I ought to carry a placard on me, stating that I was neither French nor American; but as most of the Indians cannot read, it would only have had a very limited use. In any case I saw that the life of a foreigner in Huamantla was not too secure, and now understood why Señor Espejel had suggested that if I wanted to go out with the camera I ought to have some one with me. So I hardly took any more photographs in this place, for I could not afford to pay a man for standing guard over me.

The town, although not small for Mexico, was evidently poor, as M. Lassus had told me, and I heard one of the other doctors say that he had been offered a few cents for a visit, which had naturally made him angry.

But it was, to some extent, the fault of Señor Espejel himself that his shop was not more patronized. For he made the grave mistake of allowing several idle fellows who were his friends to frequent the place. The principal of these was a tailor, who evidently liked talking more than working, and spent most of his time with us.

A chemist's shop, above all others, ought not to harbour loafers, for sometimes the customers may have to ask the chemist questions of a private nature, relative to the application of the drugs they are buying, and they naturally resent having to ask them before outsiders.

As, however, from whatever cause, the chemist and myself were both doing badly, Señor Espejel suggested that we should visit a few of the *haciendas* in the country, in the hope of getting a contract for attending to the employees, as was the custom near Calpulalpam. I was quite ready to do so, for the only expense was the hiring of a horse or mule for the day, which in a Mexican country town might average about one dollar. So one morning our mounts were brought to the door, and we started. But I was much annoyed to find that, after going a few yards, the tailor who used to loaf in the chemist's shop was waiting for us. He got up behind the saddle on Señor Espejel's animal, and accompanied us in this manner for the rest of the journey, taking the precaution, however, always to mount and



dismount at a short distance from the house we were visiting, so as to save appearances. I resented his company as a nuisance, but as he was a friend of the chemist I could make no objection.

We rode several miles to a large *hacienda*. The owner did not reside there, and we did not even see the manager, but one of the overseers entertained us hospitably and gave us breakfast. He was a tall, fair young man from the north of Spain, and looked more like a Scandinavian, as indeed he probably was by descent. Of course, he could only undertake to mention our business to the head man, and after breakfast he showed us over the large empty residence of the owner. It was built after the Spanish style, in the form of a hollow square, with the rooms around, and a large courtyard in the centre, and the building was two or three storeys high.

The rooms faced the central yard, and were reached by steps that ascended to a broad balcony that connected the rooms. The walls of the balcony were ornamented with large sketches that were supposed to be very pretty, and some really were so; but they were rather too much after the manner of the street artists who draw on the pavement.

As we could do no business here, and heard besides that it was not worth our while to visit a *hacienda* where we had intended to go, we returned by a different road, so as to take another country house on the way home.

All the country was cultivated, although lightly inhabited, and the chemist had to ask the way several times; but our journey was made in perfect safety, for my companion was evidently a Mexican, and, if that were not sufficient, we were also mounted.

The fact of riding instead of walking makes a much greater difference in Mexico, and, indeed, in Spanish America generally, than it would in England or in the more central European countries. For in these only partially civilized places all the better class people ride, even if they only have a few miles to travel; and if a man is seen on foot he is considered to be a person of little account, and is therefore much more likely to be attacked or abused by the common people, especially when they see that he is a foreigner. From a purely military point of view, a horseman may be at a disadvantage in the attack; but he has the best of it if he wishes to run away.

At the *hacienda* we visited on the way back, we found the manager at home. He received us courteously, and, after listening to my proposal to contract for attendance on the employees, he said that he would consider the matter, on the understanding that it would only be for the *dependientes*, and not for the common field workers or *peóns*. For he stated that these latter did not wish for medical treatment, and had been seen to pour their medicine on the ground.

The Spanish term *dependientes* would only include the better class employees, such as overseers, clerks and store-keepers.

After I had made my proposal, it was natural enough that the chemist should offer on his part to supply the drugs, in case my offer were accepted; but I felt rather mortified when the tailor, who accompanied us, now put in his tender to supply clothes.

We now returned home after a fruitless journey, for I never heard from either of the *haciendas*.



I now began to consider whether it would not be better to leave Huamantla, and try Altotonga, for, in spite of the lightness of my expenses, I was not earning quite enough to pay for my food.

My afternoon walks were continued as usual, for it was the only thing I had to brace me up for my cheerless life, and I was determined not to be prevented from doing so by fear of the cowardly Indians.

But I now carefully watched every *peón* I passed on the road, and if a man stooped down I looked to see if he were picking up stones.

For the behaviour of these people could not be depended upon, and their attitude varied between servility and overt hostility. Out of a hundred, perhaps, more than half would touch their hats as they passed along, and the greater part of the rest would make no sign whatever. But there was generally a small percentage that scowled, and sometimes muttered abuse; and it just depended on accidental circumstances, such as opportunity and the quantity of drink they had taken, whether their latent enmity might not break out.

One evening, towards sundown, I had walked two or three miles to a place where I had never been before.

I was just thinking of turning round to go home when I saw to one side of the road a countryman of the better class, who did not appear to have much of the Indian in his appearance.

"Good night, friend," he said, and I replied, "Good night."

"What are you doing?" he inquired, and I answered, "I am taking a walk for my health."

"You are not from this part?"

"No, of course, I am a stranger."

"Well, then, you had much better go home, there are baddish people here."

The Spanish diminutive the man used was very expressive. He hardly liked to stigmatize his people as bad, so, instead of saying *gente mala*, he said *gente malilla*.

I thanked him, and as it was getting late I shortly took his advice, but it sounded like the very candid opinion of a resident that the life of a stranger was not safe in this neighbourhood. However, I would willingly have remained in Huamantla and taken the risk of it, had it appeared likely that a good living could be made. As it was, I told Señor Espejel that before long I intended to leave, and he could offer no objection, as he was well aware that he had induced me to come on a misrepresentation of the circumstances.

One of the few agreeable reminiscences I have of Huamantla is that of a far-off countryman of mine, who was settled here, and introduced himself to me in the following manner.

There were a good many people talking in the chemist's shop, when one of them turned round to me, and said:—

"I am a countryman of yours."

As the man looked just as Mexican as the rest, I appeared slightly incredulous, so he said:—

"You will recognize my name, it is Quirban"; and although he wrote it down for me, I was obliged to tell him that I did not recollect ever hearing it before.

"But you will know it when it is written thus," he continued, with confidence, as he wrote down the name Kirwan. His grandfather



had emigrated to Mexico, and the name had been slightly modified to suit Spanish orthography. Don Esteban Quirban was afterwards a patient of mine during his temporary illness, and I found him to be a man of his word, and one whom it was a pleasure to recognize as a fellow-countryman.

My stay in this place had only lasted some two months, during which time, if my professional life had been dull, my experiences as a traveller had been lively enough, for I had come into collision with the authority on my arrival, and had been twice attacked in the subsequent two weeks, besides being warned afterwards that it was not safe to go out walking.

In justice to Mexico, it is only fair to say that a stranger would probably meet with more attacks in the vicinity of Huamantla than in most other towns.

For there was a considerable Indian population about here, and only a few miles away there was an Indian village. But it would have been dangerous to go there alone, and on foot, and I could not afford the expense of hiring horses or mules, and getting at least one competent Mexican to accompany me.

The Indians in the cooler parts of Mexico are more inclined to be hostile than those of the *tierra caliente*; but I do not know why those about Huamantla should be worse than those in other cool parts, unless it be that, as in the olden times, the Indians of Tlaxcala were always warlike, and able to defend themselves against the Aztec empire—in like manner, perhaps, their descendants resent the intrusion of foreigners more forcibly than the Indians in other parts.

Although I had lived in Calpulalpam for a much longer period without being attacked, the conditions there were quite different, as there were not many pure Indians, and almost all the *peóns* lived close to the large *haciendas*, where they were under supervision. Calpulalpam was also hardly typical of its own State, having been previously in the State of Mexico, and only transferred of late years to that of Tlaxcala.

So I now said good-bye to the town of many churches, with its large but poorly-arranged *plaza*, its long empty streets with their whitewashed walls, and the mud-coloured huts outside the town.

Shortly before my departure I abandoned my afternoon walks, as, having decided to go, it was not worth while running the risk of being knocked on the head during the last few days.

The old lady, Doña Sacramento, who owned the chemist's shop, shook her head gravely when she heard of my adventures, and said, "*Los indios son malos*" (the Indians are bad); and, as my spirits went up at the prospect of going to a more hospitable place, it amused her to hear me sing to the tune of the "Carnival of Venice,"

*"Los Indios de Huamantla no me matarán"*  
(The Indians of Huamantla will not kill me).



## CHAPTER VIII.

## IN ALTOTONGA.

**A**LTOTONGA is situated in the extreme west of the State of Veracruz and towards the beginning of a considerable extent of broken country which separates the high tableland from the *tierra caliente*.

From the intractable nature of the ground there is no railway in the vicinity, and the station of Perote is some twenty miles distant from the town.

On arriving at Perote by the Interoceanic Railway I was rather at a loss to know how I should bring my belongings to Altotonga.

I managed to get a lodging for the night, close to the railway station, and began to make inquiries about the hire of beasts of burden and carts.

The owner of the house offered to provide me with a cart for five dollars, and, as I could not make a better bargain in the little town of Perote, which is nearly a mile distant from the station, I accepted the offer, and started early next morning for Altotonga.

A rough cart, drawn by a miserable pony and a mule, is not a very comfortable way of travelling, and I was much annoyed to find that the driver stopped, presumably by arrangement, to take up a *peón* when we were only some half a mile on the road, and I had to make room for a passenger who, I suppose, was a friend of the driver and paid little or nothing for accommodation which I had hired for myself.

The first few miles were on good travelling ground over the dry plains of Perote, where there are no trees nearer than the neighbouring mountains. The country here is quite level, for the descent from the tableland has not yet begun. After some five miles we reached the little village of Magueyitos, which afterwards became well known to me from being the home of a well-off family who were patients of mine.

The village looked bare enough at the edge of the plain, but shortly after passing it the road entered a large pine-forest, which extended for about three miles. For the climate here is fresh even in summer, and the winter nights are cold and frosty.

Towards the further end of the forest the descent began, slightly at first, but after a few miles the road became very broken, for, besides the increasing declivity, the rainfall becomes much greater as one leaves the tableland, and the road was cut up with those huge ruts which are but too familiar to those who have lived in countries where waggons pass over uncared-for tracks.

But the scenery was wild and picturesque. Here and there were clumps of pine trees not far from the road, and the few huts within sight were all made of wood in this well-timbered region, where the rugged nature of the ground offered more inducement for peasant proprietors than for large *haciendas*.



Almost wherever it was possible the owners of these dwellings had put the adjoining land under cultivation, but the heather which grew in places and the stunted appearance of the stems of the Indian corn attested to the poorness of the soil.

Further on, the road became so steep and broken that we were sometimes obliged to get out and walk, for the animals appeared to be only just able to hold up the nearly empty cart behind them, and the unequal nature of the ground would hardly allow footing for two abreast.

I could now see the church of Altotonga below me in the distance, and, remembering my distant view of Mazapil, hoped that better fortune would attend me here.

Between one and two miles from the town came the last violent descent, and afterwards the road improved, although still bad.

Here there were but few trees, and all the available ground was under cultivation, for the glory of Altotonga is its water supply, and the many small mountain streams are utilized for a very complete system of irrigation.

It was in the month of July, and the maize, which in the dry country does not often rear its stem four feet from the ground, here towers above a man's head, and frequently reaches the height of more than ten feet.

The country in this neighbourhood looks at its best between July and October, for after the harvest towards the end of the latter month the empty fields which have been denuded of the long-stalked corn look very bare, and the scenery would be ruined only for the trees in such places as broken gullies and mountain tops, where they have been left because the ground cannot be used for agriculture.

Altotonga itself presented that bare appearance which seems inseparable from Mexican country towns, probably because it is customary for the whitewashed walls of the houses to abut upon the streets, and this necessarily prevents the planting of shrubs, or making any arrangement to vary the monotony.

The streets were hilly and paved with stones in places, instead of being flat and dusty, as on the tableland, and in most of them there was a central gutter, so that the good supply of water could be used for flushing them out.

I was brought to the only place that boasted of the name of hotel, although there was a large *fonda* that would have done equally well.

M. Lassus had given me two letters of introduction. One of these was to Don Manuel Gonzalez, who owned one of the principal stores in the town.

I lost no time in finding him out, for I did not want to start practice in the hotel, and wished to unpack my things in a lodging where I was likely to remain.

Don Manuel was very civil and showed me a house of his own which he offered at a cheap rental. Unfortunately, it did not suit, being in fact a small shop with a counter in the front room, and from my previous experience in Calpulalpam I knew that there might be great difficulty in obtaining a decent private residence in these country towns, where the few good houses are all occupied, and the greater number of the tenements that are not inhabited are inferior places in bad repair.



After making inquiries for two or three days without success, someone told me that Don Juan García had two empty rooms at one side of his house, and that he might be disposed to let them. I went without delay to the house, which was well situated in a main street, but slightly out of the centre of the town, and had what may be described as a conference with Don Juan on the subject. For he was a well-off person, and not inclined to let except to a suitable tenant.

While the conference was going on, it was typical of Mexican customs to see the heads of the younger females of the family peeping from a distance at the foreigner who so rarely found his way to this retired spot.

The interview ended as I desired. I obtained the two rooms with a little rough furniture for four dollars a month, and I now began to unpack my things and to settle down in my new abode.

My second letter of introduction was to no less a person than the *jefe político*. This magnate did not live in Altotonga, but in the neighbouring town of Jalacingo, some five miles distant. Not that Jalacingo was a larger or more important town, but it contained a *palacio municipal*, while that of Altotonga was still in a rudimentary state and might not be finished for years.

By good luck the *jefe político* happened just then to be in the town, so I presented my letter, and was well received.

This relieved my mind considerably, for the permission I had received in Tlaxcala only held good for that State, and I knew that by right I ought now to obtain another from the governor of the State of Veracruz.

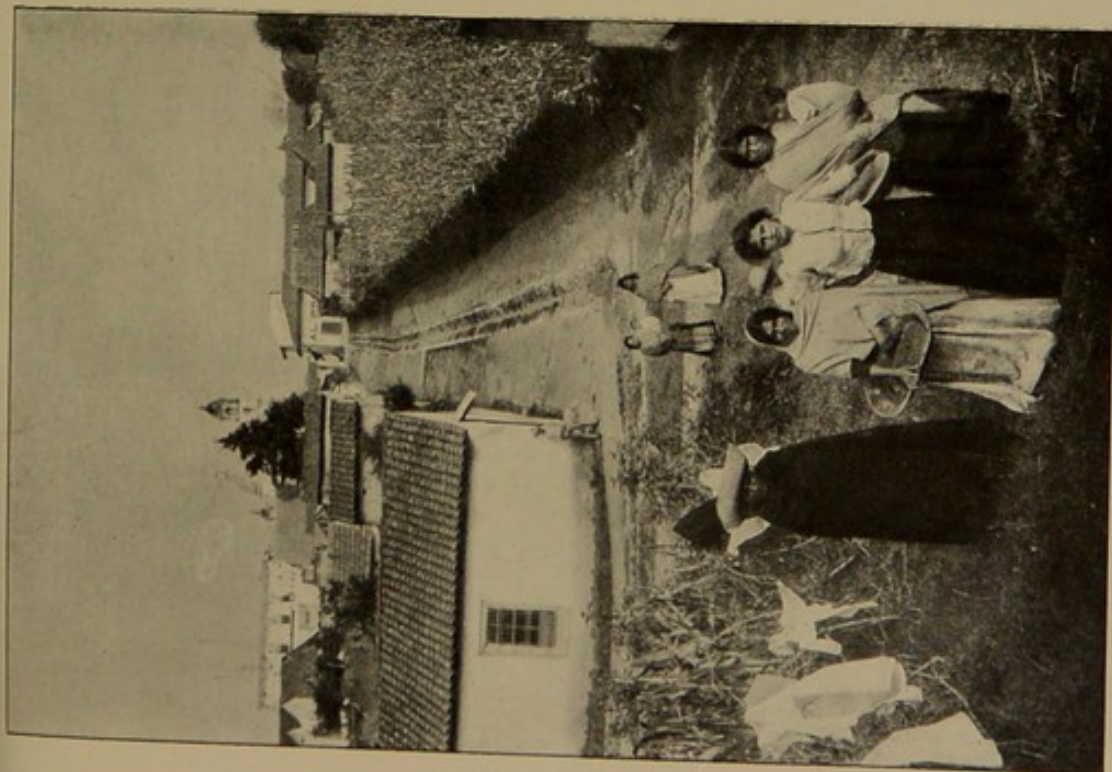
This would have entailed another long journey or a lot of letter writing, and, as I was now in a retired spot and had an introduction to the representative of the governor, I rightly considered that I should have no further trouble on this account.

Only about two days afterwards I was called to see a patient in the little town of Atzalan, which is about two miles distant on the downward slope, and might be about half the size of Altotonga, and by degrees I fell into a fair amount of work. For it was quite true what M. Lassus had told me about the unpopularity of the man already established in medical practice. Some stated that he was not duly qualified, but I fancy the chief reason he was not patronized was because his charges were so high. And when he left soon after my arrival I had no regular medical opposition, although in almost all parts of Mexico there are chemists, amateurs (*aficionados*) and quacks (*curanderos*) who take away much practice from the doctor.

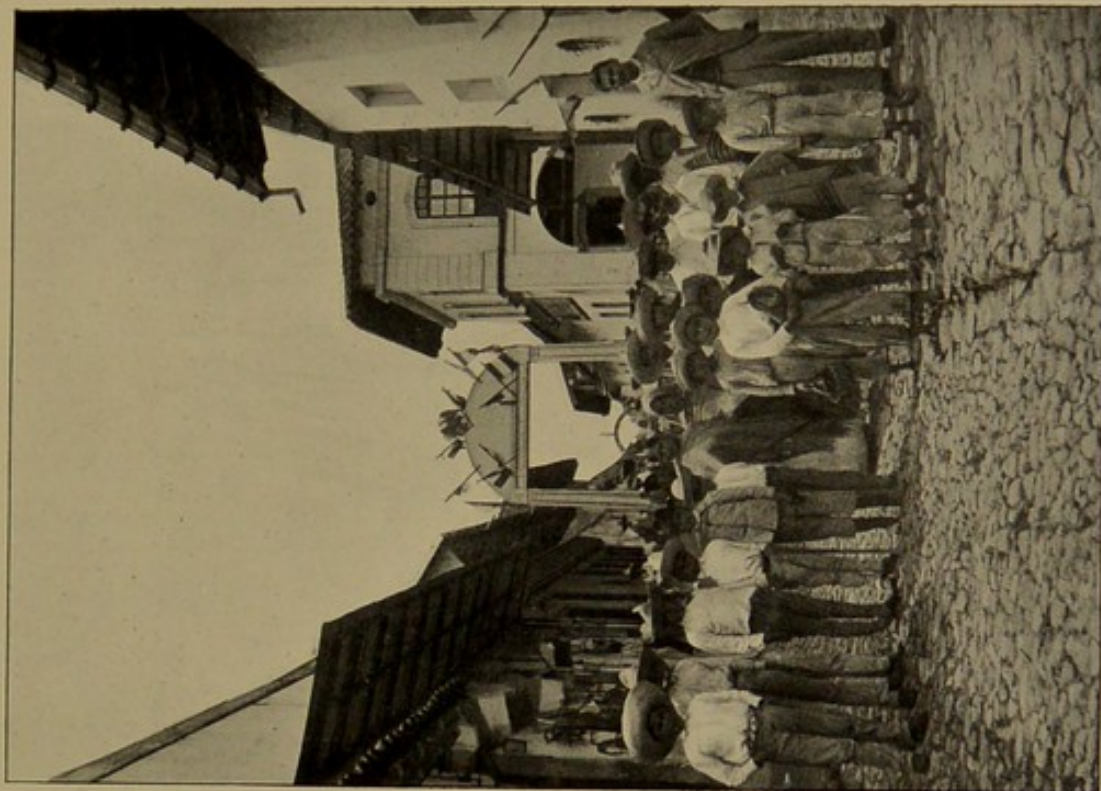
There were many reasons why the small town of Altotonga, for it only contained about three thousand inhabitants, should afford a better opening than more pretentious places. It was so far from the nearest railway station that strangers rarely came there. The roads were so bad that it was necessary that the doctor should be a good horseman. For bad as was the road between Perote and Altotonga it was still possible to drive over it, and bullock teams frequently went between these places.

But at Altotonga all wheeled traffic ceased, and the longer and more precipitous descent between it and the *tierra caliente* had to be made on horseback.





Suburbs of Altotonga—(p. 84).

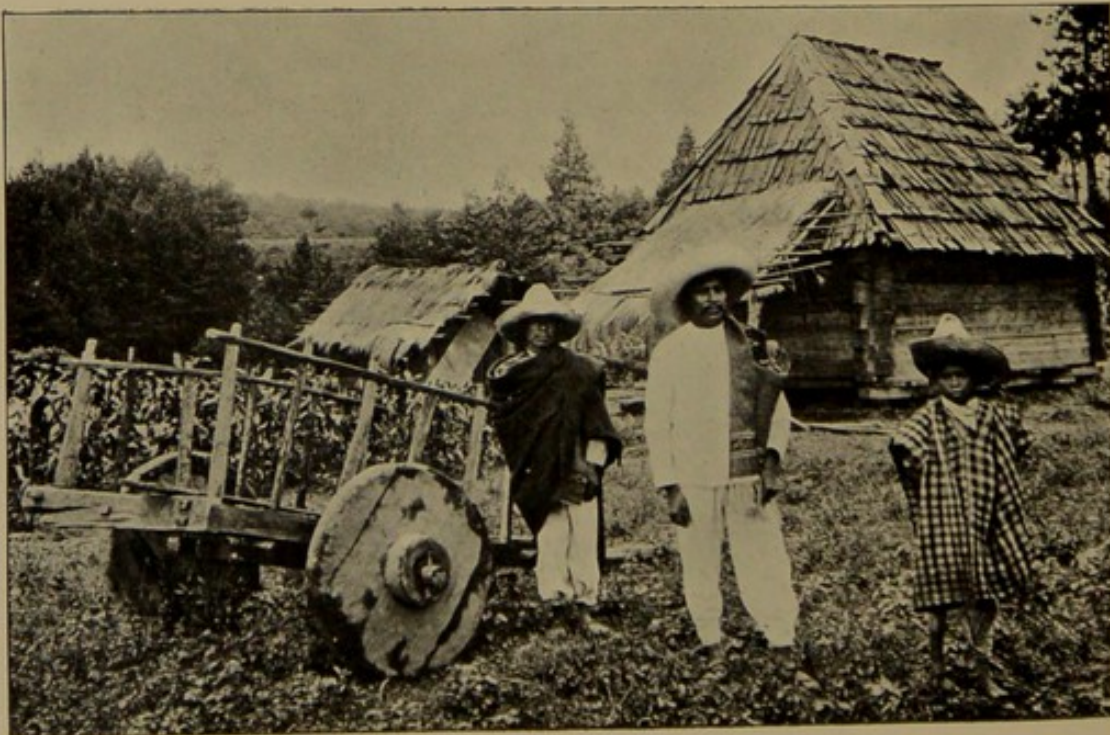


Main Street of Altotonga on Independence Day—(p. 89).





Courtyard and House of Don Juan García—(p. 85).



View near Ahueyahualco, two miles from Altotonga—(p. 86).



The position of the town also gave it some commercial importance, for it had become a kind of emporium of the products of the hot country below, and much rum and tobacco came up the side of the mountain on pack-saddles.

Probably, however, the humidity of the climate was the chief reason why the locality was not overrun with doctors as in other parts.

For the clouds, heavily laden with water from the ocean, gave up part of their moisture on meeting this range, which was the first they encountered on the way from the sea-coast, and there were nearly nine rainy months in the year, the only fairly dry ones being March, April, May, and perhaps the first half of June.

This made the climate somewhat depressing, even for those whose occupations could be carried on under shelter, but was a more serious drawback for the doctor, who might be called upon to travel more than twenty miles on a wet night over rough mountain tracks. The signs of a heavy rainfall were evident even in the dry weather, for the stone walls in the vicinity of the town were overgrown with moss, and contained, like the banks of steep cuttings and other suitable places, a very good assortment of ferns. And even on the lower part of the whitewashed walls of my rooms a green tint was generally visible.

But although my lodging was rough and poorly furnished I could not have done better under the circumstances.

There was absolutely no neat little house to be rented, and I was lucky in getting two rooms so far removed from the rest that they had almost the privacy of a separate building.

For the long, whitewashed front wall that skirted the narrow pavement of the street had an entrance somewhat after the manner of a *mesón*. The same kind of heavy door opened in the middle, and swung back on either side against the walls of a short passage.

This passage had no door or window on its right, and opened out into the courtyard behind, only, instead of the sheds that surround the yard of a *mesón* there was on the right a verandah, into which the principal rooms of the house opened.

But on the left side of the passage was the door of my front room, which had a window facing the street.

My front room opened into the room behind, and this latter opened into the yard, so that these two rooms were isolated from the rest of the house with the central passage between them.

The photograph of the courtyard and verandah will give a fair idea of the back view of a better class Mexican country-town house. And the back view of these places is practically the only one, for the frontage to the street is merely a whitewashed wall with two or three windows and a ponderous door.

Almost the first night after my arrival I nearly had an accident, for I did not know that bloodhounds were let loose at night, and, happening to enter the courtyard from my back room, three or four of these creatures came up and began to bay at me before they attacked. I had just time to regain my room and slam the door when they rushed to it and remained for some time outside, giving tongue fiercely.



The next day I complained to Don Juan about this danger, which he did not appreciate, for he said, "Give them the stick."

But I was rather incredulous about my ability to defend myself with a stick against bloodhounds, and as the rest of the family seemed to think that my idea was correct, the hounds were afterwards shut up in an inner yard, behind the one into which the house opened, and they troubled me no more.

Don Juan and his wife Doña Adelina are no longer alive, and are regretted as lost friends by the stranger whom chance brought to their door. Don Juan gave his age as over eighty, and some said he was ninety, but he could walk fairly well at this period and was able to enjoy life in a quiet way.

He had been a soldier in his youth, and it made one feel quite aged to talk with a man who had served under the notorious President Santa-Anna. His son, Don Pepe, lived in a *hacienda* at the foot of the range, about fifteen miles away, at the commencement of the *tierra caliente*, and it was quaint to hear the father describe him as "a boy who was nearly sixty years of age."

Doña Adelina was his second wife, and their only daughter Lucrecia was little over twenty years of age, so that Don Juan's son was from thirty-five to forty years older than his daughter, and one of Don Pepe's daughters, who lived with her grandfather, was considerably older than her father's sister Lucrecia.

I had to walk to the centre of the town three times in the day to get my meals at a little *fonda* kept by Gumersinda Fernandez, for, of course, the well-off family in whose house I lodged did not supply me with food.

This was very inconvenient in wet weather and at night, for Mexican country towns make a very imperfect attempt at lighting the streets, and one dark night as I was going down one of the steepest places on my way to the *fonda* I tripped over something. To save myself from falling I jumped over the obstacle, which, after landing on the other side, I found to be a drunken man stretched across the pavement.

For although *pulque* could only be occasionally obtained there was a constant supply of cheap rum from the *tierra caliente*. A wine-glassful of strong spirit could be bought for one cent, and it was not unusual to see an Indian *peón* stretched seemingly dead by the wayside a short distance from the town. But they generally timed the effects of their drink so as not to fall down in the town itself or in the centre of the road, and a woman may often be seen sitting down beside the recumbent form of a man, waiting patiently until he should be in a fit state to continue the journey homeward.

One day I was returning on horseback from seeing a patient at Ahueyahualco, about three miles above the town on the Perote road. A blinding mist was coming on when I saw a man stretched in the middle of the road. I shouted out to a woman and a boy who were in sight, asking them what was the matter, but the woman only answered, "Go on your way." Thinking, however, that no one would lie in the middle of the road when it was raining, unless some serious accident had happened, I got off my horse and inspected the *peón*, whose good pulse, and regular, if heavy breathing, seemed to point to an excess of rum.



As it was in the month of July when I arrived, the short fine weather had already passed, and it was rather a gloomy look-out to think that there would be some three months of rain before the winter came on, when in addition to the wet there would be cold as well.

The mornings often began with fine weather, but the heavy mountain mist soon closed in, and was not likely to lift for the rest of the day.

This influenced the habits of the people to a great extent, and made the early morning the principal time for doing any out-of-door work.

It was wonderful to see how the Indian corn ripened in the wet weather. In these months the stem and husk turned yellow, although there were sometimes about two weeks of almost continuous mist.

One would have thought that irrigation was not beneficial in so wet a climate, but the treatment of the maize here proved the reverse, for the fields were occasionally flooded by means of small trenches connected with the numerous streams, with the result that few places produced corn like Altotonga.

This raised the value of good agricultural land in the vicinity of the town to an almost incredible extent, and in spite of the prices given, which were considerably higher than land for similar purposes would fetch in England, the profits on such properties were enormous, amounting, as I was informed by a reliable man, to some twenty or twenty-five per cent.

About a month after my arrival, the anniversary of a great religious festival took place at the neighbouring town of Jalacingo.

Don Juan García kindly lent me one of his horses, and I regret that I did not carry my camera with me, but was deterred by being told that robberies were often committed, and after my previous experiences I had become more cautious.

People of all kinds had assembled, and some of the Indian women could be recognized as having come from considerable distances, by wearing a peculiar garment called a *huipil*, which will be afterwards described, and which is not worn in this neighbourhood.

Leaving my horse in the yard of a *mesón*, I strolled about the *plaza* which was the centre of the animation, in company with an acquaintance from Altotonga.

The *plaza* was full of booths for refreshments, and stalls for selling small articles, for the function had the appearance of a fair rather than that of a saint's day.

I soon lost all interest in the proceedings of the ordinary people, for by this time I was getting accustomed to Mexican ways, and became absorbed in watching several *cuadrillas* or companies of Indians, who were weirdly dancing in open spaces in the *plaza*, with crowds of people around them. Of course it was safe enough here, for most of the town people were either white or had at least sufficient blood and training to make them behave as such, and, to do the Indians justice, they only seemed bent on enjoying themselves and dancing, in fulfilment of a vow which they are said to take on such occasions.

Each company consisted of about twelve to fifteen men dressed in extraordinary costumes. The greater part of them wore head-dresses



composed of feathers and small looking-glasses. Two of the performers were dressed in the old clothes of better-class people, and wore long coats and round black hats. These two men were called the *huehues*, which means old ones, and is pronounced "wayways." They combine the functions of comedians and protectors of the dancers from encroachment on their dancing space by the spectators. For they wear hideous masks, and are armed with offensive weapons, such as dead rats, with which they belabour those who push too far forward.

But the strangest impersonation among the dancers was the one dressed as a woman. A young and good-looking man is chosen for this, and the imitation was so good that I could scarcely believe my companion when he told me that what appeared to be one of the best types of Indian women I had seen was in reality a man. For the dress was tasteful: two long plaits of hair, one on either side, descended behind the head, in the manner adopted by Indian women all over Mexico, the tall palm-leaf hat was of the kind that country women often use to protect themselves against the sun, and the demure demeanour and graceful attitude were appropriate to the part played.

The dancing was of the step-dance or jig kind, and was not of a very tiring nature, for it was kept up for hours. The ceremony probably refers to the conquest of Mexico, for the man dressed as a woman is generally called the *malinche*, which was the name the Aztecs gave to Marina, the Indian woman who accompanied Hernán Cortés. This performance is sometimes called dance of *malinche*, or dance of *huehues*, and some of the dancers are known by the more Spanish sounding term of *tocatines*.

When we became tired of watching the dancers, we entered the church which fronts upon the *plaza*, to look at the pictures of the miracles which had been performed in connection with this festival.

On inspecting these paintings, it was impossible not to think that the Archbishop of Mexico was quite right when he forbade the Passion plays to be enacted. For if anything beyond the ordinary range of nature is portrayed, it must be treated with consummate skill, else it becomes grotesque.

Many of these pictures were drawn quite out of proportion, but, out of the whole lot, only two remain vividly impressed on my mind.

One is that of a horseman crossing a swiftly flowing river, with a large waterfall just below him.

Under ordinary circumstances he would have been swept over it, but owing to a miracle the horse is swimming breast high on the edge of the cataract, and is rapidly gaining the shore.

The other is that of a hunter who is having an encounter with a *tigre*, as the panthers are called in Mexico.

He has fired several shots without killing the animal, which has chewed the hunter's hand, so that it hangs down in a helpless state, dripping with blood.

But by another miracle the *tigre* ceases to attack, and stands quietly while the hunter draws his *machete* with the unwounded hand, and kills the beast.

Towards the middle of the day the rain fell so heavily that we went into one of the booths for shelter and refreshment.



It cleared later in the afternoon, when I returned to see the Indians dance, and I never got another opportunity of taking their likenesses. For although I went to the same festival on the following year, the Indians had stopped dancing, owing to the incessant rain, and the only new thing to see was a bull-fight.

Bull-fights, in these small Mexican towns, have certain innovations introduced that would not be tolerated in Spain, or even probably in the large centres of Spanish-America.

On these occasions it is the exception and not the rule to kill the bull, and after the ordinary work on horseback and on foot had been finished, a few very fat-looking men came into the bull-ring, and one of them boldly advanced towards the bull and challenged him, without having any cloak or other defence.

The bull charged, and sent the unfortunate man flying yards across the arena.

As, however, the man got up, seemingly unhurt, I naturally expressed my surprise that any one could endure such a shock, when my companion smilingly explained that the man was one of the *empajados*, or stuffed with straw, his fat appearance being due to the amount of straw under his clothes.

But notwithstanding this protection, the man seemed to fear another encounter, for, although he shook his fist at the bull, he always retreated under shelter whenever the animal came near.

The last stage of the proceedings was that of riding the bull. The animal was lassoed and thrown, when a young *charro* mounted him, and, on loosening the ropes, the animal got up.

But the poor brute could show no sport in trying to dismount his rider, for he had been so roughly handled in the roping that one of his legs was broken, and he had to be killed immediately.

As it had rained before and during part of this function, the arena at the end was a sea of mud, which would astonish a Spaniard, in whose country bull-fighting only takes place in the dry weather.

In this district it seems a pity that the principal festivals could not be held in the three and a half dry months of the year, for after the middle of June the chances are that the afternoon will be rainy. But, as the *peóns* do not wear boots, they will readily walk into mud that would deter other people.

When I had hardly been two months in Altotonga, Independence Day, which I had previously witnessed in the Capital, now came round again on the sixteenth of September, and as Mexicans have intense national feeling, considerable preparations were made, even in a remote town like this, to do honour to the day.

Arches of triumph were made in the narrow stony streets, a cavalcade of horsemen paraded the main places, and finally took up their stand in the *plaza*, where patriotic speeches were made under the auspices of the *alcalde*, as chief magistrate of the town.

It was noticeable how national feeling was fomented among the children, several of whom recited incidents connected with the independence of Mexico to the assembled people.

In the evening Don Juan García asked me if I would like to go with him and his family to the theatre, where a national demonstration was going to take place.



I willingly accepted the kind offer, for on such occasions there is no charge for admission, and, as the place becomes crowded with people, it would be hard for a stranger to get a good seat.

But Don Juan was a person of some importance, and thanks to him I had a chair and a good view of the proceedings.

The theatre was appropriately draped with the national colours of green, white and red.

On the stage were the *alcalde* and a few of the leading townsmen, one of whom was always on guard over the national banner.

Patriotic speeches and recitations were made, and one of the most interesting incidents was a performance acted by the elder school children, in commemoration of the period when this formerly Spanish colony threw off its allegiance to the mother country. One of the elder girls represented Mexico, and, with chains on her arms, appealed to a youth who personified Hidalgo, the first who raised the standard of revolt against Spain. Other lads represented prominent characters in this national epoch, and the acting was good, for the children had learnt their parts well, and the Mexican character is impressible, lending itself to those gestures and intonations so necessary for effective acting.

At the end of the performance, the *alcalde* came forward on the stage, and the audience stood up while he impressively read the original Declaration of Independence when Mexico became a world power.

As the winter drew on, the combination of cold and wet became very disagreeable. Not that the cold was intense, for ice is seldom seen in Altotonga, and even then only in the early morning, although there is plenty of it in Perote, on the edge of the tableland above.

But there was no artificial protection against the cold in the shape of fireplaces or stoves, and my large room looked very dismal in its half-furnished state, with its floors of ill-fitting wooden slabs and the walls tinged with the green of dampness.

A broken pane of glass admitted a certain amount of the damp atmosphere. Perhaps this was rather an advantage than otherwise, for Doña Adelina, knowing how cold and cheerless it must be for me, used to get the servant to place a charcoal brazier in my room every evening during the winter months, and the hole in the window afforded an excellent escape for the noxious carbonic fumes. And many a time, when the continual downpour deterred me from going to the *fonda* in the afternoon for my customary cup of coffee, she would kindly send to know whether I would like some, and I often drank it at their kitchen fire.

In the country towns the homely habits of the people make it quite consistent that even better class families should frequent the kitchen, where they often assist the servant to do the work, and, apart from this, the kitchen is rather in request in the winter, as being the only room in the house which contains a fire.

By this time I was getting well known in the town, and had patients of all classes, from the *peóns* to the principal people of the place. My charges were the same as before, fifty cents in my room, and one dollar for a visit in the daytime. For a night visit the charge was three dollars. But Mexican patients are very wily in their schemes for reducing the doctor's profit.



# ¡ Viva La INDEPENDENCIA !

GLORIA al INMORTAL HIDALGO.

La R. Junta Patriótica encargada de solemnizar el memorable día en que nuestra patria rompió el yugo que lo sujetaba á la Iberia, ha dispuesto el siguiente

## PROGRAMA :

DIA 15.

A las 8 y 30 p. m. tendrá verificativo en el Teatro una velada "Literario—Musical" bajo el orden siguiente :

- 1º. "Campanone" obertura por la orquesta.
- 2º. Discurso oficial por el Cº. Ismael Landa.
- 3º. Potpourrit de la Zarzuela "Anillo de Hierro."
- 4º. ¿ "Te acordarás de mi ? " Melopeya por la Srta. prof. María Sánchez.
- 5º. "Fiesta de artistas" Vals.
- 6º. "Himno á Hidalgo" cantado por los niños de ambas escuelas.
- 7º. "Dora" Polka.
- 8º. "Salud á Hidalgo", recitación par la niña Angela Carballo; "A la Libertad," recitación por el niño Leonsio Carballo y "Cuadro alegórico" por un grupo de niñas.
- 9º. "Aguila" Marcha.
- 10º. "Libertad," Poesía por la niña Candia Ruiz, "Hidalgo" recitación por el niño Raul Aburto.
- 11º. Himno Guerrero.
- 12º. Monólogo "Las dos Muñecas" por la niña Ernestina Guzmán; "Noche gloriosa," por la niña Agustina Avila.
- 13º. "Después de la lluvia" Vals.
- 14º. "Al ir á la Escuela", por la niña Amelia Herrera.
- 15º. "El grito de Dolores" Diálogo representado conforme al siguiente reparto.

Patria	-	-	-	niña Elvira González.
Libertad	-	-	-	„ Eloésa Mendoza.
Independencia	-	-	-	„ Eloésa Castaños.
Hidalgo	-	-	-	jóven Nicanor Carvallo.
Aldama	-	-	-	„ Arnulfo H. Garcia.
Allende	-	-	-	„ Adalberto Moguel.
Abasolo	-	-	-	„ Adolfo Castaños.
México	-	-	-	„ Manuel González.







Once I was awakened between four and five in the morning by a man who shouted outside my window, "It is already day," although as yet no dawn was visible. But morning broke before arrival at the patient's house, where they seemed to think it a matter of course that the doctor should be contented with a dollar for a day visit.

At the commencement of my practice I had great trouble with spurious coinage. There are either an unusually large number of bad dollars in Mexico, or else the coiners consider that remote country towns offer most inducement, for out of the first hundred dollars I received about five were positively bad and remained a dead loss, while two or three others were so doubtful that I considered myself fortunate in being able to dispose of them.

Of course this five per cent. of bad money was far more than an average of such coinage, for the foreign doctor was looked upon as a good mark to receive what would not be taken by others.

By degrees, however, I was skilful in protecting myself.

If a patient, who was not already favourably known, came to consult me in my room, where the fee was only fifty cents, and tendered a dollar for change, I never had the change on me, and had to go to the kitchen of Doña Adelina. Here a second consultation took place, in which the family often assisted.

If the dollar rang well on the raised bricks of the cooking-place it was pronounced good.

But if it fell with a dead sound, which is known here as "deaf" (*sordo*), the patient had to be told that there was no change, or, if necessary, that the dollar did not appear good.

In the case of visits to the patients' houses the difficulty was greater, for when the doctor is given one or more dollars at the door there is no facility for testing them privately. Under such circumstances I always put the money apart, and tested it on the first opportunity.

There were also some of those indefinitely deferred payments so much dreaded by a medical man, as they generally mean a loss.

And some of the poorer people asked for charity, which was hard to refuse, for, as in the other country towns, there was absolutely no Government aid for pauper patients.

But with all these drawbacks the town was splendid compared with the other places where I had been, and it was a bad week's work that did not produce at least ten dollars, while occasionally more than double that amount might be made if it were necessary to visit a patient at a distance.

And on these occasions Don Juan García placed a horse at my disposal for the journey.

About this period I came across a well-marked case of that illness called Addison's disease, which, from its rarity, I may be excused for mentioning.

On visiting a house in the outskirts of the town, I found the patient to be a woman as dark as a mulatto, which was most unusual in these cool parts, where there is no negro blood, and where the Indians are comparatively light-coloured.

The poor creature was very weak and wasted, and appeared to be over fifty years of age, but when I proposed to examine her she made a little gesture of protest, such as is much more common in young



women than in those of more advanced years, and this made me ask her age, which was given as about twenty-five years. It was a typical case in its last stage, including even spinal disease, and she only lived two weeks longer.

The gradual darkening of the skin, which is a prominent physical sign, had attracted much attention, and a message was sent from the municipal office of Altotonga, asking me to write down the name of the disease for their information.

It was hard to know what to write, as the English name would convey no meaning to them, and I did not know how it was called by the Mexican faculty, which generally follows the French school.

But I saw in my medical book that the pseudonym of this disease is given as "*melasma suprarenale*," and so gave this as the name, hoping that so classical a term would duly impress the tribunal.

It was rather pathetic to hear that this was a white woman who had got into disgrace with her family for marrying an Indian, who, at the time of her death, was many shades lighter than she was.

Professional work often threw me into contact with the chemist, Don Desiderio Alvarez, whose shop was at first situated just outside the plaza, into which he afterwards moved.

There had been another chemist in the town on my arrival, but he died soon afterwards, and, as there was no one to carry on the business, Don Desiderio had the monopoly of drug selling.

This would conduce to money making anywhere, but especially in Mexico, where the lower-classes keep clear of the doctor as long as possible, but drug themselves with "remedies" from the very commencement of an illness.

A countrywoman in the shop of Don Desiderio was one day buying a quantity of "remedies" for her sick husband, so many cents' worth of this, and so much of that, for they patronize quantity rather than quality, and are devoted to cheap cures.

When her arms were full of these purchases, she said with a smile, "Let us see if he dies with all these remedies," and die he did.

There was a very good assortment of drugs at this place, so much so that I always sent the prescriptions to Don Desiderio, instead of making up the medicines myself, for his supply was so much better than my own that it would not be doing justice to the patients to prescribe out of a limited assortment when there was a much larger one in the town.

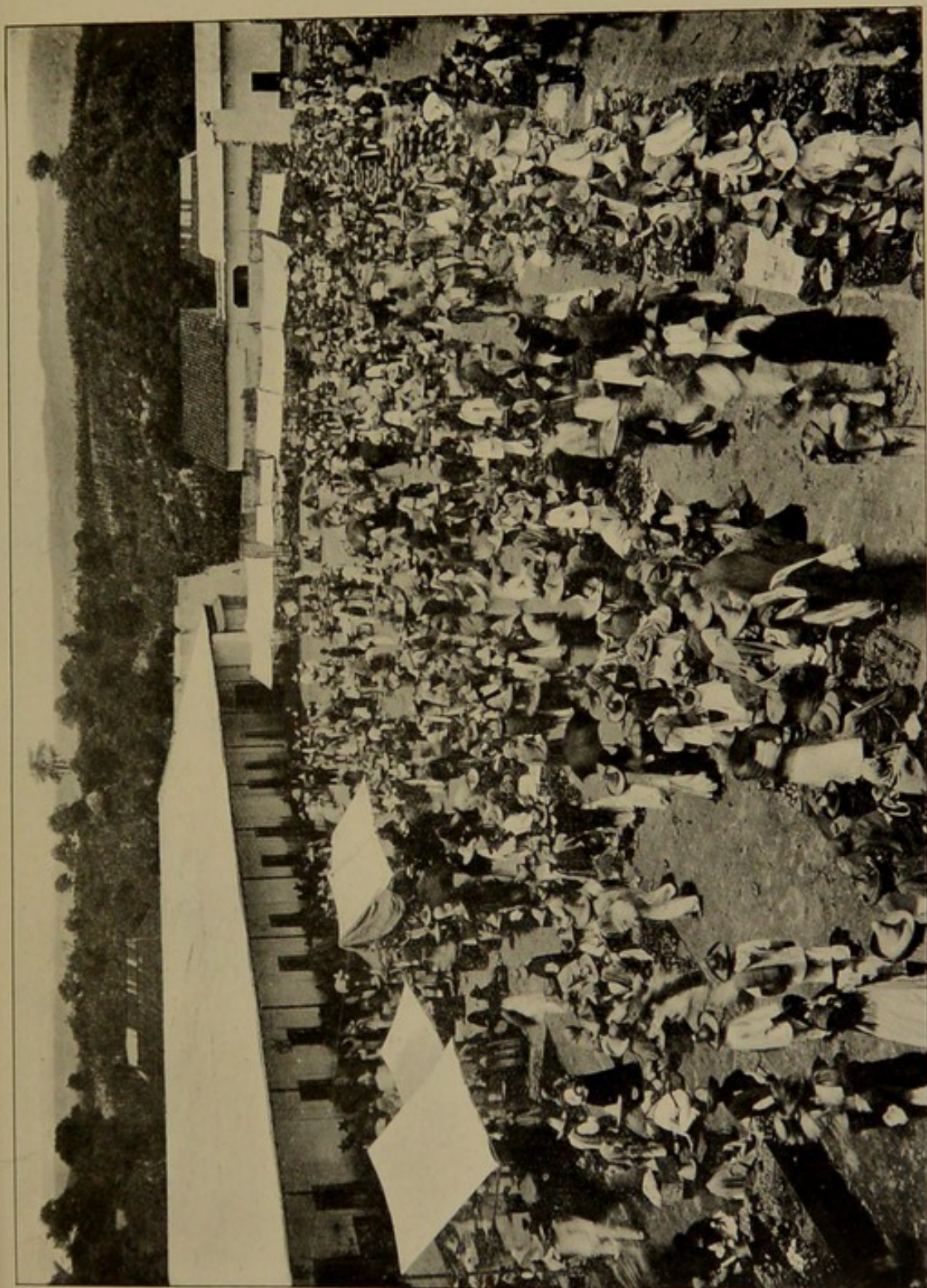
But my small supply was useful for emergencies, and at night time.

Don Desiderio was a very reliable man, "formal" in the true Spanish sense of the word, and by degrees a mutual appreciation, which ripened into friendship, sprang up between us.

Market day is a stirring time in all country-towns, and perhaps rather more so in Altotonga than in most other places. Every town has its own particular day of the week for this event. In Huamantla it fell on Wednesdays, in Altotonga it fell on Sundays.

It was hard on the unfortunate shop assistants, whose heaviest day's work was on these occasions, when the country people trooped into the town to sell their wares, and, after remaining in the open market-place until time or rain dislodged them, entered the shops





Bird's-eye View of Altotonga Market—(p. 94).





On the way to Market—(p. 93).



In the Market—(p. 93)



to buy their week's supplies, and to drink social glasses of rum, which nearly all the largest shops supplied, together with other merchandize.

This Sunday work was most aggravating for the doctor as well. For perhaps I might have just entered the market-place on a fine morning to enjoy the animation, when a person from the country, or from the neighbouring town of Atzalan, would come up and say, "Doctor, I've been looking for you everywhere, I want to consult you," and I was then obliged to return to my room to examine the patient.

Most of these cases were poorly paid, for the greater part of such patients were of the *peón* class, and would nurse up their complaints until Sunday, when it suited them to come to town and combine their market business and a visit to the doctor at the same time.

After putting on one's Sunday clothes, it was very provoking to be called upon to do dirty work, such as lancing an abscess or cleaning a neglected sore, when it was evident that the patient ought to have presented himself some time previously.

To such an extent did this procrastination extend, that one Sunday when I was at the chemist's shop two women called to see me, one of whom lived on a hill only just outside the town, and had brought me her sick baby.

There was no time to examine the little patient, who was gasping for breath, evidently in the last stage of lung trouble.

I asked Don Desiderio for half a teaspoonful of alcohol, which we mixed with water and gave to the baby. It breathed a little more freely for a few minutes, but shortly afterwards expired, and the shame-stricken mother hurried out of the shop, covering the dead infant with her *rebozo*, under the reproachful glances of her companion, Don Desiderio remarking gravely, "Señora, pneumonia is not a thing to play with."

It was probably the old story of neglected bronchitis: whilst suffering from this complaint babies are but too often carried about on their mothers' backs in the bleak mountain mist.

The leading people of Altotonga consulted the interests of their pockets rather than those of humanity when they arranged that the market should take place on Sundays.

If the market had been held on a weekday, nearly all the money would have changed hands on purely business lines, without much leakage.

When, however, the bartering takes place on a Sunday, or on any day usually held as a holiday, a new element is introduced, that of the pleasure seekers and lookers on, tourists in fact on a small scale, who, without doing any direct business, may nevertheless contribute considerably to the profits made on such occasions.

Whilst walking through the market-place, even if it were merely to enjoy the animation, one had many small temptations to spend money. There were sweetmeats, very good of their kind, at one cent apiece. The fruit was not so good, and much of it came from a distance, for the climate of Altotonga was so rainy that the peaches grown there were rather like the fruit of that kind mentioned by Dr. Johnson as producing vinegar.



In the way of drinks there was one composed of sugar and water and flavoured with fruit, that went by the name of *tapache*, which word, I was told, was easy to recollect because it was so like the name of the wild Indians (Apaches).

For those who liked something stronger, there was frequently a stand in the market where the luxury of *pulque* could be obtained, and in any case there was always plenty of rum to fall back upon that was fresh and fiery from the *tierra caliente*.

And in this damp climate a considerable amount of alcohol could be taken without the drinkers appearing to suffer much from its effects.

The country people begin to arrive quite early, some with their animals packed, and sometimes an Indian might be seen bending under a load of pottery. Numerous women with beans and other garden produce sit down in rows on the bare ground of the market-place, while the townspeople on their part arrange stalls for the sale of food, drink, and cheap, showy articles to induce the country-people to spend their money.

As the morning advances many of the housekeepers and servants of the town families appear on the scene, to buy vegetables and similar supplies, as they can be obtained cheaper here, direct from the producer, than in the shops.

People walk and ride from the little town of Atzalan and from the neighbouring hills to enjoy the animation and meet their friends, without any particular idea of buying anything.

The *señor cura* occasionally puts in an appearance, in which case the sacerdotal smile imparts an appropriate atmosphere to the day's proceedings.

In fine weather all classes are represented.

The greater part of the country people are naturally *peóns*, and many of them Indians; but *charros*, and occasionally a *catrín*, ride into town, and leave their horses or mules in the yard of a *mesón* before they stroll into the market-place.

Most of the vendors of country produce are women, and these frequently bring their children and babies with them.

The townsmen do not as a rule make many purchases of supplies, as they generally leave all such work to their women-folk, but they walk about and enjoy the proceedings.

Occasionally that class of show popularly known in England as a merry-go-round, and called here by the extraordinary name of a "tívoli," takes its stand in one corner of the market, and affords intense pleasure to women, children, and a good many men as well.

Many of the people who patronize this amusement are more or less Indians, and it was curious to watch the grave yet satisfied expression on their faces as they went round and round, without any exclamation of pleasure, the women sitting back in the seats with their *rebozos* wrapped demurely round their heads, and the men with their huge palm-leaf hats slouched over their faces, and their legs bent under the little wooden horses which seemed almost too small to hold them.

One servant-girl was so fond of this amusement that she was popularly said to keep on going round, although her unfortunate charge, the baby, who perforce accompanied her, was made sick by the circular motion.



On the first day of the year 1800





On the way from Market—(p. 95)



Plaza of Altotonga.



As the afternoon advances the people begin to forsake the market-place and enter the shops, where they make their purchases and have some social drinks.

In fine weather it was a strange sight to see a row of men and women sitting Indian fashion on the pavement with their backs against the wall of the store, while some of their number brought them refreshment from within.

Those who have pack-animals now return to the yard where they have been left, before the homeward journey begins. But when in the outskirts of the town, one or more parties will often halt to enjoy a last glass at some little roadside shop where spirits, among other things, are sold.

The photograph, "On the way from market," represents one of these scenes. It was taken at about four in the afternoon, opposite one of the last shops, before the country was reached. A very Indian-looking group unfortunately bolted at a trot when they saw the camera planted on the road. It was their only resource, for they were determined not to be taken alive, and the surroundings were not favourable for any Huamantla methods of expressing displeasure. But enough people are left to give a fair idea of the proportion of white and Indian blood which is mixed so unequally among present-day Mexicans.

The grave-looking man in the centre, with his back to the wall, appears to be of unusually white descent for a *peón*. He is moderately drunk, and began to caper about the road when he saw that preparations were being made to take a photograph. This was very annoying, for my drop shutter had been stolen with other valuables in Cuba, and, apart from this, soft diffused light and fairly slow plates would necessitate more than sufficient exposure to show movement.

It was necessary to keep one's temper, for lower-class white Mexicans are but little more civilized than Indians, so I went up quietly to the man and told him that he would make a good picture in the centre of the group if he would remain quiet, and, almost to my surprise, he put himself in the assigned place, and made no movement.

The *peón* to his left is of Indian appearance, and so is the woman standing up with the *rebozo* on her head.

The young woman with the bottle in her hand looks like a white person, and so is the young fellow behind her.

The woman sitting down, with the tall hat on her head, appears more white than Indian, and several others look like cross-breds.

It is hard to know in what class to put down the person whose leg appears between those of the drunken man; but in justice it must be stated that, in spite of his extraordinary position, it does not follow that he was also drunk, for the space was crowded, and he may have been trying to make himself seen.

Unfortunately it was but seldom, except during the three months and a half of usually fine weather, that the day's proceedings were not interrupted by the rain.

The morning might break fair, but later on the sky usually became overcast, and in the early afternoon the thick mist made all out-of-door proceedings too dismal, even for the people accustomed to such a climate.



If the rain were light and intermittent the market sellers, who were principally women, often held out all through the day, although they were sitting on the damp ground most of the time.

When, however, the hopeless downpour was of a drenching nature the exodus from the market was little better than a stampede. The sellers snatched up their goods from the ground and took shelter under the portico of a store, or in the store itself, and in some cases hurried home immediately at an Indian trot.

At this juncture a good deal of rum would be taken to keep out the cold, but the storekeepers were said to greatly prefer a fine Sunday, for rum was only an accessory, and not their principal merchandize, and in dry weather the market was much better attended.

On some occasions the rain began so early and so heavily that no market could be held, and the body of magistrates that put up a market shelter in Altotonga, where it is so urgently needed, deserve to be immortalized more than those who are recorded on stone tablets in those places where a boggy piece of road has been flagged or a fountain erected.

My principal attraction in the market was the occasionally good type of Indian who might have come from some remote place, miles away in the mountains, and could be inspected here without any trouble or risk.

For, as a rule, the further one recedes from the thoroughfare of civilization the purer is the blood.

In most of these small country towns there are a good many so-called Indians, and in the adjoining country parts the peasants will generally acknowledge themselves to be of that race.

But many of them have an admixture of white blood, for on what other grounds can the fact be explained that the people who live several miles from town, especially if it be on a mountain track, and not on the main road, tend to be of a slightly darker hue and more almond-eyed than the inhabitants of the more central parts.

It was from some such locality that there might be rarely seen in the market a few swarthy women who had not adopted the use of the *rebozo*, which is almost universally worn, even by Indians.

These people were dressed in a kind of tunic and skirt of dark brown homespun wool, and seemed ill at ease in town.

On the few occasions they appeared, there was nobody to ask for me if they would allow their likenesses to be taken, and to ask them myself might lead to a scene.

And even with the men the difficulty was little less, for on several occasions when I spoke to them they passed on without taking any notice. And if they would not answer a stranger, it was not likely that they would accede to a request to allow themselves to be photographed, when, in addition to having dealings with the hated foreigner, they might even put their souls in danger, as the Huamantla woman feared.

Eventually, however, I obtained a few good types by making it a rule never to ask them myself, but always through the medium of some acquaintance.

In this I had a serviceable ally in the person of a woman who generally sold in the market-place. She may have been Indian herself,



for she spoke Aztec fluently, and, on hearing their own language, these people were much more disposed to allow their portraits to be taken than if they had been addressed in Spanish. For although the Indians in or near the town abandon the use of their language, and soon only retain a smattering of it, as they find Spanish so much more useful, those who live together in the distant hills cling tenaciously to their native Aztec, which has probably not changed more than Spanish itself since the conquest of Mexico.

But they are all practically bi-linguists, for some knowledge of Spanish is necessary for market and shop uses; and all the complicated machinery of Mexican law, with which the Indians are constantly brought into contact in the way of taxes, legal obligations and actions against each other, is carried on in Spanish, and in the whole town there is probably not one official who is familiar with Aztec.

The Spanish that these uneducated people speak is not bad of its kind, often ungrammatical and freely mixed with local words of Indian origin that have crept into the European language, but the pronunciation is good, and this causes American Spanish to be more easily understood than that spoken in some of the provinces in Spain.

The same parallel holds good in the English language, for it is easier for an educated person to understand the English of a Barbadian negro than that of a peasant in some of the English counties.

The partial fusion of the white and Indian races that exist side by side in modern Mexico make it often difficult to know from what stock an individual is descended, and will account for the frequent use of such expressions as "Indian-looking" or "cross-bred."

The tendency is, however, for the Indian element to be absorbed in the white, rather than the white element in the Indian.

This absorbed Indian element, however, leaves its mark on the appearance and character of people of mixed blood, who are slowly but surely on the increase.

The following anecdote will show how Indian blood is sometimes absorbed.

I had asked some friends of mine in Altotonga if they could find me a civilized Indian who would accompany me to one of the outlying places where these people live together, but I made it an essential that my guide should be able to speak Aztec, as the native language has a soothing effect on its people.

My friends assured me that they knew such a person, an Indian who had settled just outside the town some three years ago, and they promised to speak to him on the first occasion.

In a few days time they laughingly gave the result of their conversation with him, thus, "He will go with you, but he says that he cannot speak Indian, he can only understand it a little. Three years ago he could not speak Spanish well, and was only called Juan de Dios, but he is now married to a white woman, and his surname is Mendez."

Señor Mendez, or more politely Don Juan Mendez, was evidently of that somewhat rare type, a progressive Indian, who, unlike most of his race, was prepared to accept European civilization, instead of resisting it to the bitter end. His children will not even understand the language of their father's ancestors, but they will inherit their share of the



almond-shaped eyes, coarse black hair, and mental characteristics of the Aztec race.

Altotonga, like most towns of any pretensions, has two *plazas*, that of the market, which has already been described, and the place for promenade and music.

Here, weather permitting, the band played for two hours on Sunday afternoons, and such of the townspeople as wished to show off themselves and their best clothes walked round, or sat down on the stone seats at the side.

Most of the people that came here belonged to the better class families, but there were also some quite poor people who wore the *rebozo*, which no woman of quality would wear on such an occasion.

And even the ladies and girls of the richest families seldom wore hats, but were quite content with the old-fashioned *mantón*, generally thrown round their shoulders, but drawn over the heads of elderly persons. Sometimes the younger ones used a *chal*, or a *pañuelón*, in its place.

This *plaza*, or *zócalo*, as it was generally termed, was laid out with shrubs and flower-beds. The church was on one side, and on the opposite side was the office of the *juzgado*, which was frequented by the magistrates and other representatives of the law. At the side of the *juzgado* was the partially built *palacio municipal*, and behind this were the rooms that did duty for a police hospital and the prison, with both of which I soon became well acquainted.

For one evening, in the winter time, when I was talking to Don Juan and Doña Adelina, the former informed me that the magistrates of the town were intending to offer me the appointment of municipal doctor.

A medical man, who had previously lived in the town, had received thirty dollars a month for this work, which an unqualified man was now performing for the surprisingly low salary of five dollars.

Eventually I accepted the post; although in my case the salary was cut down to fifteen dollars monthly, for I was assured that the work was very light.

The duties were confined to dressing the wounds of the police cases, as in the little hospital in Calpulalpam, but would be less onerous than in that town.

For, as there was no *jefe político* in Altotonga, all the more important cases would go to Jalacingo, where he resided.

Before I came on duty, I visited the place where my unqualified predecessor was doing his last few days' work, as I was naturally anxious to know something more definite about my new duties.

The greater part of the cases were ordinary cutlass wounds, which, although not generally of a very serious nature, necessitate a good deal of time to clean and sew up.

There is an axiom in the profession to the effect that cheap medicine pays, but that cheap surgery does not; and I asked my predecessor, who was a good fellow, and was doing the work creditably for an unqualified man, whether these cases did not sometimes occupy him for two or three hours in the day. "Often more," he replied.

But I had accepted the employment, and could not go back on my word.



The system here adopted was of that peculiar kind which throws all incidental trouble on the person who undertakes the care of the wounded.

It was the business of no one to provide essentials, such as basins or lint for the wounded people; although, sometimes, the patients would do this for their own sakes, and it was most annoying to have to wait, perhaps, for half an hour before warm water was brought, without which it was impossible to begin to clean the wounds.

The municipality provided nothing but a room, unfurnished with the exception of one or two benches.

The wounded people lay down on the floor to rest, and, in the cases of those who were not well enough to sit on the bench, it was necessary to work in some tiring positions, such as kneeling or sitting on the ground.

If the aggressor were also wounded, the conditions were practically the same, except that in his case the unfurnished room was the prison, kept, of course, under lock and key, where I was so frequently incarcerated during my work that the next time I am obliged to fill an immigrant's schedule in the United States it will be somewhat difficult to say how many times I have been in jail. The most truthful answer would be, "Daily for a considerable time."

After finishing the technical part of the work, it was necessary in the case of a new patient to inform the secretary of the tribunal as to the nature of the wound and the amount of time it would take to heal.

And medical prophecies are of that dangerous kind that but too often reflect little credit on the veracity of the speaker.

So that the title of municipal doctor was more honourable than lucrative, for, to earn my fifty cents, I often had to leave a patient who would have paid me twice as much, as, of course, this public work took precedence of any other.

In return, I had the honour of being officially addressed as the C. doctor, in the same manner as the C. governor; but I would rather have had more money than the citizenship.

Possibly, however, the official position may have been of some use in giving me more security among the lower-class people and the Indians, who are much afraid of the entanglements of the law of their country.

At the end of one month I found my miserably paid position to be such a questionable advantage that I wrote a letter of resignation, but my retirement was not accepted until some two months afterwards, and in the meantime I was obliged to continue my ill-paid duties.

Most of the cases were of that commonplace kind that would not cause general interest.

Once, however, towards the end of my term, something unusual happened. An Indian had been found dead on a mountain track near a village called Juan Marcos, about seven miles distant from Altotonga.

The circumstances were unusual, and the magistrate, or *juez*, as he is called, was obliged to visit the spot before the body could be removed.



As I was still municipal doctor it was my duty to accompany the magistrate, which I did sorely against my will, for I had been unwell for a few days, and a ride over a rough mountain track was most unwelcome under the circumstances, especially when the day's pay only amounted to fifty cents, or one shilling in English money.

Early in the morning the magistrate, his secretary, and myself started on the visit of inspection.

I had been provided with a bad horse that fell down on his knees at the first violent descent just outside the town, and but for my being accustomed to riding, I might have been thrown out of the saddle against the stones.

For this place was typical of many others that are flagged with large stones to prevent beasts of burden from slipping or sinking in the mud when the steepness of the incline or the boggiess of the ground makes the roads almost impassable in wet weather. The photograph will give some idea of the rough way of paving these places and of the wildness of the scenery.

The main track descends to a place in the *tierra caliente* called Zapotitlan, where the son of Don Juan García lived, but the way to Juan Marcos, whither we were bound, branches off to the right.

The magistrate and his secretary had to ask the way several times, for better-class townspeople do not often ride through these retired mountain tracks, and it seemed to me that most of the natives who lived here were darker and wilder-looking than the so-called Indians in or near Altotonga.

At last we came to the scene of the disaster, where the body of the dead man lay under a shed of boughs, which had been erected for protection against the sun, for it would have been illegal to remove the corpse before it had been inspected by the magistrate.

The unfortunate Indian appeared to have been walking down a steep mountain track, when he fell forward downhill, and remained with his head partially doubled under his body. The skull was also injured, presumably by one of the sharp rocks.

In the absence of any history to the contrary, it certainly looked like a case of natural death, and the magistrate's opinion coincided with mine.

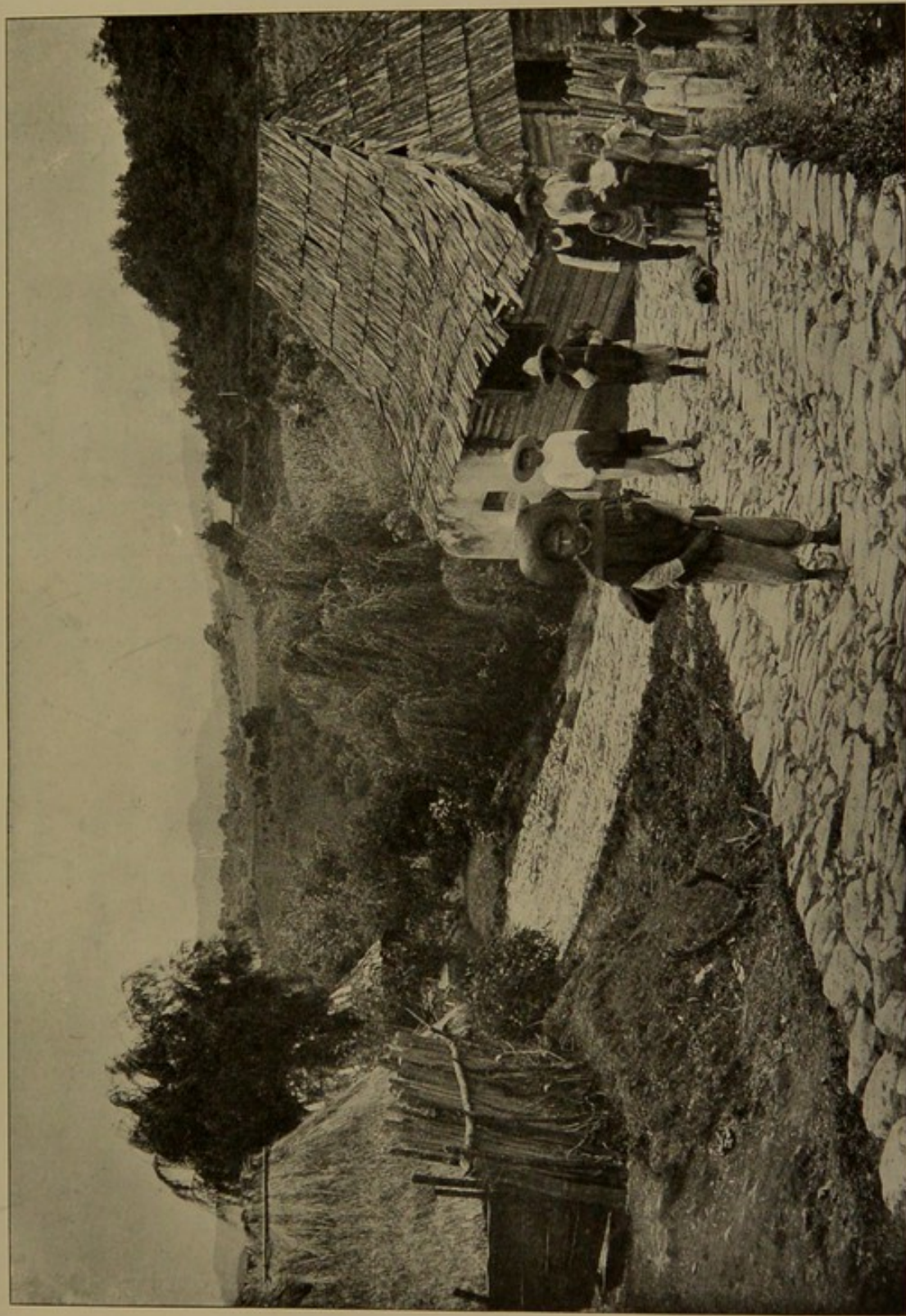
After inspecting the body we now adjourned to a shed outside one of the neighbouring wooden houses, which soon presented the appearance of an impromptu Government tribunal. The people who knew the man, or might be supposed to know something about the circumstances, were examined by the magistrate.

The secretary spread his papers on a flat block of wood, and took down the depositions, which were of a negative kind, and of little value.

It was a weird sight to see the Indian witnesses, as they submissively stated the little they knew, for they have a wholesome respect for the law of the land, although something wanting in their treatment of foreigners.

They came up one by one to be examined, standing in front of the magistrate with hat in hand, and each of the bereaved relatives, whether man or woman, was given a glass of rum after making the deposition.





Road to Zapotitlan : Track to Juan Marcos turns to the right—(p. 100).





Courtyard View of my House—(p. 103).



Mexican Girl grinding Maize—(p. 107).



We now began the return journey, but stopped on our way back to have some late breakfast.

The magistrate had a very good repast spread for us on the grass, where we sat down at a short distance from the track and rested from our labours.

I here took the opportunity of making my excuses to the magistrate for the surliness of my manner in the earlier part of the day.

He was a good fellow and readily accepted my apology, being quite aware of the circumstances, and that a forced employment at a nominal fee does not conduce to good temper, especially when you are not feeling well.

There was now a new trouble in store for me. All the dishes were flavoured with those horribly burning *piquantes* that are the delight of the Mexican and the dread of the foreigner.

Even the tinned salmon had been taken out and mixed with these condiments.

Hunger, however, rises superior to all ordinary dislikes, and I was soon doing justice to the food, although I felt it burning my tongue. It did not hurt me so much at the time, and I was able to converse with the magistrate, but next day my whole mouth seemed on fire, and did not return to its normal state until nearly a week had passed.



## CHAPTER IX.

## IN ALTOTONGA.

**I**T was about this time that I left the kindly shelter of the house of Don Juan García. Not that any coolness had sprung up between me and his family, but it is natural to wish for a house of one's own, and it is especially desirable for a doctor in the country parts.

Suitable houses are very hard to obtain in Mexican country towns, and I was fortunate in obtaining this one at six dollars a month, unfurnished, which was really cheaper in proportion than the two partially furnished rooms I had been renting at four dollars.

Of course this necessitated buying a small amount of furniture, such as a table, chairs and washing-stand. The chemist, Don Desiderio, lent me a good bed with a spring wire mattress, and Don Juan García gave me an old table and sold me a long bench, in case many people might want to sit down in the consulting room.

Doña Gumersinda, of the *fonda* where I used to eat my meals, advised me about the kitchen utensils that would be required.

These did not cost much, for with the exception of a frying-pan, delf and cutlery, the greater part of kitchen furniture consists here of rough earthenware, which is manufactured in the country by the Indians, and sold in town at a very moderate price, such as about seven cents for a *cazuela* (a large bowl used as a stewing-pan), and jars whose prices vary from one or two cents upwards, according to their size.

The house in its half-furnished state would have looked very desolate in England, but not so much so in Mexico, where little money and antiquated customs have accustomed people to a lower style of living.

Even with the utmost economy my expenses were considerably greater than before, when they had only cost me something bordering on five dollars and a half weekly.

The household food cost one dollar a day, with an extra dollar on Sunday to buy cheap vegetables, direct from the producer, in the market.

The weekly rent of the house, at the rate of six dollars for the month, was approximately one dollar and a half, and the servant's wages for the same period, at the rate of three dollars for the month, amounted to seventy-five cents.

So that the weekly account stood thus for food, house-rent and wages :—



Food	...	...	...	8.00	dols.
House rent	...	...	...	1.50	"
Wages	...	...	...	0.75	"

---

10.25 dols.

Occasionally, however, there were small extras such as a sack of charcoal for the kitchen fire, and the week's expenses might amount to some eleven dollars, or about double what I was paying before.

This would be a cheap rate of living in the case of a foreigner who brought gold into the country, and whose weekly expenditure of, say eleven dollars, would only mean some twenty-two shillings at the exchange from a gold to a silver basis, but was not so cheap in the case of a person whose work was paid for in silver of the country, for to such a person the eleven dollars would represent their full value, or about forty-four shillings. It was, however, a great comfort to have one's meals at home, and not to be obliged to walk to the *fonda* every night.

For in wet weather pools of water lay on the ancient pavement, and, when it was too dark to pick one's way, an incautious footstep might wet one up to the ankle.

And it was a great advantage to have a place that was not locked up during my temporary absence, so that patients could find out when I was likely to return, and wait for me if they preferred.

My house had even some pretensions, according to Mexican customs.

It had two rooms in front, which were used as bed and sitting room, and each room had a window, which looked into the street.

A window in England would be considered a necessity rather than a luxury. Not so in Mexico, where many rooms in lower-class houses have only a door facing the street, and as it is frequently necessary to keep the door open so that the light may enter, the occupants are often obliged to put up a partial screen in the open passage, in order to ensure a little privacy and to keep the rain out.

The two rooms and a gateway, with a ponderous door through which a horse could enter, comprised the front of the house. At the back of this was the courtyard, with a cement floor and a bare wall on either side.

The glory of the yard was the fountain in the centre, and the water was very serviceable for washing purposes, although that for drinking had to be sent for from outside.

Of course my yard and fountain were far inferior to those of Don Juan García, but they still stamped the house as one of the better class.

At the back of the yard was a long room, subdivided by a wooden partition, on one side of which was the kitchen, and on the other side the consulting room.

It was rather awkward having kitchen and consulting room so near together, so better class patients were sometimes received in the house, but if possible the common people were never admitted there, for lower-class Mexicans often make an external show of cleanliness which closer acquaintance belies, and the consequences of receiving them in the house are disastrous.



The cold, wet winter was nearly over when I took possession of my new dwelling, and as the weather began to mend towards the month of March my life was far more comfortable than it had been yet, either in Texas or Mexico.

Besides being the only doctor in the town, I was almost the only resident photographer, and in this latter capacity my services were sometimes required, for in the country parts of Mexico it is not considered undignified for a medical man to receive money for photographic work.

The net profit for my work of this kind was little, if any, but the money received for taking likenesses paid for buying all the plates used for taking views, portraits of Indians and scenes of everyday life, not appreciated by the natives, but of great interest to a foreigner.

My prices were four dollars and a half for six photographs of cabinet or half-plate size, and three dollars for the same number of a smaller size.

This may appear a very handsome return, but the work was only occasional, and Mexican dollars, being only worth about two shillings each, do not go far towards buying the American plates imported into the country, where they sell at more than double the price that English plates obtain in England.

My medical practice had increased steadily, and I often had five or six patients in the day, although most were of the poorer class with continual shortage in their payments, and it was a poor week that did not afford me enough to pay for household expenses.

And sometimes there were expeditions to well-off people in the country, which were better paid.

There were visits to Magueyitos, some fifteen miles away on the high ground towards Perote, and to Zapotitlan, about the same distance from Altotonga, but in the *tierra caliente* below.

As this latter was a very bad road, my visits were considered cheaply paid at from fifteen to twenty dollars.

But these expeditions occupied two or three days, as the patient or his friends would expect the doctor to remain for one or two nights before he returned.

My first journey to Zapotitlan was merely a friendly unprofessional visit to the house of Don Pepe García, the son of Don Juan.

It was still winter time, and the mild climate of the country at the foot of the range formed a marked contrast to that of the bleak mountain district.

For in Altotonga no tropical fruit would grow, although a stunted banana tree might be seen in the *plaza* or in a courtyard, and the foliage was still such as is seen in the cool climate of the high table-land.

But as one descended to the foot of the range, the trees and plants of the hot country that borders on the coast began to make their appearance, and one was soon in the midst of oranges and bananas, and in places where coffee and sugar-cane, were cultivated.

The *hacienda* of Don Pepe used to be a coffee plantation, and the barbecue, or cemented terrace, in front of the house often had a few coffee berries put there to dry, for a few of these bushes were still cultivated. The coffee plant might average the height of a man,



and the bright colour of the fruit-like pulp that grows over the berry would prevent a stranger from ever suspecting the true nature of the plant.

But the chief cultivation was that of the sugar-cane, which was here grown for making rum.

The cane juice was first made into brown sugar, and the sugar was then dissolved in water and fermented.

I asked the man in charge of the *trapiche*, or mill, why the juice itself was not fermented, so as to avoid the intermediate trouble of making the sugar.

He told me that this had already been tried, but the result was not so good as when the sugar process was used.

When I subsequently visited this and other remote places in the pursuit of my profession, the procedure was generally the same.

The visit itself was almost always to a member of one of the few well-off families, who alone could afford the expense. But after duly caring for the person who had been the cause of the journey, many of the poorer people, chiefly of the *peón* class, gladly availed themselves of the opportunity, and were merely charged at the ordinary town rate. A room was generally assigned me, to use as a combined consulting room and dispensary, for in these emergencies it was always necessary to carry a small supply of drugs, either on the saddle or in charge of a *peón*, who generally followed on foot.

Here one could attend to smaller ailments, but occasionally it was necessary to visit neighbouring huts in the settlement, to see people with more serious complaints.

The general run of the patients bore a great similarity: the *peón* with some recent or old injury; the Indian mother with her sick baby, suffering from the effects of unsuitable food; the chronic invalid with some incurable disease; children with complaints brought about by dirt and bad hygiene. But one was sometimes confronted with the most appalling cases. These journeys were very tiring, for the professional work began after riding for several hours over rough mountain tracks, where the horse was continually liable to fall, for one step would be on rock and the next might be in a slough some two or three feet deep, and the incessant rain caused one often to arrive in a damp condition, in spite of the *manga de hule*, or waterproof, which every horseman is obliged to use in these parts. It is a plain piece of india-rubber sheeting, without sleeves, with a hole in the centre for the head to pass through, and extends, poncho like, from the shoulders almost down to the feet.

For the continual drizzle or thick mountain mist, which is here called the *chipi-chipi*, in imitation of the dripping sound made by it in falling, extends to a great extent to the lower slopes of the mountains, only it causes less discomfort here from the mildness of the climate.

But my most frequent visits outside Altotonga were to the little town of Atzalan, about two miles down the mountain slope. These short expeditions were generally satisfactory, for I received three dollars for the visit and returned home at once, without knocking myself about by conforming to unsuitable habits, or eating indigestible food in other people's houses.



People in the country parts often go to bed between eight and nine in the evening. On these occasions "*Usted quiere descansar*" (you wish to rest) was equivalent to a request to retire to my room. As this was too early for me to sleep, I used to while away one or two hours as best I could.

And the burning condiments with which the meat was generally flavoured sometimes reduced my supper to little more than bread and vegetables.

Atzalan had a slightly milder climate than Altotonga, but was, if possible, even more rainy. As it was much smaller than the latter town, many of its people visited us on Sundays and holidays to see the markets, festivals, and whatever kind of amusement might be going on. But Atzalan had occasionally a festival of its own, one of which is the subject of the picture called "*Santiagos*."

Many of the *Santiagos* wore masks and carried wooden swords, and, as the name of this saint was the battle-cry of the Spanish conquerors, it is likely that this festival commemorated some episode in the conquest of Mexico in some way, as the Indian dances at Jalacingo.

But the affair at Atzalan was not nearly so interesting, for the actors were chiefly townspeople and not pure Indians.

Still, it gives a good idea of the cross-bred population in these parts.

One of the most extraordinary professional cases I had in Altotonga was that of an unfortunate lad, more or less Indian, who died from eating papaw seeds. The innocent looking little seed of this tropical plant has the property of swelling to an enormous size under certain conditions, but I have no doubt that many other people besides myself have eaten some of them without any bad results.

No sensible person, however, would eat many, for they are easily detached from the fruit.

But this poor fellow was somewhat deficient mentally, and was not accustomed to eating tropical fruit, which does not grow in the cool climate of Altotonga.

One day, however, he happened to be in the hot country at the foot of the range, when he must have eaten a great number of papaws, with most or all of their seeds.

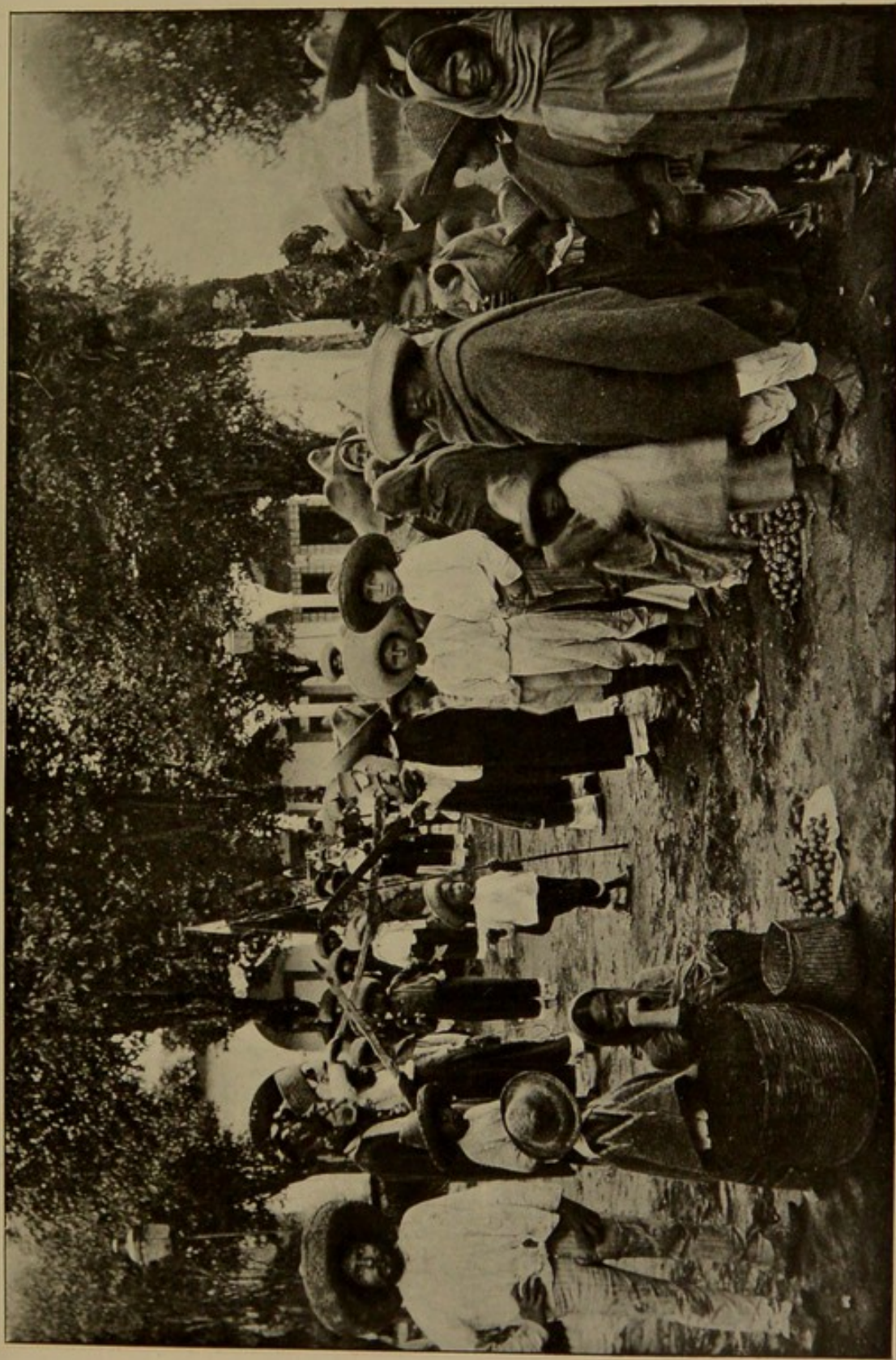
His relations probably never knew in time of the danger he had incurred, and when I was called to see him about a week afterwards he was already suffering from inflammation, and only lived for a few weeks.

It was evidently not the first time that a fatal result of this kind had occurred, for Don Juan García told us a somewhat weird story of how another man had died from eating these seeds, and that people used to come to eat the fruit of the papaws that had sprung up at the grave.

The picture of the girl grinding corn is that of this lad's sister. She looks so healthy that one would never imagine that she was going to fall into a decline and die some two or three years afterwards.

The grinding of the maize to make *tortillas* is such an onerous work for the women in the country towns, that some of the better class families keep a servant especially for this purpose.





"Santiagos" in Atzalan—(p. 106).





Raiceros (Root Workers) preparing Roots for making Brushes—(p. 107).



Indian Hut with Walls of Maize-stalks—(p. 107).



The maize is first soaked in lime water and then spread on the *metate*, as the grindstone is called. The woman then pounds the grain into a pulp by means of a long stone, something like that used for sharpening scythes, and the work has to be done three times before the mass is reduced into a sufficiently fine state for making the *tortilla*, which is flattened out by the hands, and roasted on the fire.

Even better-class Mexicans often prefer the *tortilla* to wheaten bread, which they say is insipid, but to me Indian corn cake always appeared to have a bitter taste.

Altotonga was essentially an agricultural town, but it had one somewhat important industry, that of the *raiceros*, or root workers, who prepare a thin, wiry root which is in great demand for making brooms and coarse brushes. This work affords employment to many people in several country towns, for it seems to require a great amount of pounding and washing.

The photograph will give an idea of the different types among these people of the lowest class, where you may see every variety between white and Indian.

Men and women worked together, and the latter were said to prefer this employment to household service, on account of the greater freedom of the life after working hours were over.

There is no one among the educated classes who comes into closer contact with the poor than the doctor, unless perhaps it may be the clergy. In this respect the doctor may have the advantage as the poor man's friend in Protestant countries, and the priest in Roman Catholic countries.

Thus it was not long before I became acquainted with the *cura* of Altotonga, who was a right good fellow.

One evening he called on me about eight, to ask if I would go with him to a small settlement called Las Vigas, some twenty-five miles distant, to see his aunt who was unwell.

On my replying in the affirmative he asked me how much I would charge for the visit.

"Twenty-five dollars," I replied.

He evidently considered the price reasonable enough, for he said at once, "It shall be paid you, *señor*."

And surely a midnight journey over rough country track ought to be worth that sum, which would represent about five pounds in Mexican money, but only half that sum on a gold basis, especially as I would be expected to remain with the patient at least one day.

"How soon will you be ready to start?"

"Not for two hours, for I have not had supper yet, and must also select the medicines that are likely to be required," was my answer. For it was necessary on such occasions to get a description of the symptoms of the illness, and to pack up the most likely drugs to be serviceable.

At a little after ten at night I walked through the empty streets of Altotonga to the house of the *señor cura*, close beside the church.

He had provided a horse for me, besides the one he had for himself, and we started at half past ten.

But although my horse was a very good walker and could average



nearly if not quite five miles in the hour, he was no match for the priest's horse, which went at a peculiar kind of amble, the speed of which could not be emulated by any animal with ordinary paces.

The direction was in the high lands towards Perote, Las Vigas being in fact the next railway station to that place, but, before half the distance had been accomplished, we branched off the main road, and went on paths that a stranger would never have been able to follow.

In this elevated part it is always cold at night, and in spite of my greatcoat I felt rather numb at the end of the journey at half-past three in the morning, for we did the twenty-five miles in five hours—excellent travelling for rough tracks at night time.

As the lady was sleeping at the time of our arrival, and there were no urgent symptoms, it was decided not to disturb her before daylight, and we were shown to our beds at once.

This introduces a feature in Mexican customs, as tending to show how little even better-class people think of comforts that would almost be considered necessities in some countries.

It might naturally be supposed that, after a long journey on a cold night, some slight refreshment might be required by the travellers, and, to myself at any rate, a biscuit with a glass of spirits or a cup of coffee would have been very acceptable, but such an idea did not seem to occur to the person in charge.

We remained at Las Vigas all the rest of the day, and on the following morning, as the patient appeared to be relieved, we began the homeward journey. The ground was hilly but cultivated, and as we rode along a track on one of those short cuts with which my companion was so well acquainted, we came across a number of Indian *peóns* on their way to or from their work.

If the priest had been the first magnate in the land, he could not have been treated with more respect.

Every *peón* got off the track to make way for us, and stood hat in hand while the priest murmured a passing benediction, and I felt that there was more safety in his company than in an armed escort.

He was a most genial companion, and I regret that we did not have any more journeys together.

At one time the temporal power of the Church used to be very great in Mexico, partly owing to the superstitious tendencies of the ignorant Indians, who, although converted to Christianity at the point of the sword, embraced with fervour the religion of their conquerors.

This tendency was probably enhanced by the fact that two of the greatest insurgent leaders in the War of Independence, Hidalgo and Morelos, were priests themselves, and thus the priesthood was placed on the popular side at the very commencement of the Republic.

The great President Juárez made such stringent laws against the Church as a secular body that it is now deprived of many of its ancient privileges. Even monasteries and nunneries are no longer tolerated in Mexico.

Although the mundane power of the clergy may be apparently broken, the priest is an object of veneration to the *peón* population, which is largely Indian, and would prefer to obey the precepts of the Church rather than the laws of the State.

To such an extent does this feeling exist that I have heard these



people doubt the validity of a marriage if the ceremony had not taken place in a church, whereas the State requires that legal forms should be complied with, and does not recognize a marriage as such merely because a religious ceremony has been performed.

Sometimes an irreligious person will take advantage of this state of things, as in the case of a man who had only been married according to the Church, and who later on married some one else according to the law.

The soil in the vicinity of Altotonga is very fertile, much more so than in the dry country above, or in the broken mountain ranges below, and this oasis extends from about one mile above the town to near Atzalan, about two miles below it. Three crops were frequently grown on the same ground in one year, beans and barley in the earlier months, and maize in the summer and autumn. This natural fertility is largely increased by a complete system of irrigation, in which the natural streams in this well-watered part are diverted from their course to flood the ground on which maize is growing. And when one field has had enough irrigation, the water is turned in another direction.

The photograph of the reapers represents the harvest of barley in the early summer, for the maize was not gathered until the end of October, when it seemed almost incredible how any grain could bear the combination of wet and cold; but it ripened and turned yellow in spite of the continual drizzle, and probably the wind that blew at this period aided in drying the cobs of corn.

There can be few plants that will endure such a variety of conditions, for it grows on the high tableland, in a cool climate that is dry, on the broken descent from the tableland in a cool climate that is wet, and in the tropical country below.

Most of the land under maize cultivation in the immediate vicinity of the town belonged to fairly well-off people, but in the more remote hill sides there were a large number of Indian peasant proprietors, who all aspired to have their crops of maize and beans, as these foods formed the staple of their everyday diet.

The Indians therefore in these parts are not in reality so badly off as they often appear to be. For, besides their little homestead with its harvest, they always have some domestic animals and birds, such as donkeys or mules, pigs, goats or sheep, and turkeys and fowls, and their condition appears very prosperous as compared with the *peóns* employed on the large *haciendas* near Calpulalpam, of whom mention has already been made.

A stranger would imagine that these people must be very destitute, having only an earthen floor, none too dry, in their hut, and living almost without furniture, except possibly some wooden stools; scooping up their beans with a bent corn cake dipped into the *cazuela* (earthen dish used for cooking); and being without tables, knives and forks, and other utensils of civilized life.

Many, not past middle life, would complain of pains that were evidently rheumatic. What else could they expect after lying on the damp ground all their lives?

On entering the hut of one of my first patients of this class, I was so impressed with the idea of poverty on seeing a sick man stretched on the earthen floor, that I only charged him half my usual fee.



The family of Don Juan García laughed when I told them this, and said: "He has a bag of silver buried in the ground." But an Indian uses his silver for buying domestic animals, corn, and things of a more profitable nature than furniture which his forefathers never used, and he is quite content to live as they did.

Most of the huts of these people had wooden walls in this district, where timber was still plentiful in the broken country that had not been denuded of trees, and the climate almost required a substantial defence against the cold and wet. But occasionally there might be seen a dwelling like that in the picture, where the walls appear to be made of some bamboo-like structure, in this case probably the stalks of the maize. Such dwellings, however, were the rule rather than the exception in the warm country near Zapotitlan.

No description of country life in Mexico would be complete without alluding to the use of the *lazo*. On one occasion when a quiet cow was thrown for photographic purposes, one of the men fell, owing to his saddle turning round, as has been described at Calpulalpam.

A stranger might imagine that the use of the *lazo* was a matter of everyday occurrence, for almost every saddle is made with the peak in front, to which reference has been made in comparing the American saddle with the Mexican.

The peak, of course, is only useful for holding the *lazo*, and is a nuisance to foreigners, and probably to those Mexicans as well who are not engaged in cattle ranching, for although it is shorter, broader, and therefore less dangerous than the one on the American saddle, it might still give a man a very nasty blow if his body were suddenly thrown forward.

It is therefore somewhat of a surprise to find that one might live in the country for years without ever seeing the *lazo* used, unless one lived near one of the stock-raising properties that only exist in certain parts.

The Mexican saddle is a most tiring one to ride on, and the hide tacked close on the ponderous wooden tree makes one of the hardest seats imaginable, but it is so strong that it seldom wants repairing, and when the hide and adornments are worn away it is often used as a pack-saddle on a donkey.

The price of a saddle might vary from twenty to eighty dollars, for some are so freely ornamented with silver that the cost is greatly increased, but a good one would hardly be obtainable under forty dollars, which represents four pounds in English and eight pounds in Mexican money.

This seems dear, but a Mexican saddle with its profuse trappings must be much more troublesome to make than an English one.

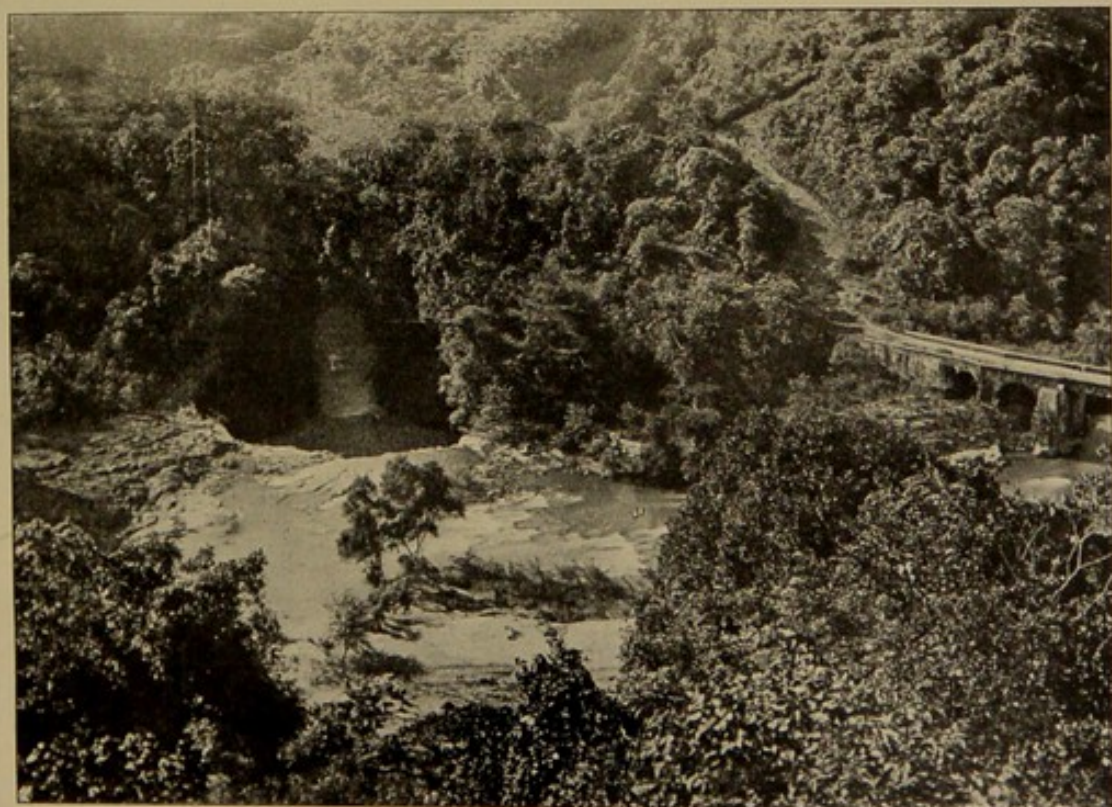
During the summer after my arrival in Altotonga, that is to say, when I had been there about one year, a pleasant surprise awaited me. M. Lassus, who had advised me to try this place, and had given me warm letters of introduction, visited the town on the following business.

Rather more than twenty miles from Altotonga, in the hot country below, there were waterfalls of considerable size, formed





Lassoing a Cow—(p. 110).



Waterfall at Tomate—(p. 111).

The scenery is similar to that of the "Night Ride" in the subsequent chapter.)





Reaping Barley—(p. 109).



by the confluence of the many small streams that descended from this mountainous region, and he had come to see if this water power could not be utilized.

The objects of this preliminary expedition were to inspect the place, confer with the local authorities relative to obtaining permission to utilize the water, and to obtain some photographs to show to the people who were interested in this undertaking.

He wished me to go with him, partly for company, and partly for the purpose of taking the desired photographs.

The road was rough and rain was threatening, but I felt so grateful to him for sending me to a place where a living could be made, that I would have done more than this to oblige him.

We obtained two horses, and waterproofs which were soon required, and after the usual difficulties of the descent, which varied between rock and bog, the worst parts being the slippery mud which formed a thin covering in places, we arrived at the village of Tomate, near which the waterfalls were situated.

M. Lassus was well known here, and we lodged that night at the house of a friend of his.

We spent about a day in examining the river and its falls, riding as far as we could along the bank, and when the ground became too rough for horses we tied them up and went on foot.

A few of the people of the place accompanied us, including one or two *peóns*, who were very serviceable in clearing away the undergrowth with their *machetes*, or cutlasses.

The country was wild in the extreme, and near the waterfalls the ground was so broken and steep on either side of the river that not even the Indians, who generally like secluded places, cared to live here, for it would have been almost impossible to grow crops of any kind.

Here were tropical trees and creepers which I had never seen before, and I was especially warned against touching the stinging plant.

It was very difficult to get a footing for the camera in some of the places where a photograph was required, and as a rule this wild mountain scenery does not come up to expectations in making a good picture, for the incessant green of the foliage comes out too dark, and there is little or no contrast.

After this work was finished, we went on about a league further to the town of Tlapacoyan, where M. Lassus wished to interview the authorities. Of course only the Federal Government could give a legal right to any concession, but it was all important to have any project reported favourably by the local people.

Tomate lies close to the foot of the range, and the road between it and Tlapacoyan was fairly good and level, for we were now well out of the mountains, and in the *tierra caliente*. The bamboo grew abundantly here, and its stem was largely used for the walls of the Indians' huts.

Tlapacoyan was a smaller town than Altotonga, but had a much finer *plaza*, together with a comfortable appearance which answered to its reputation for richness.



And these places with tropical foliage almost invariably produced a pleasing effect which was wanting in the cooler but healthier mountain regions.

On riding into the yard of the hotel where we were going to remain for the night, it was typical of the hot country to see the *zopilotes*, as the small black vultures are called, walking about looking for food, without disturbing the domestic fowls which were on the same errand.

Although the *zopilote* exists in most parts of Mexico, it is a comparatively shy bird in the cooler climates, but, as one approaches the warm coast region, this little vulture abandons all fear, and walks about in the vicinity of man and domestic animals, as if he knew that his valuable services could not be dispensed with in these places where sanitary arrangements are deficient.

My stay in this town was but short, for M. Lassus told me soon after we arrived that his business with the officials would probably detain him several days, and he said that he would not like to injure my practice by detaining me too long. So next morning I began the return journey, which was not nearly so pleasant as the first one. For, not knowing the way well, I went several miles on a wrong track, and my horse began to show signs of knocking up.

In leading him over a place where it was not safe to ride, he pulled back suddenly and the bridle broke, and although I patched it up, I had no longer a command of his head.

On nearing Altotonga he had subsided into a pace of about two miles in the hour, and was browsing on the maize at the side of the track as he went along.

Some Indians in the distance called out, "Stop your horse from eating the maize." "How can I help it when the bridle is broken?" I shouted in return.

M. Lassus subsequently brought two engineers to the waterfalls, but the heavy estimate of the cost of the undertaking caused it to be abandoned.

On this occasion he asked me how I liked Altotonga. My answer was that the place was very good compared with the other towns where I had been, but that I was not altogether satisfied, for I was not able to earn much more than what it cost me to live, and as I had the whole work of the district there was no probability of my income increasing.

"It is your own fault," he replied; "you do not charge enough."

About this time I lost a good opportunity, the acceptance of which would have probably put an end to my travels by locating me in Altotonga for years.

One of the leading merchants of the town approached me with an offer, somewhat similar to that made me in Encinal, but on a larger scale.

He premised by saying that Don Desiderio Alvarez was the only chemist in town, and that, although no objection was made to him personally, all monopolies were bad things, and that it would be desirable to have another *botica* (chemist's shop).

So it was suggested that I should be supplied with a drug store, which I was to work on my own account, merely paying interest on the money advanced.



I really believe that this would have been a profitable business, for Mexicans are much more addicted to "remedies" than to doctors, but there were several difficulties.

The Government makes every storekeeper pay a tax according to the amount of profit made on his merchandize, so that I should have had to keep books to be examined by the inspectors who make their periodical visits.

In the next place I should have had to keep an assistant for the ordinary shop and counter work, and as an unqualified man would have to be employed for the sake of economy, I should be legally responsible for an accident which might take place during my absence.

But my chief reason for declining the offer was that I shrank from entering into competition with Don Desiderio, with whom I had always been on most friendly terms.

So I continued my work on strictly medical lines, thereby putting a good deal of custom in the way of the chemist who dispensed my prescriptions, and determined to await events, and to go or stay as inducement offered.

Every Mexican town has a bath-house, which in Huamantla went by the appropriate name of *Baños de Neptuno*. But unfortunately the season for baths is only in the summer time. In the colder weather the baths are shut up, and many of the poorer people only perform scanty ablutions until the winter has passed.

In Altotonga I was fortunately independent of the baths. There was a pretty mountain stream about half a mile from the town. The water was quite shallow in most places where it dashed over the rocks and pebbles that formed the bed of the watercourse.

But just below the place which forms the subject of the photograph, "A Mountain Stream," there were a few deeper holes, where little waterfalls of two or three feet had hollowed out the sand underneath. Here one might expect to find water at least three feet deep, and this was my favourite bathing place.

It will be noticed that a woman is crossing the stream at the time of taking the photograph, and that the reflection of the sun on the edge of her *olla*, or earthenware jar, looks rather like a halo of glory over her head. So I told a girl about twelve years of age that this was the likeness of a saint.

"How did you manage to take it"? she asked.

"I knew by a dream that a saint was going to cross the river, so I hid in the bushes and photographed her as she passed."

"The doctor is making fun of you," her friends remarked. "No, do you not see *la gloria* on her head," the girl replied.

So, as the name of the young woman in the picture was Carmen, I used to call her *Santa Carmen* afterwards.

Few people, except professional hunters, are in a position to describe the wild animals of Mexico, for one might live an ordinary lifetime in most of the country districts without seeing the larger ones.

The lion, as the puma is called, still exists in some of the wilder regions, and is dreaded by those who keep the larger domestic animals on which this creature preys.

The so-called tiger, or panther, inhabits parts of the *tierra caliente*,



and the skins of these animals were occasionally seen in Altotonga, which was only a few leagues distant from where they had been killed.

It was only by accident that I knew there were deer in this part. For one night, being on a visit to see a patient in the hot country, I wanted to enter a hut where I had left some of my belongings, and the door was locked.

I expected to find the owner of the hut easily, as the hamlet only consisted of a few houses, but was told that he had gone out hunting.

"Hunting at night?" I exclaimed, in surprise.

"Yes, he goes out at night with a lantern on his head to shoot deer, which come to him when they see the light."

Bears are found in some of the mountain ranges.

The *coyote*, or native wolf, is found over a considerable extent of the high tableland. Their beat extended several miles on the Altotonga side of the plains of Perote, where they are said to be dangerous at night and in cold weather. Some horrible stories were told me of their ferocity, how a wretched woman, on being pursued by them, let her baby fall, when it was devoured, although she herself escaped; and how an unfortunate boy, who was riding a donkey, was pulled off and killed.

It was described how this savage but cowardly animal will not make a straightforward attack on a man, but rushes past him, endeavouring to inflict a wound, and that these rushes are continued until blood is drawn "when nothing will stop them."

The inhabitants of most of the small towns have nicknames, which correspond to the animals in their vicinity, and as this was the term for the people of Perote, it would appear that there were a good many *coyote* in that district.

The nickname for the inhabitants of another place was *zorrilla*, or skunk, although its true Spanish meaning would be "little fox."

I only saw one *zorrilla*, and guessed from its helpless looking appearance and slow walk that it was likely to be the animal provided with the horrible smell as a means of self-defence, so I kept at a safe distance.

There is a strange-looking animal, with a large head and a long snout, called the *tejón*, which is said to be a species of badger, but the only one I saw was at night time.

The little black vulture, known in Mexico by the name of *zopilote*, is called *gallinazo* in some parts of Central America. And this Spanish name, which might be translated "ugly hen," owing to the suffix of contempt *azo*, may be compared with that of turkey-buzzard, the kindred vulture, which Mexicans call by the more classical name of *aura*.

But the *zopilote* is the usual vulture seen in Mexico, and the *aura* is rare, whereas in West Indian islands, such as Cuba and Jamaica, the turkey-buzzard is the rule, although the *zopilote* is said to frequent Trinidad, probably on account of its proximity to the mainland.

It seems strange that one vulture should prefer the continent and that the other should prefer the islands.

Any kind of vulture must of necessity be a repulsive looking bird, but of these two varieties the *zopilote* is more so, for he looks un-



mistakably what he is, while the *aura*, or turkey-buzzard, might almost be taken for a domestic fowl in the distance.

A great part of the tableland is poorly supplied with birds, probably on account of the want of trees necessary for their shelter. But there were plenty of trees in the mountain gorges below Altotonga, yet I seldom saw any large birds in my journeys.

There were some humming-birds, even in the cool country near the town, but they were of a plain brown variety, and not clothed in that brilliant plumage which is sometimes seen in warmer places.

It might not be worth while mentioning so insignificant an animal as the rat, except as a means of showing how domestic animals tend to be called by Spanish names, while field animals are more frequently known by the Indian equivalent. This calls to mind Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe," where the Saxon name of calf is contrasted with the French name for its flesh.

The house rat is universally known by the Spanish name *rata*, but I had frequently heard of a small field animal called the *tuza*, without being able to ascertain what it was.

Chance threw in my way a very interesting book on the Aztec language, which will be subsequently mentioned, in which *tuza* is given as the Indian name for rat.

So the field rat kept its old name, as the field workers were Indians, but the house rat assumed a new name, as the dwellers in the best houses were of Spanish descent.

This line of reasoning will reduce, probably correctly, the status of a sweetheart to that of a domestic creature of civilized origin, that did not exist among the Indians before the conquest.

For subsequently, in the isthmus of Tehuantepec, I was present while a conversation in the Zapotec language was going on, and did not understand one word except the term *novio*, the Spanish for sweetheart.

On my remarking that this was a Spanish word, they replied, "Yes, there is no word for sweetheart in our own language." And this would be natural enough at a period when the personal inclinations of people were but little consulted with relation to marriage.

It is hoped that the reader will have understood my position in Altotonga. I had now been settled there for considerably more than one year, and had the whole practice of that town, together with that of Atzalan and the surrounding country, occasionally riding more than twenty miles in different directions to see patients.

I was on good terms with all the people, from the *alcalde* (chief magistrate) to the poorest Indians, who had been my patients, for even the latter can be overcome by good treatment, and it was only rarely that I was confronted by a scowling face that muttered the word *Americano*.

In no case had there been any attempt to molest me, although I was always unarmed, often alone, and used to do all my work on foot, unless my patient lived more than three miles away.

The poorer people frequently addressed me affectionately as "*doctorcito*," and sometimes most politely as "*Su buena persona de usted*," which may be interpreted as "Your good personage."



Yet I was far from contented. The life in every small country town in Mexico is dreary, and necessarily more so in a place where there was such an excessive rainfall.

There were practically no recreations except an occasional stroll along the least frequented country tracks, surrounded by fields of waving maize, when I used to solace myself by smoking those good and cheap cigarettes at five cents (about a penny and a farthing) a packet, which were one of the few luxuries to be obtained.

One of the chief reasons, however, of my dissatisfaction was that my work was not paid at the same rate as that of native Mexican doctors.

It was quite true what M. Lassus had said about my not charging enough. But having once begun to work at reduced prices, owing to my ignorance of the customary charges and my desire to please the people, I now found it impossible to obtain a fair remuneration.

The profit of a doctor here does not lie so much in the ordinary town visits. These will not command more than a dollar, and in the case of poor people an average of much less, for many will claim a reduction, and some will never pay, although they urgently require the attendance that in Europe would be supplied by some kind of Government relieving officer.

But distant visits to rich people form the work that enable a doctor to save a little money, and it was most annoying to find that such services were not paid at the same rate that others received.

I was a good horseman, having lived some fifteen years in the saddle before I became a medical student. But these long expeditions were very tiring, and quite apart from ordinary wear and tear, there was always a likelihood of getting such exposure to wet as might cause an illness, or receiving some injury from one's horse falling.

And a doctor who is expected to ride twenty miles over a mountain range on a dark night has a right to make something more than a bare living.

Several minor reasons combined to accelerate my departure. The rainy latter part of the summer was over, and the rainy and cold winter was not an agreeable prospect for one who had much out-of-door work.

So many dirty people had been in my house that nothing but extreme care could have prevented disastrous results, and it now seemed impossible to dislodge the vermin that had taken possession of it, without having more efficient aid than I could command.

On several occasions lately, my weekly earnings had been insufficient to pay for expenses, and although this was but a temporary falling off, it had an effect in making me more inclined to leave.

And where was I to go? There was certainly no inducement to return to any of the places where I had been.

But I had often heard of the isthmus of Tehuantepec in the south of Mexico, and of the richness of the people in those parts, where the women wear long necklaces strung with golden coins.

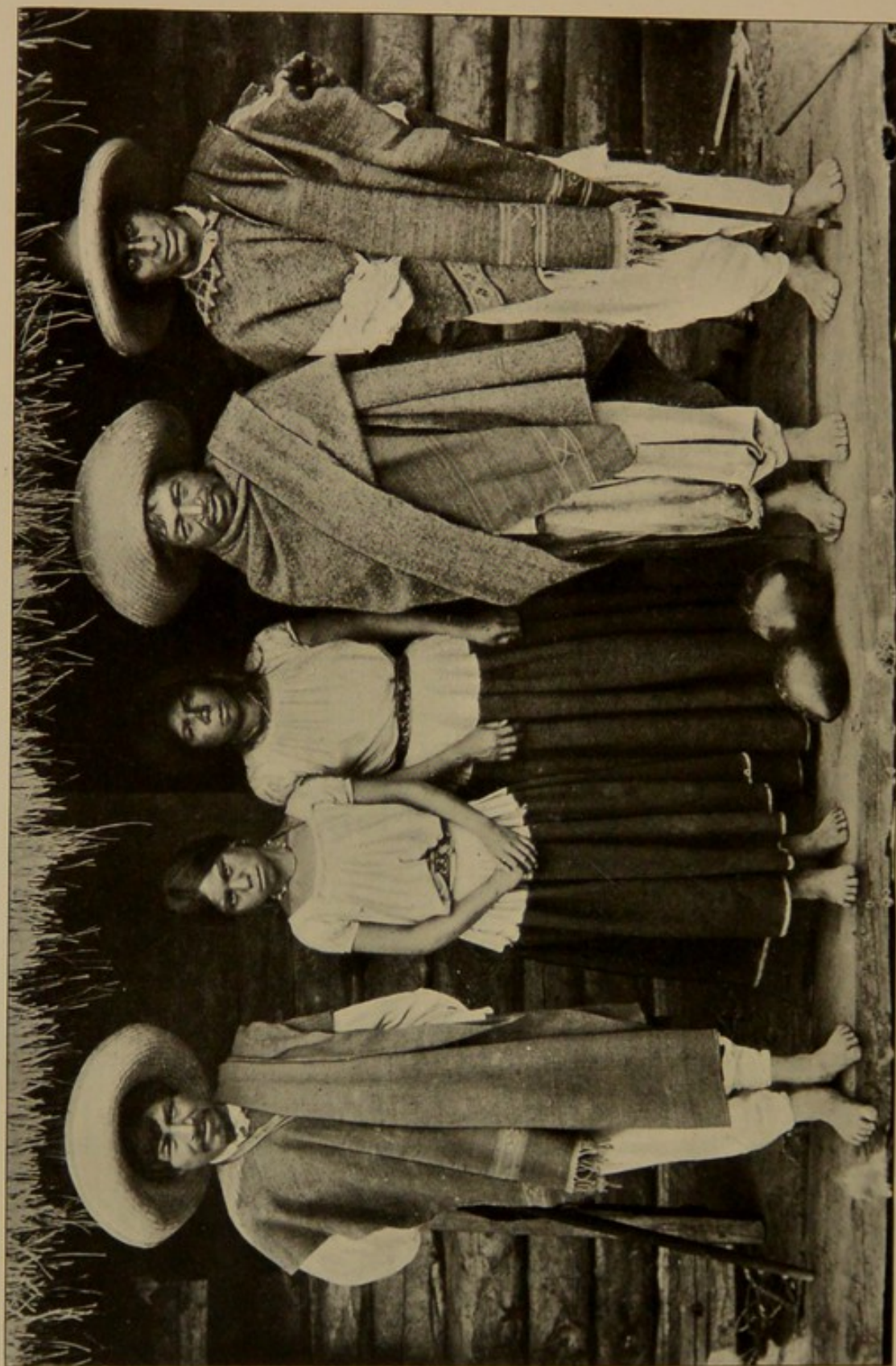
And quite apart from monetary reasons, Tehuantepec and its people have always been an object of interest, even in Mexico, on account of the superior race of the Indians who live there. And if this place did not afford me a living, I should be close to the Pacific





A Mountain Stream—(p. 113).





Indians at Home—(p. 117).



coast, and might embark for some part of South America, preferably Chile, with which country books of travel had favourably impressed me.

Before I left Altotonga there was one place I wished to visit again. The reader will recollect my journey to Juan Marcos in the preceding chapter, when I accompanied the magistrate to investigate the cause of the death of an Indian.

The people in this retired hillside hamlet had interested me, as they appeared to be of purer blood than the so-called Indians who lived nearer the town.

More preparations were required for this journey of about seven miles than would have been necessary for far more than that distance in more civilized countries.

For, in Mexico, when a stranger goes alone to a part where few but Indians live, and I am here referring to the descendants of the Aztecs and not to the more pacific tribes, he puts himself practically rather out of the pale of the law.

My friends in Altotonga warned me that there might be risk in the journey and said, "These people will not want to have anything to say to you, and if you try to photograph them they may even maltreat you."

So to avoid casualties, I took every precaution.

The first thing was to obtain a letter of introduction from the *alcalde* (chief magistrate) of Altotonga to the principal person in Juan Marcos, who was a white man.

Knowing from experience how pedestrians are despised as people of no account, I hired a horse, and obtained a friendly Indian, who lived near the town, as a guide.

I took two bottles of rum in the capacious pouches of the saddle, and was prepared besides to pay the Indians liberally for any services they might do.

We started on a fine morning, my Indian leading the way on foot, and I followed on horseback, with the camera slung over my shoulders in its canvas bag.

The weather soon clouded over, and it became evident that the only pictures worth taking would be those of the people.

As we neared the scattered huts of the *congregación*, as a hamlet of this kind would be called, my guide inquired for the magnate to whom we had the introduction, and we were directed to his house, which appeared to be a rum-shop.

He received me affably, and after perusing the letter handed me over to his lieutenant in authority, the by no means good-looking Indian next the woman in the centre of the group.

I expressed my desire to photograph a few of the huts, with people in front.

The lieutenant, apprehensive that I might avail myself of my introduction as a means of obtaining his services gratuitously, informed me, before I had taken the first picture, that he could not remain much longer, as he had important business.

But when he noticed that I gave the owner of the hut half a dollar, he decided that it was worth while remaining, and consented to be photographed. This picture was the last and perhaps the best of the four taken.



By this time the rum had done its duty, and the faces of the Indians wore a benign expression.

So anxious were these people to let the *alcalde* know that they had complied with the purport of his letter, that they asked me to make a statement in writing to the effect that they had assisted me, the lieutenant being especially anxious about this, as he had got into trouble with the law some time previously, and still dreaded its power.

I paid the few who had accompanied me half a dollar each, but here a difficulty arose, as the lieutenant, being in authority, considered that he ought to be remunerated at a higher rate. This did not seem unreasonable, so he received some twenty cents more than the others, and we became such good friends that he embraced me as we said *adiós*.

These men all spoke Aztec to each other, but were quite familiar with the Spanish language.

But this excursion, however interesting, was not very successful from a photographic standpoint. The state of the weather, cloudy, with the hill-tops covered with mist, made good views impossible, and the Indians were not as good types as I had expected to find, and are therefore not placed in the chapter that deals with Indian types especially. Good types are always scarce, and the best place to obtain them was at the Sunday market in Altotonga, when the pick of the surrounding country might be obtained, if only one could prevail on them to consent to their likenesses being taken.

The news that I intended to leave Altotonga was by no means pleasing to the inhabitants of that place. And quite apart from any appreciation of my services, they had a natural dread of the exorbitant fees charged by their own fellow-countrymen for professional visits from distant places. An attempt was made to raise a subsidy, so that I might be guaranteed a certain income, but it came to nothing, as every one would not join in it.

Among the more disagreeable preparations for my departure were my efforts to collect outstanding accounts, which to a doctor but too often represent bad debts.

It would hardly interest the reader to hear most of the excuses made by the poorer people, such as, the husband was absent, the pig had died, the turkeys were not yet fat, and so could not be sold, the taxes had just been paid and there was no money left. Many of these tales were not strictly true, but they served their turn, for it does not pay to take much trouble over small accounts, although in the aggregate they may represent a substantial sum.

One of my adventures of this class was of a different nature, and may be related as it throws a side light on Mexican customs.

In Atzalan, I had an unusually bad paying patient who owed me a few dollars. He was by no means one of the poorer class, being in fact an official of that town. His true name is not given here for the sake of friends who still live in these parts, but he will be described as Don Trapalero, which by the change of only one letter would mean Don Fraudulent.

Contrary to my general rule, I was on horseback, and having finished my other business in Atzalan, I went to the *juzgado* (magistrate's office) to complain to the *juez* (magistrate) that this person



would not pay me, and to demand redress. I tied up my horse in front of the building, and was directed to the room of the magistrate, who listened to my complaint, and then sent word to Don Trapalero to appear before him. If this gentleman had not much brass in his pocket (although his family had once tried to make me take a dollar of base metal) he had plenty of it in metaphor, so he affected at first not to know me.

When, however, the magistrate repeated my statement, and asked my opponent what he had to say in the matter, Don Trapalero replied as follows: "I now recollect that I have seen this *señor*. It is true that he has visited me, but, as I derived no benefit from his treatment, I did not consider that I was under any obligation to pay him."

"I do not guarantee to cure people," I replied, "I can only do my best."

The magistrate, having now heard both sides of the case, gave me the following impartial and sensible advice: "This affair is for a small sum of money, which will not be worth the trouble of many visits to Atzalan, for the amount is not sufficient to entitle you to travelling expenses. My business is to conciliate people, if possible, and I advise you to accept half the amount of the debt."

"*Señor juez*," I replied, "I know you are giving me good advice, and I should make a mistake in allowing irritation to prevent me from accepting it. I will take half the amount."

But here another difficulty arose, for Don Trapalero flatly refused to pay me more than one-third of the debt.

This was too much and too little for me, and I addressed the magistrate thus: "*Señor juez*, I cannot with self-respect take less than half; I will go, and will leave the money and the shame (*la vergüenza*) with him."

Leaving the building I mounted my horse, and was going dejectedly at a slow pace in the direction of Altotonga, with the mountain mist falling around me.

Before I had gone two hundred yards, I heard a sound behind me as of some one calling.

It came from the front of the *juzgado*, where the magistrate and Don Trapalero were standing.

The magistrate, evidently feeling that the good name of the place was at stake, had brought such pressure to bear on my opponent that he had consented to pay the required half of the debt.

The money was handed over to me, and thanking the magistrate, I turned a second time towards that home I was so soon going to leave.



## CHAPTER X.

## A MEXICAN DOCTOR'S NIGHT RIDE.

**A**LTHOUGH a night journey under favourable circumstances has already been mentioned, another one occurred under opposite conditions, so typical of the accidents to which one was liable in these parts that I venture to relate it at full length.

One afternoon I was informed that a man wished to see me, for the purpose of arranging a visit to Cuauzapotitan.

I interviewed this person at El Progreso, the friendly store of Don Fernando Lopez, and was given the following outlines of the case.

The messenger's brother had been attacked by a party of men, and had been left for dead with two *machete* (cutlass) wounds, one of which had laid his skull open.

He had also received three revolver bullets, one of which had entered the chest and had come out at the back.

The place with such an Indian name was situated some twenty-four miles in the worst direction for travelling, that of the *tierra caliente*, the steep descent to which could not be accomplished before nightfall.

I would willingly have avoided the journey, and asked my would-be guide if he really thought it was worth while bringing me to the wounded man, who by all accounts appeared to be in a dying condition.

But I was told that my visit was urgently desired, and indeed, if I were to go, there was no doubt that it should be at once, for the patient had already been some two days without any medical or surgical aid.

The price of the visit was arranged at thirty dollars (about three pounds in English money), but as, in the unlikely event of the man's recovery, he would necessarily remain for a long time in a dangerous condition, I stipulated that I should only be expected to attend to the patient's wounds, and should be free to return after this was done.

And now the first difficulty began. My guide had never brought a mount for me, although every one knew that I kept no horse, and that it was customary to provide me with one if a long journey were required.

The miserable kind of reasoning that prompted this omission was probably as follows: "If we send a horse for the doctor, we shall be obliged to send some one back to town with him to bring the horse home, but if he has to hire a horse for himself he will return alone and give us no further trouble."



Thus valuable time was lost, which should have been employed in selecting necessities for the patient, for nearly two hours had passed before I was able to procure a horse. It then took me some time to pack the instruments, dressings and drugs likely to be required, and it was after five in the evening when we left Altotonga. Before we reached Atzalan, some two miles on the rough downward slope, I was already aware that my horse was utterly unfit for such a journey, being a weak animal, whose insecure footsteps in the daytime made me anxious about what might happen after dark.

About an hour after we had passed Atzalan the night came on. There was no moon, and at this period the worse part of the journey began.

For the descent cut in the mountain side was freely shaded by trees, which made the track so dark in many places that I could not even see my horse's head, and had perforce to ride with a slack rein and trust to the animal's instinct.

Long before this I had made no attempt to keep beside the sure-footed mule of my companion, but followed a short distance behind.

Here and there, when the shadows lightened, I could see a rut about a yard deep, or a steep incline on the lower side of the track.

Occasionally I had to call out to my companion not to go too fast, so that my untrustworthy horse might be guided and encouraged by the sensible mule in front.

I thus spent between one and two most uncomfortable hours waiting for a fall. And it came at last.

At this place the road took a bend, and there was a ravine on the right-hand side. My wretched mount must have stepped off the track, and have put his hoof over the edge of the ravine.

In an instant I felt that he was more or less on his belly, and was sliding down a steep place, so, with the instinct of an experienced rider, I threw myself clear of a falling horse. Unfortunately, I was not able to throw myself on the upper side, but, taking a header in the darkness, I turned a somersault, and lit on my feet on a ledge at the bottom of a little cliff of some seven or eight feet, that lay a few yards down the ravine.

Here I caught hold of the bushes growing from the cliff, and called loudly to my companion for help. Fortunately, I had given him my matches some time previously, for he had neglected to take any with him.

My greatest anxiety was lest the horse, which was lying a few yards above, should fall over the cliff on top of me. I could hear his struggles and groans, but could not move on account of the darkness.

My guide, leaving his mule on the track, struck a light, and cautiously descending through the undergrowth and bushes, reached the edge of the cliff. I could now see my way, and was able, with the help of his hand and of the friendly bushes, to pull myself up, and ascending the sloping ground, where my wretched horse was lying, head downwards, I reached the track in safety.

Of the few trifling scratches I had received, not one of them was deep enough to draw blood.



My high-crowned palm-leaf hat, similar to that worn by the Indians, had protected my head, and the yielding bushes had broken the fall. I sat down on the dark road and rested, for the accident had somewhat unnerved me for the time, while my companion tried to make the horse get up.

But a weak horse, with his head lying down hill among scrubby bushes, is not a very manageable object on a dark night, and the man had to give up the attempt, although he succeeded with great difficulty in disengaging the saddle from the animal's body, and carried it up to the road.

My anxiety was now transferred to the horse, for if he were to die the owner might hold me responsible, and value the loss at perhaps one hundred dollars, although he would be dear at any price.

The question was now what we were to do, for but little more than half the journey had been accomplished.

My companion asked me if we should rest on the road until morning, but this did not seem to me the best plan, for it would have been a miserable camp, besides which there was the patient awaiting us at the end of the journey.

So I said, "We had better go on," and he then asked if I would like to ride the mule. But I was naturally rather doubtful about the safety of riding, and replied that I would follow him on foot.

So the things that we could not carry, such as the saddle of the fallen horse, my own greatcoat, and a waterproof which I had borrowed, were hidden in the bushes at the roadside, and my companion, mounting the mule, led the way, carrying some of the things I had brought for the patient, while I followed on foot, carrying the rest.

But I was not accustomed to walk over these kinds of roads at night, where the heavy rains had washed away the earth in places, leaving stones the size of a man's head projecting, and before I had gone a mile I had stumbled heavily several times, and only saved myself from falling by the use of my hands.

So I now mounted the mule, while my guide walked in front, and I soon found that the steady animal was likely to carry me in perfect safety, as he picked his way through the worst places, with which he was probably quite familiar from previous journeys.

We travelled thus several miles until we came to a hut on the roadside. Here my companion stopped, and called loudly to the inmates, who were fast asleep.

At last a woman put her head out of the door, and, finding that the person who called was an acquaintance, she came out and conversed with him.

He had evidently asked her for something to light us on the way, for she gave him two huge tallow torches, which he lit and carried in his hands as he preceded me on the road.

The journey was now comparatively easy, for the torchlight enabled us to see the bad places, and to avoid them.

The country now began to change its aspect, and the descent became less steep. Here and there by the weird torchlight might be seen some tropical foliage, and, finally, we came to another roadside hut, which was the end of our journey.



We were now at Cuauzapotitan, but not at the house of the wounded man. For after the outrage had been committed he had been carried to the house of the *juez* or magistrate.

As has been explained before, the *juez* in the country parts is often a man in humble circumstances, although something better than his neighbours, and this man kept a little roadside store, in which there were such things as tinned meat and fish for the better-class customers, ropes and harness for the pack-saddles of the passing muleteers, and rum for all.

It was merely a superior wooden hut, of which the front room was the store. The wounded man and his family had been accommodated in a side room, formed, as it were, by building outside walls to part of the verandah, and the slope of the room was such that one could not stand upright near the outer part.

The patient lay on a high couch, probably a table, in the centre of the little room, and around him were his father, two women, the elder of whom was his mother, and one or two younger members of the family.

He was a rather good-looking young man, of some twenty-five to thirty years of age, of Indian-like appearance, and, as might be expected, ghastly pale from weakness and loss of blood. It was now one in the morning, but it never seemed to occur to the family that I might require any refreshment after some eight hours of hardship, and I was brought at once to the bedside.

As they did not offer me any facilities for washing, I told the patient's father that I must have some warm water to mix with antiseptics before I began my work.

The wound on the head was more severe than is generally seen outside military practice, a clean sword cut several inches long, which had cleft into the skull, and had nearly gone through it. As the occurrence had taken place two days before and no treatment had been applied, the skin and superficial structures had retracted at least half-an-inch on each side of the cleft in the bone, leaving a long white furrow in the surrounding scalp, and the dry blood-clots in the tangled hair promised plenty of preliminary work before any stitches could be put in.

The dim lamplight did not conduce to speed, but in time the wound was cleaned, the adjoining hair removed, and the soft parts became less tense by continued moistening, and allowed themselves to be united by sutures.

The injury to the leg also implicated the bone, but was comparatively easy to dress.

I now began to consider what should be done with reference to the bullet wounds in the body. It was evident that no ball had perforated the chest, as I had been told, for the patient did not cough up any blood.

There was no oozing from any of the wounds, and as it was now four in the morning, and the patient had been exhausted by three hours treatment, I told the family that enough had been done for the present, and that the other injuries would be examined later on.

The patient's father now conducted me to my bed, a mat stretched on the damp ground in another hut, with a small puddle of water



near my head, and feeling quite worn out I was obliged to ask him if he could not give me a drink of coffee.

He returned soon with a bottle nearly full of cold coffee, and after drinking the greater part of it, and smoking one or two cigarettes, I stretched myself on my hard couch and slept the sleep of the weary.

As it was nearly daylight when I lay down, my rest was not a very long one. The patient was going on as well as could be expected, and I now turned my attention to the bullet wounds, of which there were four.

The one in his back had not in reality perforated the body, but was the separate wound of a fourth bullet.

The cheap, but showy, revolvers used by the lower classes in Mexico are, fortunately, of a very inferior description, and this wound had actually not penetrated the skin, which was merely bruised.

With regard to the three other wounds, the skin was certainly broken, but no signs of bullets could be seen about the chest.

I came to the conclusion that these bullets had hit the ribs, and, not having force enough to penetrate, had fallen down outside the body, as the posterior one certainly had done.

But the bruising of the ribs caused a complication, for pleurisy developed.

In the meantime men had been sent to try to raise my horse, and towards eleven in the morning I was well pleased to see him brought, with my greatcoat on the saddle, but the pleasure was much mitigated when I was told that the waterproof could not be found. As all the things had been left together, there is little doubt that it had been stolen by one of these very men, and I had already begun to consider how much I should have to pay to the person who had lent it.

The magistrate-storekeeper gave me a good meal, of which I was badly in need, for the patient's family took little trouble about my comforts. They neglected me so much that one night I had to remind the patient's father that he had given me no food since breakfast, and eventually some *tortillas* and a jar of coffee were brought, and I took my meal by the firelight, outside the hut.

On the second night the magistrate provided me with a sleeping place in his house. This was far better than my previous accommodation, but the comfort was marred by hearing the groans of the patient, from whom I was only separated by a few wooden slabs.

The women kept watch over him all the night, and this was the refrain which he repeated at intervals, "*Ave María, purísima! Jesús, Jesús, Jesús, levántame por el amor de Dios*" (Hail Mary, purest! Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, raise me up for the love of God).

I was now quite at liberty to return to Altotonga, as I had performed my part of the agreement, which was merely to dress the wounds; but I hardly liked to abandon a man who was lying between life and death, so I remained three days with him.

On the last day, the magistrate and the secretary of the *juzgado* in Atzalan, to which town this district belonged, arrived to take the depositions of the people who knew something about the outrage.



I was examined as to the nature of the wounds and the probability of the patient's recovery, and gave it as my opinion that there was hope, and that, but for the fear of disappointing people, I would have said "good hope."

The secretary then took the deposition of the patient, whom he tired too much by the long interview, and turning to me after he had finished, remarked, "You are right, *tiene resistencia*" (he has resistance).

During my stay here I was indebted for hospitality on at least two occasions to a Señor Guzman, whom I cannot mention by the more polite term of Don, through not remembering his Christian name. For it would be as ridiculous to call the owner of a Spanish name Don Guzman, as it would be to address the owner of an English name as Sir Jones.

This gentleman, probably knowing that I should be half starved where I was, kindly brought me to his house, where, besides good food, I was given the best cup of coffee I had taken for a long time. As all the coffee used here is grown in the district, I mentioned my surprise that his should be so much better than that of other people, when he replied with a smile, "I do differently to the others; they sell their good coffee and keep the bad for their own use, but I keep the best for myself."

His sister-in-law was doing the honours of the house, and this lady gave me the history of the events which caused the murderous attack on my patient. As nearly as possible these are her own words translated into English:—

"Your patient had robbed a woman, but she could not have cared for him much, for she soon returned to her former home. Her rightful owner, with his brother and two friends, were occupied in stealing wood in a retired place, and they were well armed in case the owner of the wood should find them out.

"Your patient unexpectedly passed by, and they thought this was too good an opportunity to be neglected, so they set upon him and left him for dead."

My sympathy for the wounded man was somewhat lessened on hearing this account, but the glory of the medical profession is that it tries to save all, good and bad alike, from the untoward consequences of their own actions.

It was now the fifth day since the afternoon of my departure from Altotonga, and I could delay my return no longer. The patient's wounds were in a healthy condition, and, giving them a final cleaning, I instructed the family not to remove the dressings for several days, for these people have very vague notions about cleanliness, and I was anxious lest exposure to dirt might set up an inflammation.

The patient's father had promised to procure me a guide for the return journey, but he made some flimsy excuse at the last minute, telling me that I had better wait until the next day, and return then with the judicial party to Atzalan.

I was naturally provoked at this treatment, and said that I could not wait. The bare sum of thirty dollars was handed to me at the door, without allowing me anything for the extra time I had remained, and I set out on the homeward ride, which, if not so disastrous as



the previous one by night, was nevertheless full of disagreeable adventures.

The way was practically unknown to me, as the greater part of the journey had been made in the dark. Before I had ridden an hour one of those heavy storms so frequent in mountain regions set in, and now that the waterproof had been stolen, my old greatcoat proved a very insufficient protection against the wet.

Finally I had to shelter in a roadside hut. The people, knowing that I was the doctor, were civil enough, but importuned me to examine a person with some obscure complaint.

When the rain began to moderate, I continued the journey, being anxious lest my unsure-footed horse should slip on the wet ground.

A few miles further on I came to a roadside hut where spirits were sold and, as there were two tracks here, I had to ask the way. The shanty keeper, noticing that my worn-out stirrup leather was giving way, kindly patched it up again, but refused to take money for his services, as he wished me to prescribe for his sick children. This perforce had to be done, and nothing of consequence happened until I was within four miles of Atzalan. Here there was a river which had not appeared very formidable on the previous journey, but the heavy rains had now brought down a body of water quite sufficient to be dangerous, especially to the rider of a bad horse.

I urged my animal into the river, and, when he was belly deep in the current, I saw some people, near the houses on the opposite side, who were making violent gestures with their hands, pointing up the watercourse, by which I considered that they were warning me that the ford was higher up.

I turned the horse back and took a higher crossing, the animal being only just able to stem the current, which was well up on his body.

On reaching the other side these people told me that, if I had persisted in my first attempt, my horse would have got beyond his depth; we should have been swept over a waterfall.

This appeared to be a narrow escape, but all my dangers were now over. Impediments, however, hampered me to the last. Just as I reached the welcome outskirts of Atzalan towards sundown, a man was stationed on the road to inform me that a patient was awaiting me in that town.

In vain I told him that I was tired and wet, and not in a fit state to attend any one.

The patient was said to be seriously ill, and the messenger had been directed to bring me without fail.

I could scarcely command myself so as to perform this visit decently, especially as the case could have easily waited until next day.

It was already night when I left the house and began the stony ascent from Atzalan to Altotonga. The road here, although perhaps just as bad as in many places lower down, was familiar to me from use, and I welcomed it as the nearing of the journey's end.

Soon I was clattering through one of the roughly paved central streets of Altotonga, and my satisfaction may be imagined on giving up my wretched mount without his being apparently the worse for his misadventure.



I now entered the courtyard of my house. Everything was in darkness, for my servant was out, probably not expecting my return at such a late hour.

Just then a servant from the adjoining house, whose balcony overlooked my courtyard, shouted out, "You are to go at once to the house of Doña —; she has been confined, and there's something wrong with her."

"I will not go," I replied testily; "I am worn out and hungry and must have rest."

"All right, do not go; only I was told to send you," the servant replied.

Just then my own servant entered the yard, having heard of my return.

After a wash and supper, I felt in a more amiable state of mind, and knowing that the one unpardonable sin of a doctor is to neglect a case of confinement, I walked to the house, which was not far off.

Fortunately it was not a serious case. A slight operation was necessary, but could not be done without the husband's leave, and, being absent, his consent did not arrive until next day, when the *señora* was duly relieved.

And in the meantime I slept and rested.

So ended my worst professional ride in Mexico, or anywhere else. Not many weeks afterwards I was told that the horse that had carried me on this journey fell dead as he was being ridden, so I may consider myself lucky that this did not happen while he was in my charge, else I might have been liable for damages.

The wounded man recovered so well that, some two years afterwards, I heard that he would soon be out of prison, where he had been sent for "going on with his old tricks."

I do not know if these "tricks" were of the same nature that caused him so much danger on this occasion, and I never heard what penalty was awarded to his assailants.

The profits of this journey were not enormous. Out of the thirty dollars paid me for the visit, I had to recompense the person who had so kindly lent me the waterproof that was stolen. It might have been worth fifteen dollars when new, but the owner was satisfied with ten dollars for its loss. If you add to this, five dollars for horse hire, at a dollar a day from the afternoon of my departure to the night of my return, half my earnings had been consumed in expenses, leaving me fifteen dollars, or thirty shillings in English money, for more than four days of hardship and a certain amount of danger.

In justice to ruling prices, however, I may add that a native Mexican doctor would have known how to exact from two to three times the fee that I received.



## CHAPTER XI.

## MODERN AZTECS.

**B**EFORE leaving the district it would be suitable to say a few words about the native race that still inhabits central Mexico, for Altotonga lies towards the eastern extremity of those parts where the Aztec language is spoken.

This language was naturally the most important one at the time of the Spanish conquest, being that of the ruling native race which had subjected so many of the surrounding tribes.

Few, if any, authorities seem to agree about the number of these languages, for what one person may classify as such another will call a dialect, and thus large discrepancies take place.

The situation cannot be more concisely described than in the words of Gadow: "Some authorities group the hundred and odd so-called languages into a dozen or a score of families."

Those who wish to become acquainted with Aztec would do well to procure a reprint of the book written by the priest André de Olmos<sup>1</sup> soon after the Spanish conquest. This Hispano-Aztec grammar is stated to have been the result of some twenty years of study, and although badly compiled, according to modern ideas, evinces a profound knowledge of the subject.

This book is also interesting as showing how much the Spanish language itself has changed in nearly four hundred years.

And this change in Spanish orthography naturally affects the Aztec, which is perforce written in Roman characters, as the native language had never reached the stage of letters.

So that some words in this book are written in a manner that would not convey to an English-speaking person, or even perhaps to a modern Spaniard, the sounds that they are intended to represent.

The most noticeable example is as follows: In the Aztec language the sound *sh* is frequently used; this sound does not exist in Spanish, and cannot be represented by any letter or combination of letters.

How then did the ancient writers represent such a sound?

By the letter *x*, which is still used in Mexico to represent *sh* in the middle of Aztec words which are incorporated in the Spanish spoken there. Thus the word used by a Spanish-speaking Mexican for "to reap maize" is written *píxcar*, but is pronounced *pishcar*.

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<sup>1</sup> "Grammaire de la langue Nahuatl," publiée par Rémi Siméon, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris.



And although the Spanish grammar is silent about such a use of the letter *x* in ancient times, it would appear that this was the case, and the letter bears this value to the present day in the allied Portuguese language.

Aztec itself has probably not changed more than Spanish since the period of the conquest of Mexico, for on writing down the numerals as far as the number ten from the dictation of a modern Aztec, and comparing them with the same numbers in the Hispano-Aztec grammar before mentioned, it was found that there were only such slight differences in a few of the words as might be accounted for by the difficulty of writing in an unknown language.

Aztec would probably be harder to learn conversationally than some of the other native languages, for these Indians are generally of a morose disposition, and do not care for social intercourse with foreigners, while the Zapotecs are of a more genial temperament, and also appear more intelligent, so they are better able to impart their knowledge.

This brings one to the subject of the Aztec disposition, of which some idea may have already been formed.

The opinion of Ober is probably correct in comparing the Aztec unfavourably with some of the other native races, as far as kindness to a stranger is concerned. He may perhaps be a better fighter and worker than the inhabitants of the warmer districts, but his attitude is gloomy and reserved, and he wishes to keep at a distance from those who are not of his race.

Even he and his countrymen of Spanish descent are not too friendly, but they have come to understand that they must tolerate each other, and they each have a bond of sympathy in the mutual dislike to foreigners that many of the lower class Mexicans, of apparently white descent, share with the Indians.

The following incident will illustrate the Aztec character.

The writer was walking in the country, about three miles from Altotonga. There was a small hut, and the view was such that it looked like the making of a good photograph.

Having no camera, he merely paused in his walk, and looked at the hut from a distance of some fifty yards.

There was soon heard the angry voice of a woman who had been unseen in the interior of the hut, and the following dialogue ensued: "Why are you looking at me? Go away at once."

"Do not trouble yourself, Señora; I was only looking at the view, which belongs to every one."

Whereupon another woman, who was washing clothes at a stream close by, exclaimed: "Yes, indeed, she is quite right; it is not the custom for the people of the town to come out here."

An Aztec *peón* will seldom or never be heard whistling or singing at his field work, and will have to drink a considerable amount of *pulque* or rum before he indulges in hilarity of a most undesirable kind.

He assumes a somewhat tragic aspect with his solemn countenance and drooping blanket, but it is difficult to unearth the qualities that lie under his impassive exterior, and to the ordinary observer they



will not be worth the trouble. Even the young children do not romp and play, but walk about sedately with mournful faces.

But if the Aztec fails to impress a stranger favourably by his assumption of dignity, he is at least believed in by the females of his own race, who are true Indians, and the submissive servants of their mankind.

Many of these women will hardly answer the passing salutation of a stranger, and hurry past with their faces half concealed in the *rebozo*. Thus they are likely to be looked upon as models of modesty until their relations with the other sex are disclosed.

Gadow aptly describes the Indian mind "as a book with seven seals," and when these seals are broken under the pressure of excitement, such as that caused by anger or drink, the Aztec is dangerous.

The delicate question must now be discussed as to whether the life of a stranger is safe in some of the country parts of Mexico. It is hard to reconcile the different statements made by travellers.

Ober, when about to make the ascent of the mountain Popocatepetl, quotes his Mexican guide as saying "Señor, they would kill you for a dollar."

A tourist who wrote a book some fifteen to twenty years later, and went about with an armed escort, remarks: "Travellers, however, are safe in Mexico."

Much improvement has undoubtedly been effected during the period which has elapsed between these opposing statements, but, with all due allowances, the character of a people will not entirely change in that space of time.

Both these statements may be modified into comparative harmony with each other by the addition of a slight proviso at the end of each, thus:—

"Señor, they would kill you for a dollar," if they were not afraid of the consequences.

"Travellers, however, are safe in Mexico," if they go about with an armed escort.

Of the two amended statements it would be safer to trust to the latter, for the presence of even one or two armed soldiers would be a sign that the traveller was under the immediate protection of the law, which the Indian fears; while in the case of a person who travels alone and unarmed, the fear of subsequent retribution would not always be sufficient to restrain a semi-savage when under the influence of anger or drink.

The personal experiences related in this book certainly tend to prove that the foreign resident who goes about unarmed, alone, and on foot, is by no means safe in parts of Mexico, but a prudent traveller who was well armed and well mounted would not incur much danger.

The Indian, however, is not the only one against whom arms of defence may be required, for subsequent events will show that some of the lower classes of white descent are equally savage.

Apart from his hostility to foreigners, even the Aztec has his good points. He is very patriotic, is affectionate to his relations, and is contented with his humble belongings.

He can live comfortably on what an ordinary European would



starve, and has always been a cultivator of the soil. Although he may squander some of his spare *centavos* on drink, he is but little likely to part with his homestead, which is the mainstay of himself and his family.

His religious propensities have already been noted, but some of these are a doubtful asset, as they border on superstition.

Most of the older Indians are intensely ignorant, and cannot read or write, although necessity has made them to some extent bi-linguists.

But as schools now abound in many of the remote hamlets there will be a marked change in a few years' time.

The amusements of these people are of rare occurrence, and they hardly seem so constituted as to require them. They do not care for recreation in the intervals of their daily occupations, and they go to sleep soon after nightfall.

Still they have certain enjoyments. They like attending the weekly market, quite apart from any idea of profit. On these occasions they talk and drink together in the afternoon, when business is finished.

They are very fond of religious festivals, such as the one described at Jalacingo, when a few *cuadrillas* (troops or parties) will dance for some days at a time, while the other Indians watch them. They dance also at the weddings of their people, but few strangers get the chance of seeing this festivity. Their taste for music of a mournful nature has been mentioned and some become good musicians.

Under whatever phase, however, they are seen, their expression is generally that of the *indio triste* (sad Indian).

The Aztec and other Indian races are being slowly absorbed in the white population, but at such a slow rate that, after nearly four hundred years, the European and native races have only partially mixed, and to this day in the country towns the ancestry of every one there is known, whether they are of white, Indian or mixed descent.

It is a noteworthy fact that these people of mixed European and American-Indian blood are harder to distinguish from pure Europeans than the progeny of the latter from other races, such as negroes or Mongolians.

The hair, and sometimes the features, will betray the admixture of African blood in a man who is practically white, and the oblique eyes of a quarter-bred Chinaman will not pass unnoticed, for these alien races make a strong cross that is perceptible for many generations.

But with Mexican Indians the cross soon becomes obliterated, leaving the product apparently of pure European descent.

This point was brought to bear against the author in an argument which he maintained against some Spanish-Americans when he asserted the superiority of the negro over the American-Indian, while the others naturally espoused the side of their Indian fellow-countrymen.

One of these gentlemen, therefore, remarked triumphantly, "If you cross the Indian two or three times he becomes a white man."

But this only tends to prove that the American-Indian is not of a pure race. For in animals, if a pure bred is crossed with a mongrel, the progeny more nearly resembles the parent of purer blood. Whereas in a cross between different pure breeds the result would be



comparatively half-way between the two parents. But this in no way proves that the mongrel is superior to the pure bred.

This argument is only used tentatively in referring shortly to the origin of Mexican Indians, for the writer makes no pretence to scientific researches, but the faces of the people among whom one lives are an open book to be read by any one.

All writers admit that there has been Asiatic immigration into America in the prehistoric times, but it is unknown whether these immigrants merely mingled with each other or with an already existing population of so-called aboriginals.

But even denying the existence of the so-called aboriginals, the field of immigration from so large a continent as Asia would mix so many different races that the descendants would not exactly resemble any parent stock.

The Asiatic immigrant who has left his impress most undeniably on many parts of America is the Mongolian.

A person who had resided in British Columbia told the author that it was very hard to distinguish a Siwash Indian on the Pacific coast from a low-caste Japanese. In Mexico also a prominent type is the Mongolian.

But although almond-shaped eyes, round faces with flat noses, and coarse, straight, black hair are abundant in the land of the Aztecs, one feels that there is some blood other than Mongolian mixed with the native race.

In Southern Mexico, among the Zapotecs, the impression is rather of an Indo-European race, the oblique expression of the eyes being less, or even absent, while many of the people have good European features.

It is proposed to illustrate Aztec types by a few photographs which were all taken in the neighbourhood of Altotonga, where the native language is spoken.

There are two opposite types of features among these people: one, for want of a better name, called the American type, with sharp features and a prominent nose, and the other, called the Mongolian type, with round features and a flat nose.

Both have black eyes, almond-shaped to a greater or less extent, coarse, straight, black hair on the head, and only a few straggling hairs on the upper lip and chin.

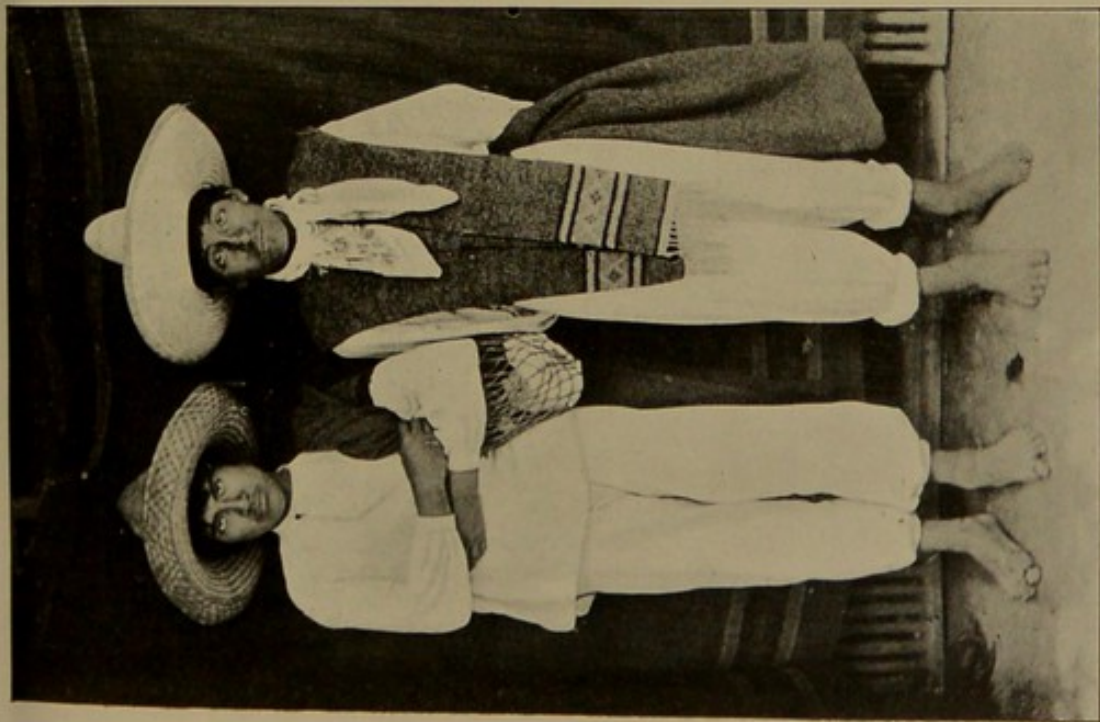
They are generally small in stature, and their colour varies between a Chinese yellow and a shade or two darker. But, as is usual in countries where two opposing types exist, a perfect type of either kind is rare, as most faces are intermediate between the two.

Photograph No. 1 represents two young men, the one to the right being a fairly good American type, and the one to the left, with the net basket in his hands, a first-rate Mongolian type. He almost looks like a Chinaman.

Photograph No. 2 is that of a man in his palm-leaf waterproof, with a woman at his side. The man is a first-rate specimen of an Aztec, and was styled as "*indio legítimo*" (pure Indian) by those who saw the likeness. He is of the American type.

On the same morning three or four others had previously been asked to stand for their likenesses, but had all refused, although the





No. 1.—Two Opposite Types—(p. 132).



No. 2.—Man of American Type, with Palm-leaf  
Waterproof—(p. 132).





No. 3.—Woman of Mongolian Type—(p. 133).



No. 4.—Composite Type—(p. 133).



request was made by means of a native market woman, who spoke to them in the Aztec language.

Fortunately, the one shown is just as good a type as any of those who refused.

The woman at his side, although a fine looking Indian, is not so good as her companion. A better type refused at the last minute, and this woman was taken instead.

She more nearly approaches the Mongolian type.

Photograph No. 3 is that of a woman carrying a child in the usual style. She is a first-rate specimen of her race, and approximates to the Mongolian type.

The mournful Indian expression will be noticed on her face, and the piercing black eyes of the baby on her back.

Photograph No. 4 is a woman of a composite type, such as is often seen, with a girl and a baby.

The low-crowned palm-leaf hat is the cheapest, and is often worn by the poorer Indians.

Photograph No. 5. A group taken for the occasion. The lads have fairly good Indian faces. The extraordinary looking man in the centre is a dumb beggar. The young woman ought not to be in the picture, as she is only half-bred, and replaced an Indian woman who suddenly left at the last minute.

Perhaps the latter thought her soul was in danger, like the woman in Huamantla.



## CHAPTER XII.

## BETWEEN ALTOTONGA AND VERACRUZ.

**I**T was with no joyous feelings that I made final preparations for leaving the place which had sheltered me for nearly a year and a half, for experience warned me that I was on the eve of a risky undertaking.

But the wet winter was coming on, and, if I were going, it was better to leave at once.

So I somewhat bitterly tore from the walls the few little ornaments which had adorned my now damp and dirty home, and said good-bye to friends I never expected to see again.

My departure was as humble as my entry, for I came in a cart drawn by a pony and a mule, and I left in one drawn by oxen.

I was now on my way to Veracruz, and had been told that the scenery was better on the main (Mexican) railway than on the Inter-oceanic, so I retraced my way from Perote as far back as San Marcos, where the two lines intersect, and changed for the other railway.

The engineering feats on this main line are certainly to be admired, as the railway climbs up or down the sides of the steep ranges, where bridges take the train over deep chasms. But, as these ranges have a barren appearance, and are chiefly clad with a scrubby kind of timber, most people would call the scenery wild rather than picturesque.

An ordinary railway journey offers little scope for adventure, so I will relate a subsequent journey from Altotonga to Veracruz, when I remained two weeks on the road at Jilotepec, a village chiefly inhabited by Indians.

This place is only some two miles distant from Banderilla, the next station to Jalapa on the inland side, and is, therefore, approached by the Interoceanic railway.

My reason for going here was as follows: The reader may have noticed my interest in the native races, but this is a pursuit which requires money, of which I had none to spare. Here, however, was a chance of seeing something new at little cost.

The part I was about to visit is inhabited by the Totonacs, a race of Indians inhabiting the eastern coast district, and different alike from the Aztecs of the tableland and the Zapotecs of the isthmus of Tehuantepec.

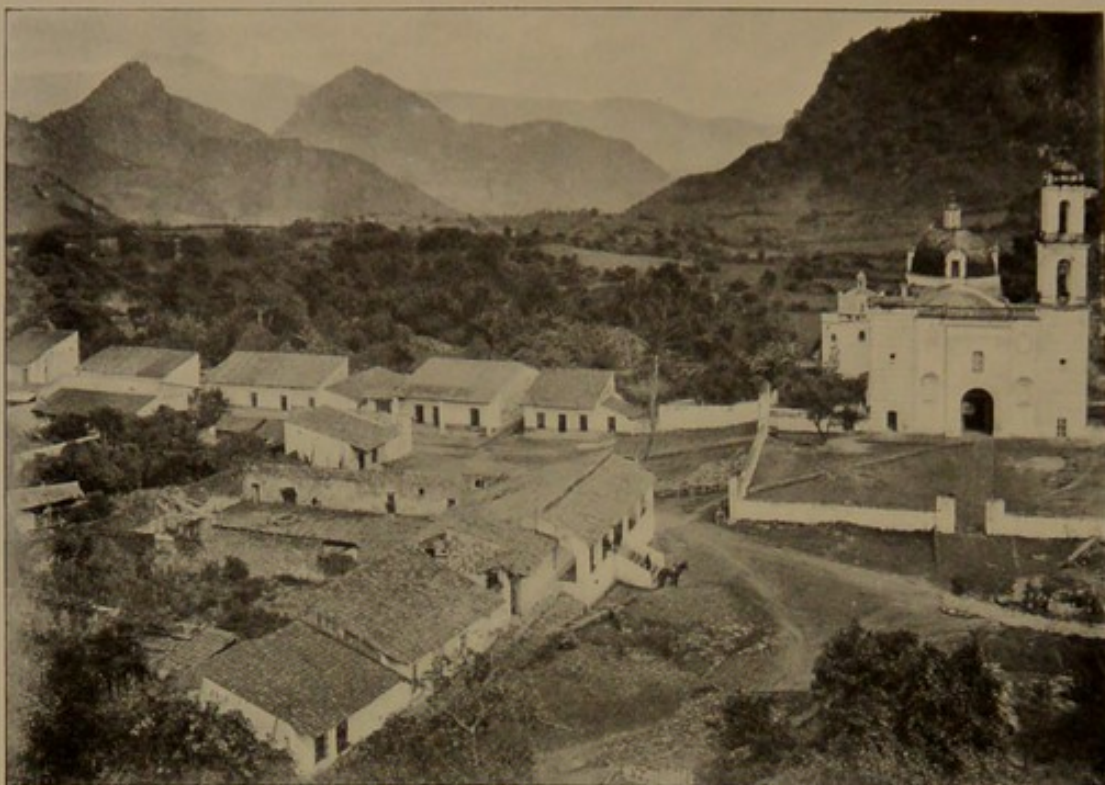
A friend of mine in Altotonga had given me a letter of introduction to a storekeeper, who was the principal person in this village, and, as it was only two miles out of the direct course of my journey, the inducement was irresistible.





No 5.—A Group (the three Lads have good Indian faces)—(p. 133).





Jilotepec—(p. 135)



Indian Hut and Women wearing the Huipil—(p. 136).



On getting out of the train at Banderilla, I left nearly all my belongings at the railway station, and, inquiring the way to Jilotepec, started on foot for that place.

Up to now hardly any tropical foliage had been seen, and Jalapa, the next station, is stated to be a little over four thousand feet above the sea level.

Soon after leaving the railway station the road commences a violent descent. The steeper parts are flagged with stones, as on the outlet from Altotonga to Zapotitlan; otherwise beasts of burden would slip and fall in muddy weather. Before arriving at Jilotepec, the coffee bushes and tropical fruit trees announce the entrance into warmer parts.

This village has a very Indian sounding name, being derived from the words *jilote*, a green cob of maize, and *tepec*, a Spanish corruption of the word *tepetl*, which means hill. So that the meaning of Jilotepec is "the hill of the green cob of maize."

The surrounding mountain scenery is intensely wild, and rocks and stones abound everywhere.

There is only one street worthy of the name. In the central part are the Government offices, the school, the principal stores, and the dwellings of the few white people who live here.

Back from the main street are lanes, with the stones piled up on either side, so as to make walls, and behind these walls, surrounded by coffee bushes and other foliage, are the Indian huts, which are here generally made of wood with tile roofs.

I lost no time in presenting my letter of introduction to Don José María Guevara, who received me very kindly, and even offered to find me a room in his house.

But as there was no facility in it for developing photographs, without causing too much inconvenience to the family, I decided to look for a room elsewhere.

It seemed almost impossible to find a suitable place, for the only two or three vacant huts had all such large apertures that absolute darkness, even at night time, could not be obtained. Don José helped me out of this difficulty by lending me a small room close to his house. This place had solid walls and no window, the door that opened into the main street being the only aperture that admitted light. It had been used for saddlery and lumber generally, but these were now removed, and the pile of maize in the corner did not trouble me, except for an occasional rat that came there to eat.

I was provided with a rough couch, and, being now installed in my new quarters, I sent to the railway station for that small part of my luggage which contained photographic supplies. This was carried down to the village by an Indian, and having bought a few *cazuelas*, or coarse earthen dishes, for washing negatives, I was now able to settle down to my work.

There was a small *fonda* or inn nearly opposite the house of Don José. It was kept by white people, and I arranged with them for my daily meals at a moderate price.

The principal objection to my new quarters was the rudeness of the village boys, the worst of whom appeared to be of white descent. These boys, having a double object of curiosity in the



arrival of a stranger and a photographer, used to crowd on the doorstep of my room. If the door was open they would remain to watch. If the door was shut, the room was in darkness, which is not desirable at all times, even for a photographer, and the stuffiness of a place without ventilation was made worse by the crowd that remained outside.

I used to water the doorstep with photographic messes, in the hope of keeping away these unwelcome visitors, but the warm climate was against me, and both doorstep and ground soon became perfectly dry.

The Totonac Indians appear to be of a less sullen and reserved temperament than the Aztecs of the high lands, although, even here, they do not mix with Europeans so freely as the Zapotecs further south.

During my short stay there was no difficulty in procuring a few likenesses, and the only misadventure I had was with low-class white Mexicans, who, as before remarked, are but little superior to Aztecs.

The chief novelty here in the way of female costume is the *huipil*, which had not been worn on any part of the high tableland where I had been.

This is a genuine Indian garment, and not like the *rebozo*, which, as its name implies, is of Spanish origin, although now freely adopted by the native women.

A male stranger should be careful about describing the intricacies of female adornments, and the best way of avoiding such pitfalls is to let the pictures speak for themselves. To a casual observer the *huipil* looks like a small white sheet, through which the head protrudes, allowing the lower folds to hang loosely about the body. It is not nearly so serviceable a garment as the *rebozo*, which has a greater latitude in the ways it can be worn, besides having the advantage of not being of a white colour, which soon looks dirty.

The *huipil* worn here appears to be similar to that described by Ober, as used by the Indians of Yucatan, and is very different to the *huipil* of Tehuantepec, which is so modified as to be merely an ornamental head-dress.

Soon after my arrival Don José and his family asked me to take a likeness of three girls dressed in the costume of the pageant that had been acted on Independence Day.

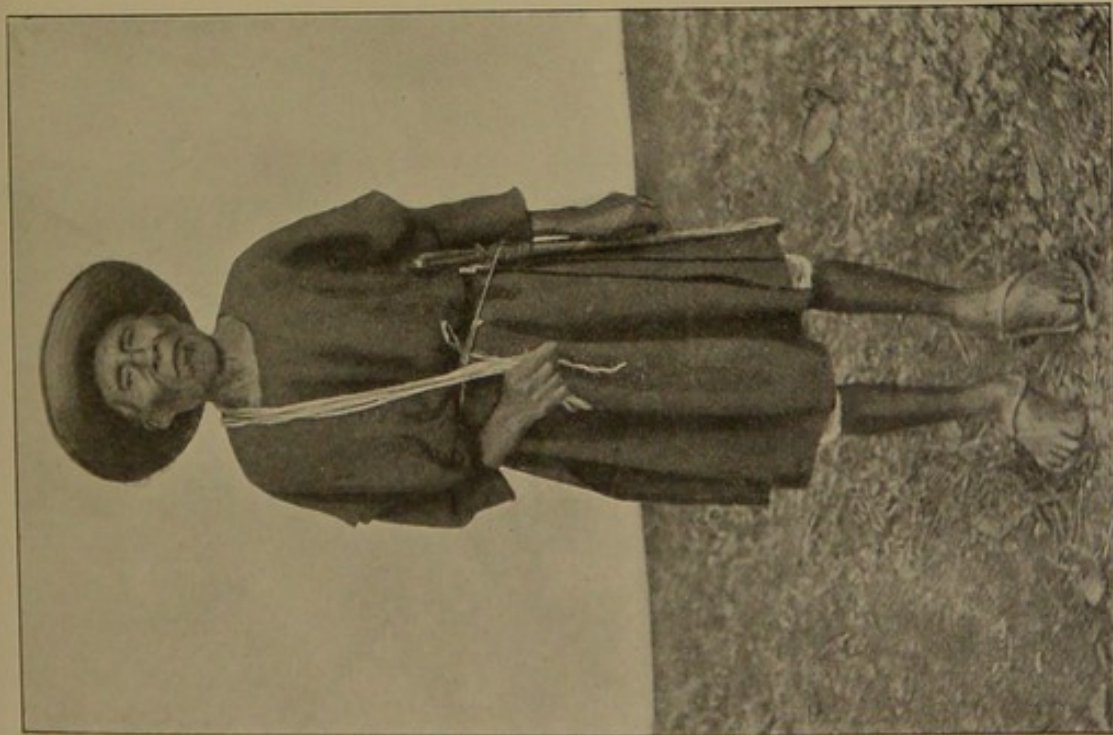
On this occasion there had evidently been some performance similar to that which I had previously seen in Altotonga, and it shows to what an extent colonial Spaniards and native Indians have combined in throwing off the yoke of their European masters.

Don José also asked me to photograph the only surviving Indian man who had never adopted the use of trousers. He was said to be more than ninety years of age. A few years previously there were some seven or eight of these trouserless men, and they were anxious to have a likeness of the last.

This old fellow spoke to me in good Spanish, and appeared to be fairly strong; but a fine day was picked for taking his likeness, lest he should catch cold.

For the first week of my stay here nothing very eventful happened. The lumber-room in which I was housed served for bedroom, sitting-room and photographic purposes.





The last Trouserless Man of Jilotepec—(p. 136).



A Hard-working Couple—(p. 140)





Five Indian (Totonac) Girls and one White Girl (centre front)—(p. 140).



Village of La Antigua, about twenty miles from Veracruz—(p. 141).



At the *fonda* it was always possible to get bread, meat and vegetables, together with a cup of good coffee. It is by no means desirable in Mexico to have one's meals in a common place of this kind where there is only one room for everybody, as there are occasionally drunken and other undesirable guests, who will not always keep to themselves, especially when they think there is a good opportunity to annoy a stranger.

But the people of this house were kind to me, and if any such attempts were made they were promptly checked.

My greatest privation was the lack of convenience for a bath. For although there was a stream in the village, quite large enough to bathe in, the most suitable places were nearly always occupied by women washing clothes or were in exposed situations.

I used to stroll about, looking for objects of interest, but never got very far from the village in my rambles, as the scenery appeared to be the same everywhere, and the steepness of the rough mountain roads was such that it made a short walk more tiring than a far longer one on good ground.

The Indians were quite inoffensive, either merely saying "*Buenos dias*," or else passing along without more than a furtive glance.

In so short a time little could be learned about the Totonac language, but the Indians here, as elsewhere, are bi-linguists and speak Spanish also.

The climate in this place, although not so sultry as in the lower districts of the *tierra caliente*, is warm even in November, and the mountain drizzle or *chipi-chipi* seemed on this occasion to keep within reasonable limits, and did not cause me to lose very much time.

One day I was walking about with my camera in the outskirts of the village, looking for likely views. I was in one of the before-mentioned lanes, which have walls composed of loose stones piled upon either side. At this spot there was a place that seemed like the making of a good picture—a hut at a suitable distance behind the stone wall, which here had the desired opening, with the foliage and background required to give a pleasing impression.

It would hardly seem necessary to ask permission to take a view when the photographer is on a public track, but, knowing the peculiar ideas of some Indians on this subject, I thought it would be safer to speak to the occupants of the hut. The only grown-up person at home was a woman, whom I asked if there would be any objection.

She replied that she could not give me leave to enter within the aperture of the wall, as the owner was absent, but that I might take the view, with the house in it, from the lane.

This was all that I required, and I immediately began to arrange the camera on the track.

While my head was under the focusing cloth, I heard the sounds of approaching footsteps, but paid no attention to them, as no one had ever threatened or molested me here.

A few seconds later I found myself seized from behind and my arms held. For a few moments I remained quiet, thinking it might be some rather untimely horse-play on the part of the family of Don José.



When, however, the tightness of the grasp and a painful sensation in my face made me aware that harm was intended, I made a violent wrench, and found that two men were attacking me. I lunged out at one of these, but was taken at such a disadvantage that he managed to retire in time, and my fist did not come within several inches of his somewhat astonished face.

After following him up a few yards, I suddenly recollected that the other man was behind me, and that he would have an unlimited supply of stones from those piled up on the wall.

So prudence compelled me to desist, as it appeared that no further harm was intended. The quarrel now degenerated into violent language on both sides, and several people of the village came up, who, I am bound to say, were favourably disposed towards me, knowing that I was a friend of Don José.

These two men, father and son, were occupants of the hut in question, and, returning home at this moment, had taken advantage of my preoccupation to vent their displeasure by seizing me from behind and thrusting a stinging weed, something like a nettle, in my face.

Strangest of all, there stood the camera on the road, not a bit the worse for the scuffle around it.

I threatened the elder of these two brutes with complaining to the *alcalde* (chief magistrate), to which he replied that he was not the least afraid. And he spoke with reason. For when we were confronted before that functionary in the afternoon, my assailants having been locked up in the intervening time, the magistrate addressed the elder man somewhat thus, in a tone of expostulation: "But, Don Juanito" (the affix of endearment would make the name equivalent to "my dear Don Juan") "he asked leave to photograph the house, and it was granted him." "Don Juanito," however, said he did not care who gave leave, but that he was determined that his house should not be photographed.

And these men were of white descent, and not Indians, as I at first imagined.

Having made my statement of the case I was allowed to leave, but in one or two days I returned to the *juzgado* to inquire what punishment had been awarded to these men.

The secretary received me courteously, and replied, "Oh, yes, they have been punished, you will see it in the next gazette."

"Might I ask what the punishment was," I further asked.

The secretary hesitated before he answered, "Don Juan was fined three dollars," for he well knew that no reasonable person would think that a fine of a few shillings was a sufficient penalty for an outrage like this.

The other man incurred no penalty, for he had the effrontery to say that he merely accompanied his father to prevent him from doing me injury, while in reality he was aiding him.

But what can be expected when a cowardly assailant of this kind is addressed in the magistrate's office as "My dear Don Juan."

The affair, however, did not end here, for the owner of the *fonda* said mysteriously to me several times, "*Hay consul*," by which I came to understand that there was a British Consul (or Vice-Consul) at Jalapa, only one station beyond Banderilla.



So in about two days' time I took the train to Jalapa, to lay my case before the Consul.

After listening to my statement, this gentleman said: "If you take my advice you will not go to law with this man, for Mexican law is very long-winded, but you will complain to the Governor of the State, who has power to do summary justice. I cannot put your case before him myself, as he might resent such a proceeding, but we have an understanding that on these occasions my card may be presented, and you can explain the matter yourself."

So the next morning, furnished with the Consul's card, I presented myself at the chief Government office, and asked to see that great personage, the governor of the State of Veracruz.

The governor received me in the usual courteous official style, and, sending for his second in authority, the *jefe político*, asked if he knew the people complained of.

The prefect replied "Yes," in a tone that would imply that he was unfavourably acquainted with them, for "Don Juanito" was a bad character.

The governor then told me to return in a few hours, so that there might be time to make inquiries, by means of the telephone, between Jalapa and Jilotepec, and on my second appearance said to me, "How long are you going to remain at Jilotepec?"

I replied that it would not suit me to leave before another few days had passed.

"Well, then," said the governor, "when you have left Jilotepec, come here and let me know."

The comment of the British Consul, to whom I related this interview, was: "It was not a nice thing to tell you that nothing could be done before your departure, but it was a fair thing." For the reason of the delay was that I might have time to leave the village before "Don Juanito" was punished, as afterwards my life would have been in danger.

Only for this adventure I should never have visited this rather pretty town, which is now the Capital of the State of Veracruz. From its elevation of more than four thousand feet, the climate is only sub-tropical, and not like that of the port of Veracruz, which is so hot and unhealthy that the seat of Government was removed from it to Jalapa.

As I had lost some time over this disagreeable affair, and now wanted to shorten my stay in Jilotepec, I returned to Banderilla by the late train that same night.

There had been a heavy rainfall, and, as I was walking down the steep descent between the railway station and the village, I slipped on the water-worn paving of the road, and measured my length backwards on the stones. It was like a bad fall on ice, and afterwards I only ventured to walk very slowly.

I only required one more view, and, while taking it, the owner of the *fonda* stood behind me, with a heavy stick in his hand.

The place was not far from the hut of "Don Juanito," and, on seeing me near it, he had hurriedly provided himself with a supply of stones. But a peaceful occupation like photography loses its zest under such conditions, for it puts the operator at the mercy of any sudden attack.



A few likenesses were now taken in private places where there was security.

There were two Indians here that were noticeable by the severity of their toil, which excited compassion in the case of one of them, a woman of by no means robust build. They looked miserably destitute, and were very willing to receive a small sum for having their likenesses taken, when the poor woman asked so plaintively for her picture that of course it had to be given to her.

This hard-working couple used to carry large stones all day to the edge of the village for building purposes. These stones were so heavy that the poor woman could not put them down without aid, but had to wait until her companion deposited his load, when he relieved her from the weight on her back.

For the American Indian, having a comparatively thin skull, carries a weight thus, while the thick skull of the negro enables him to carry it on his head.

The usual way for an Indian to carry a load on his back is by means of a broad band over the forehead, which is attached on either side to the load behind, and thus prevents it from slipping down.

But, in order that there should not be too great a strain on the head and neck, the Indian is obliged to bend forward while carrying a heavy load, while the negro, poising it on his head, walks upright.

In this photograph, however, the woman has no load attached to the band, and can therefore stand erect.

Before leaving the village, I arranged with the family of Don José to take the likenesses of a group of Indian girls in his garden. The girls had been carefully selected as good types, and finding that they were already waiting for me, I went to my dwelling to fetch the camera.

I was very perplexed on my return to find that there was one more girl than before, but my surprise was soon explained by finding that the daughter of Don José had dressed herself in Indian style, like the other girls. Her face of a good European type contrasts strongly with the faces of the Indian girls, who, although mostly of nice appearance, have the heavy lower features that seem characteristic of the Totonacs.

Parting on cordial terms with Don José and his family I now continued my journey. It was necessary to stop at Jalapa on my way to the coast, to inform the governor of my departure, so that he could take what measures he liked against "Don Juanito." The governor asked me if I had definitely left the village, and on being assured of this, he told me to call next morning, when he briefly informed me that "they are already punished."

But the great man never informed me what the punishment was, and I thought he might resent my asking.

I requested the Consul to send me word; but, although I left an address where a letter could be forwarded, no news ever came. Perhaps the letter miscarried.

Knowing that Veracruz was a hot and expensive place, I resolved to go no further than a village called La Antigua, about twenty-two miles from the port, although only three miles from the sea, and to make inquiries from there about the departures of the steamers.



La Antigua is a village with historic associations, for it was here that Hernándo Cortés, the conqueror of Mexico, destroyed the ships that had carried his soldiers and himself to this country, with the object of preventing those who were faint-hearted from turning back on the great undertaking which was afterwards successfully accomplished.

The station-masters at the smaller railway stations are generally very civil about looking after passengers' luggage, when there is no regular "cloak-room," so I left most of my luggage behind me, and walked towards the village which lies on the opposite side of the river.

This river is broad, but not very deep, for some horses that were taken across only lost their footing in a few places. There was a ferry to take travellers to the other side, and the ferryman had some negro blood in him, which made him more sociable than a pure-bred Indian.

The village on the far side is such a straggling place that a stranger would wander hopelessly about in the waste of loose sand that forms the roads, which are bounded by a few wooden houses and much tropical foliage on each side.

When one enters the *tierra caliente*, it is always harder to obtain a lodging, and, after several efforts, I had to be contented with a bed in the same room as the son of the house, but this was better than being lodged with an unknown traveller. For in these hot parts they frequently put two beds in one room. If you have luck, you may have the room to yourself, but you are only entitled to the bed.

There was a strong infusion of negro blood among the people here, and this cross produced an effect similar to that described by Gadow on the Pacific coast, where the inhabitants of a village of this mixed race were "less sullen and reserved" than those of the surrounding districts.

When negro blood is mixed with that of the Indians of the coast districts, it is rather hard to tell the extent of the mixture, for even a pure-bred Indian of the *tierra caliente* is considerably darker than one of the tableland.

But if the admixture of negro blood is more than very slight, the hair becomes short and frizzled.

This is especially noticeable in the women. For it is the universal custom in Mexico for the Indian women to wear their hair in two long plaits, but many of the women here could only produce rudimentary ornaments of this kind.

The large river here afforded the long desired luxury of a bathe, but I did not care to swim much, for on asking if there were *caimanes* (alligators) here, the answer was that there were none, but that sharks sometimes came up from the sea at high tide. The water, however, seemed quite fresh.

I only remained a few days here, for there was not much photographic inducement, and in any case there was no facility for developing one's work. The two or three views taken had to be finished at a photographer's in Veracruz, and I will now continue the direct thread of my journey from that place to Tehuantepec.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## VERACRUZ TO TEHUANTEPEC.

IT is more difficult for a traveller of small means to procure good accommodation in Veracruz than in Mexico City, on account of the higher prices that rule in the *tierra caliente*, and I found it impossible to obtain board and lodging, even at an inferior hotel, at less than two dollars a day.

A cheap hotel in a large town in Mexico is a most undesirable place, for its arrangements may be concisely summed up in the term "dirty," so I lost no time in hastening my departure.

A few of the central streets in Veracruz are fairly good, and the *plaza* is pretty with its tropical foliage, but there are many places of the slum description which emit unsavoury odours, and but for the good offices of the little black vulture, the *zopilote*, the health of the town would suffer considerably.

My only business of importance was to go to a mercantile house to receive the sum of my small savings in Altotonga, where a business man had given me a letter of credit, in return for the silver and bank notes left with him, for gold is practically unseen in Mexico.

I now only desired to take some of this money in cash, for travelling expenses, and obtained another letter, for the greater part, on a mercantile house in Tehuantepec, where sooner or later I expected to arrive.

The next thing to consider was the best way of reaching that place.

There is now train communication between the Mexican railway, along which I had travelled to Veracruz, and the Tehuantepec line which connects the port of Coatzacoalcos on the Atlantic coast with Salina Cruz on the Pacific. But this connection had not yet been completed, and there was a most undesirable gap that had to be bridged by coach travelling. The expense of this part of the journey made me anxious, for my luggage was rather heavy with medical books and other accessories, so I gave up the idea of travelling on the unfinished line, and preferred to go by steamer to Coatzacoalcos.

There were small steamers frequently going to this port, the difficult native name of which is gradually being supplanted by the easier Spanish one of Puerto Mexico.

The journey is not a long one, and leaving Veracruz late in the day, one arrives early on the next morning at the more southerly port.

It is extremely desirable when travelling in these out-of-the-way places to have little luggage, which often has to be carried from one means of transit to another on the shoulders of men who engage in such occupations.



This means expense, with risk to luggage and sometimes to oneself, for on this occasion the porter who carried my heaviest trunk from the steamer to the railway station, let it fall so close beside me that I barely had time to avoid having my foot crushed. After leaving all my heavy luggage at the station, I obtained a bed at the customary price of a dollar a night, and then walked about the streets of Coatzacoalcos to get information about the town itself and the isthmus of Tehuantepec in general.

The town contains a few thousand inhabitants, and is spread over a considerable extent of ground, with broad streets of loose sand.

The buildings may be described as of the wooden shanty description so prevalent in the new seaports of tropical countries, where solid masonry often gives way to this cosmopolitan style.

The general impression of a sandy, comfortless place of this kind is not pleasing, especially when, in addition, the necessities of life are dear, and the Zapotec women, with their low-necked tunics, bright-coloured skirts, and often good-looking features, were almost the only objects of interest.

The only eating-house I could discover was frequented by a lot of lively young *dependientes* (clerks, shop assistants, &c.), who threw bread at each other during mealtime.

This pastime is never appreciated by strangers who are in the line of cross fire, although on this occasion they offered me a cigar, to show that no rudeness was intended.

While wandering about I saw a chemist's shop, with a doctor's name over it, for, as has been before remarked, these two occupations are often combined in Mexico.

Here was a chance for getting the desired information, so I entered the shop, and introducing myself to the doctor, briefly told him my object.

He very civilly explained at length the condition of this region, as far as the medical profession was concerned, and appeared to have a personal knowledge of many of the places in it.

The isthmus of Tehuantepec, as already stated, has Coatzacoalcos and Salina Cruz for its ports on either side.

These ports are connected by the railway which bears the same name as the isthmus, on account of Tehuantepec being by far the largest town on the line. The distance from one seaport to the other is nearly two hundred miles, and the town of Tehuantepec lies near the Pacific side.

The doctor put the facts before me so candidly that I became rather disheartened at the outset.

He looked at me fixedly when he described Coatzacoalcos as about the best town on the line. But even if I had liked the place better, it would have been risky for me with my small means to oppose well-established practices.

He then said that about half-way towards the other side there was a station called Palomares, where possibly I might get some work, as there had been an epidemic there lately. Going further along the line there was San Geronimo, with a population of from two to three thousand people. This place had no doctor—"but" (here he looked fixedly at me again as he spoke), "no doctor has ever been able to hold out there yet."



If I failed in that place, there was Tehuantepec, two stations further on—a large town of some ten thousand inhabitants, but with a good many doctors already. It was therefore in an anxious frame of mind that I went to the railway station, and asked for a ticket to Palomares.

The money received from the mercantile house in Veracruz was in banknotes of the country. With most of these I was already familiar, such as those of the Bank of London and Mexico, and of the Bank of Veracruz.

But there were a few notes of the Bank of Tamaulipas, which I had never seen before, and on the principle of testing the unknown, and keeping what is known to be good, I tendered one of these in payment.

To my discomfiture the official refused to take it. Apprehensive that these notes might be bad, although it hardly seemed possible that a mercantile house would act thus, I asked the reason of his refusal. The official replied, "There is a discount on these notes, and I do not know what the discount is, therefore I will not take it." Fortunately I had enough money in my purse to make up the deficiency, else I might have lost the train. I afterwards found out that the discount on these notes was very small, only about two per cent., but the slight loss was nothing as compared with the inconvenience, and in future I was on my guard against the paper of this bank, which bears the figure of a mournful-looking child upon it.

The train went slowly along the line out through a jungle of tropical vegetation, amongst which were small palm trees and an abundance of wild plantains.

The rainfall on this side of the isthmus is very heavy, and the ground at the side of the railway was flooded in many places, giving it the appearance of a suitable home for malaria and other tropical diseases.

Once or twice a sign-board with *plantación* written on it, indicated that some kind of cultivation was conducted on a large scale.

The whole line is almost on a dead level, for, although the watershed between the two oceans is near Palomares, the rise and fall is so slight as not to be noticeable.

On arriving at this station there was a large but common-looking accommodation house where I brought my luggage. The mistress of this place was a somewhat remarkable person, a young Zapotec woman who was said to be married to an American.

During his absence owing to some serious illness, Doña Gumer-sinda was managing the business with considerable tact, allowing herself a certain amount of that freedom usually claimed by grass widows, and thus ingratiating herself with the railway men who patronized her house, while she did not neglect the money side of the question, and presided herself at the drinking bar until a fairly late hour at night.

She was a very good specimen of a Zapotec Indian, somewhat over middle height, with good European features and graceful proportions, having a certain delicacy of manner not often equalled among the lower-class Mexicans of white descent. But she could act otherwise when she thought the occasion required it. For when an Italian



who had lost something in her house became disagreeable in consequence, she mimicked his Spanish, and effectually put him to flight by threatening to throw a soda-water bottle at him.

At places of this kind there is always drink, and generally food, but more rarely sleeping room, so I was relieved when this lady said she could accommodate me.

She conducted me to a shelter which could hardly be dignified by the name of bedroom, at the back of the shambling wooden premises, and with her own fair hands, or perhaps they were better called swarthy, began to sweep the dirty earthen floor which was deeply covered with dust.

The quality of this chamber was aptly gauged by a half-drunken German contractor who was lodged with me one night, when he made a remark as to the consequences of sleeping in such a place, a remark which made my skin creep.

The only permanent lodgers besides myself were two Syrian pedlars, who sat all day behind their wares in the verandah facing the railway line.

These men took their meals at the same table as other guests, but were independent of sleeping accommodation, for they made make-shift couches out of some loose planks in the eating-room.

Places of this kind care little for permanent lodgers, and make a better profit out of the meals, and still more out of the drink of travellers.

Undesirable as my new quarters were, it was possible that there might be some work for a doctor, so I obtained leave to have a professional notice fastened to the front of the house, and then took a walk through the settlement.

This did not improve upon further acquaintance, for the greater part of the dwellings were Indian's huts, with here and there a shanty store of but little better description. In one place there was a small line of buildings, offering a faint resemblance to a street, but a good many houses were isolated among the surrounding foliage.

The small settlement was bounded by scrub, but although there was still plenty of vegetation, there were unmistakable signs that the rainfall was not so heavy here, and the ground was nowhere flooded as before.

The outlook for work looked dismal enough, and I returned to my lodging with lessened hopes that the notice of my arrival would induce some one to come to me.

Three or four monotonous days passed thus, without a single demand for my services.

The evenings and earlier part of the nights were more lively, but in a way that few people desire.

For the house had no sitting accommodation, except in the eating room, which had the drinking bar at one end.

Here congregated travellers, railway men off duty, and those whom love of drink and company drew together under the presiding care of Doña Gumersinda. It was truly a mixed company.

It must not be supposed that only Spanish was spoken here. This was of course the universal language, of which every one had to know something, but, as the house was frequented by railway people, there



was a strong *Gringo* element that frequently gave voice to the English language.

In some of the quiet country towns, the terms *greaser* and *Gringo* are hardly ever heard, for nearly all the people are sons of the soil, and there is little scope for giving a nickname to any person's nationality, except in the case of an occasional Spaniard who might be called a *gachupín*.

In the places, however, where the Anglo-Saxon and other northern races clash with Mexicans, the two former terms abound.

The meaning of the word *greaser* is self evident as a term of contempt applied to the Mexicans, who perfectly understand that it means "*los sucios*" (the dirty ones) and resent it accordingly.

But the meaning of *Gringo*, as applied by Spanish-Americans to the northern races generally, is ill understood, some writers saying that it is impossible to account for its derivation, while others assert that it comes from the song, "Green grow the rushes, O," which the Spanish-speaking people are said to have contracted into *Gringo*.

These conjectures are the result of people writing about a country when they do not understand its language.

*Gringo* is Spanish dialect for *Griego*, which means Greek, and in Spain one person will say to another, "Do not talk *Gringo* to me," just as in England people say, "Do not talk Greek to me."

But in Spanish-America the word has a secondary meaning, which is thus given in a dictionary: "*Gringo*—Greek, incomprehensible, English or German," and the sequence is natural enough, for most of the strangers who talk an incomprehensible language to these people belong to the Anglo-Saxon or allied races.

All over Mexico a great number of the railway officials and employees are English speaking people, often Americans, so that in the vicinity of a railway this language is of frequent occurrence.

On these occasions, when a group of people, speaking the same language as yourself, make friendly overtures in the way of asking you to drink with them, it is somewhat hard to refuse, however much you may wish to avoid doing so.

In the present instance the German contractor before mentioned, who spoke fluent English, came up to me and said, "I think you are a *Gringo*, and you must have a drink with us."

Of the two people with him, one was an American, and the other a big railway man of somewhat nondescript nationality. This latter, a white man, or nearly so, came from the Danish West Indies. On being asked what his own language was, he considered a moment, and then said he thought it was French, as this was the medium through which the instruction in his school had been given.

He was now speaking English without any foreign accent to the others drinking with him, and good Spanish in the intervals to Doña Gumersinda, whom he appeared to admire. He declared he could partially understand the German song of the contractor, and knew something of Danish, the official language of his own country, so that his talents seemed rather wasted in his present employment.

A railway contractor is rather a great man when near his contract, for he is in the position of an employer of labour, and when, in addition, he is in the mood to spend money on drinks, he has a right to make as much noise as he likes.



The only refuge from these nightly festivities was in my dirty sleeping room, where I used to retire in order to escape from the company forced on me.

It is therefore not surprising that after three or four days I lost all hope of doing anything here. Fortunately I had neither unpacked my luggage, nor the small box of medicines I carried with me, and as the train came in front of the door, it was easy to move on.

So I said good-bye to Doña Gumersinda, who proved her goodwill and her influence among the railway people by offering to send something after me in the train, free of charge, and I continued my way towards San Geronimo, the place dismally described as where "no doctor has ever been able to hold out."

The next station to Palomares is Mogoñé, where a rather picturesque river runs through rocky ground, and when I came here my spirits fell still further at seeing the changed aspect of the country.

It has already been noticed that the rainfall at Palomares appeared considerably less than near the Atlantic coast, and this was the last place where there was any vegetation worthy of the name, and the railway now ran through a tract of arid-looking ground, incapable of supporting the life of grazing animals.

It bore a family resemblance to the miserable extent of country on the frontier of Texas and northern Mexico, but it was considerably worse here, having less of the prickly pear, which, however undesirable, can be eaten when young by cattle, while there was more *mezquite*, which thrives where ordinary foliage will not grow, and the country presented the same aspect as far as San Geronimo, some four or five stations further on.

Alighting here towards dusk, I obtained a lodging at an hotel kept by Americans, close to the railway station, and had to postpone further investigations until the next day.

This house, although ordinary enough, was far superior to the place at Palomares, which resembled a drinking shanty more than anything else.

I was awakened early next morning by the sound of a band of native musicians, who were playing just outside the hotel, in honour of somebody's saint's day.

It did not surprise me that they were playing well, for the Indians frequently have a good taste for music, but the principal tune they played was such an unusual one that I thought it must be a native air, until I found out subsequently that it was a Spanish *zarzuela* (comic opera) called "*Enseñanza Libre*."

While the playing was going on I could hear the shuffling of feet in the hotel yard, and, on peering through a small window high in the wall, I could see two lively Zapotec girls, who were employed in the hotel, engaged in dancing.

After breakfast I went out to investigate what the settlement was like. There were a few houses, rather of a better class, close to the railway station, but the native village only began about a mile away, and extended perhaps for another mile further.

The way lay along a track worn by bullock carts through the inhospitable *mezquite* before described. In the intervals between



these thorny bushes was the bare ground, which looked as if it had never seen rain.

On arriving at the settlement, the track lay between scattered huts which, although humble enough, could hardly be called miserable, for solid mud walls make a very comfortable shelter in hot weather, and palm-leaf thatch makes a good roof.

In these dwellings there might be about two rooms, or, rather, one subdivided by a screen, which suffices for the accommodation of a family. The furniture of the hut is generally scanty, but the glory of an Indian dwelling in these tropical parts is the hammock, which is large and very serviceable.

Many huts have two hammocks continually slung from wall to wall, into which a wooden fixture has been built, so that the hammock strings may be securely tied.

Most of the inhabitants of this village were Zapotecs, but a few of the principal people were of European descent.

Towards the further end of the village lay the market-place, solidly floored, with a good roof and open sides.

This is always rather an important place in any settlement, and close by were one or two of the principal stores.

On my asking for information about the village, I was directed to a person whom I will call "The King of the Isthmus," being, in fact, a title claimed by himself when he had too freely imbibed, and as he was kindly disposed towards me, I will not betray his real name.

The king, who on this occasion was as sober as—a king should be, was a somewhat unusual kind of person. He could not have been a pure-bred Zapotec, and had a slight curl in his hair, which made me suspect a cross of negro blood. Practically, however, he was a Zapotec, for his wife was of that race, and his grown-up daughter appeared like other Indian girls.

He talked Zapotec to his family, but, like other natives, spoke Spanish as well, and presented me with his gilt-edged card, on which was inscribed a very pretty Iberian surname.

He was the first specimen I had seen of an Indian-speaking man who was also a person of education. For, unlike those who only knew Spanish colloquially, this man, besides having a small store, was a competent book-keeper, and could earn enough in that capacity among the few storekeepers in the village to support himself comfortably without being overburdened with work.

This gentleman asked me to sit down in his house, which was close to the market, and, giving me the desired information about the village, offered to make inquiries about a lodging.

Telling him that I desired first to go on to Tehuantepec, but would return in a few days time, I now retraced my steps to the hotel, and went on to that town the next day.

My object in seeing Tehuantepec before I settled down was twofold.

I wanted to buy a few more drugs, for none could be obtained in San Geronimo, and as I was naturally doubtful about being able to succeed in a place where no other doctor had been able to hold out, it was desirable to know whether there might be any chance of



making a living in the larger town, in spite of the number of doctors already there.

Tehuantepec is only two stations beyond San Geronimo, and all the intervening country is of the same arid description, where little else grows except those thorny plants which can endure a prolonged drought.

The Atlantic side of the isthmus abounds in swamp, and the Pacific side in desert. The former would be preferred by the planter, but the latter, although intensely hot, must be healthier on account of its dryness, which does not encourage that pest to humanity, the mosquito.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## TWO MONTHS IN THE ISTHMUS OF TEHUANTEPEC.

THE railway runs through one of the main streets of Tehuantepec without any fence between it and the public traffic, as is not unusual in many places in America.

On alighting at the railway station, I allowed myself to be brought to a rather large hotel a few hundred yards further on in the direction of the line.

Here board and lodging could be obtained at one dollar and a half a day, the lodging only giving the right to a bed in a room which contains two.

Before describing personal adventures it would be suitable to say a few words about this part of the country, and its inhabitants.

The Atlantic side of this isthmus lies in the State of Veracruz, but the Pacific side is in that of Oaxaca.

This State, in which the town of Tehuantepec is situated, has a very mixed population, there being many native tribes living in it, besides people of European and mixed descent.

The total number of inhabitants in the State of Oaxaca is said to be about one million.

According to an approximate estimate made by a Mexican official (Don Francisco Belmar) and quoted by different authors, the three most numerous sections of people are :—

White and cross-breds	...	...	320,000
Zapotecs	...	...	284,000
Mistecs	...	...	205,000

This will account for over four-fifths of the population, the balance being made up of many other native tribes in much smaller proportions.

The Zapotec language is spoken on that part of the Isthmus through which the railway runs, although there are slight variations in different places, for my friend, "the king," informed me that there was a difference between the accent of the people of San Geronimo and Tehuantepec, although these places are only a few leagues apart.

Even in Mexico the Zapotecs have a peculiar fame, arising in a great measure from the absence of that sullen temperament which causes the Aztec to keep aloof from the white population, although this is doubtless enhanced by the good looks of the women and their peculiar costume.

It is becoming harder every year to find perfect types of the native races, especially in those parts of Mexico where there is a railway. For this means of locomotion is freely used by the Indians, who can



now travel greater distances than before, and thus get more mixed with each other, as well as with the increasing white population, which is the result of the railway.

The Tehuantepec railway, however, has not had time to obliterate the type of people along the line, although it has already changed the prices of the necessities of life to an enormous extent, according to the statement of an Indian, who told me how such things as fowls and eggs had risen in value.

The Zapotecs show but little affinity to the Mongolian race, as compared with the Aztecs. It is true that occasionally an oblique form of the eyes may be noticed in the people of this part, perhaps accounted for by the small Aztec population in this very State, but the general impression is that of European features under a light brown skin.

It would not, therefore, be unreasonable to suppose that these people were emigrants from some Asiatic country far south of that which colonized the northern parts of Mexico, and that they chose this region because it was tropical, and therefore more like their original home.

The vivacity of their temperament may be demonstrated by contrasting their behaviour in the market-place with that of the Aztecs.

In any place where there are many people there will, of course, be a hum of voices, and this is just what is experienced on the tableland, where many of those in the market are of white or mixed descent, who buy from a comparatively small number of Indians. These latter, however, if noticed separately, contribute but little to the surrounding animation, although they may cry out occasionally, "*Marchante*" (or rather "*Marchanta*," as most of their customers are females) in trying to sell their wares.

But in Tehuantepec the shrill Indian voices of the women keep up such a continual clatter that they appear to speak from a love of talking, rather than from the requirements of business. The principal market day (Saturday) leaves an impression not easily effaced, in which the main features are a Babel of voices and bright-coloured dresses.

As compared with the country towns of Central Mexico, Tehuantepec may be called an Indian capital. In the former places, the native languages are occasionally heard, but, as a rule, those who speak them are visitors only, who have come in from the country to do their business, as on market days.

Whereas in Tehuantepec the Zapotec language makes itself felt as the prevailing speech of the place.

The universal affix *pec* (Spanish modification of *petl*, meaning hill) in so many parts of Mexico, where now different native races dwell, points to the existence of some previous race, perhaps the Toltecs, who overran this country.

But this is too deep a subject for a mere sketch of travel, and during the two months that I was in this region I was so perplexed with the difficulty of making a living that I did not learn as much about the natives as might be acquired in two weeks under more favourable circumstances.

It was out of the question that I should visit the far-famed ruins of



Mitla in this State, or those of Palenque, in the neighbouring State of Chiapas.

Neither was I able to see those parts of Oaxaca which have given this State such a reputation for fertility, the neighbourhood of Tehuantepec being a mere desert.

It would be long before a railway was made through this desolate region if it were not for the inter-oceanic facilities which this comparatively narrow strip of Mexico affords, and the Government is fully aware of the value of a trans-continental train for military purposes.

The town lies on the banks of a large river, in the immediate vicinity of which there is a certain amount of irrigation, and under these conditions tropical agriculture can be carried on.

But only a scrub of thorny bushes grows in these parts when nature has not been assisted.

To use the words of an Indian of San Geronimo, where there is also a river, "When you get away from the water it is *tierra muerta* (dead land)."

The nucleus of Tehuantepec is on the usual Spanish-Mexican lines. Here is the *plaza*, with the *palacio municipal* and the well-roofed market-place.

Some of the central streets might be on a par with those of other country towns, if it were not for the want of paving in the roadway. The only footing in many of these places is the sandy ground that has been ploughed up by ox carts and beasts of burden, and the person in the wake of these, with the wind blowing towards him, soon becomes thickly covered with dust, which so sticks to the perspiring skin that in a few minutes both face and clothes feel dirty.

Outside this central part, in which the principal stores are situated, lie the Indian huts of various forms, sometimes only consisting of a room with bamboo walls and a verandah around it.

The site of the town is not unpicturesque. It is dominated by a rocky hill, presumably giving its name to the place, and from this elevation can be seen a considerable part of the town, which lies between the hill and the river.

While strolling along a main street near the *plaza*, I saw a chemist's shop with "*Botica del Comercio*" written over it.

Here was an opportunity for making inquiries about medical practice and medicines, so I entered, and in the style which had now become familiar to me, asked to be pardoned for the trouble I was giving, but that, as a medical man and a stranger, I wished to be informed about the chances of being able to get any work in this place.

The only customer in the shop was a poor-looking woman, and the lady chemist behind the counter appeared to be rather uncertain about the medical treatment that her patient required.

This appeared to be a chance for ingratiating myself and proving my capability, so briefly explaining that I did not want any fee for my services, I asked the patient the necessary questions, and wrote a prescription which convinced the lady of the house that I was in the profession.

She was decidedly disposed to be sympathetic, and said that, although there were many doctors in the town, she would be pleased



to see me in her *botica*, and might be able to put me in the way of doing some business.

Presently her daughter joined her, and these two persons deserve a short description, both from their intrinsic merits, and from the part they formed in my everyday life during my residence here.

Doña Virginia was the widow of a chemist, and carried on her late husband's business, ably assisted by her young daughter Xochitl.

It was rather wonderful to see how these two persons, without any pretence to such professional acquirements as are taught in schools, carried on a flourishing business, guided by a daily familiarity in the handling of drugs, and a more or less imperfect knowledge of their actions on the human frame.

Their medical ability had been partially acquired by the frequent presence of doctors in the shop, where, in addition to compounding the prescriptions, they frequently heard the questions asked of the patient, and the resulting diagnosis and advice.

It was only in the cases of serious illnesses and better class people that the services of a medical man were required. Xochitl was more frequently in the shop than her mother, and freely gave the unfeigned chemist's advice so much desired by poorer people everywhere, but if a case were somewhat more difficult, Doña Virginia was summoned after the manner of a consulting physician.

A great number of their customers were Indians, and in talking to them Xochitl often mixed a few words of Zapotec with Spanish to make them feel at home. Doña Virginia told me that they did a larger business than the more pretentious shop in the *plaza*, and this was probably true enough, to judge from the amount of their customers, for Indians are very addicted to "remedies," although not to doctors.

All kinds of chemicals passed freely through their hands. A dyer might purchase something connected with his trade, a countryman might ask for poison to kill noxious animals or crude drugs for home consumption.

It astonished me to see an Indian buy a certain amount of mercury, and on my remarking to Doña Virginia that I had never heard of this metal being used for medicine in its pure state, she explained it thus: "The Indians have learnt that preparations of mercury are good for skin diseases, so they buy the metal and pound it up with fat to make ointment."

An Indian woman came in to know if they had any "*escudos americanos*," as American gold pieces were called, for sale.

For these people are fond of carrying such a number of gold coins strung over their necks that the money thus displayed must form a considerable part of their riches.

Xochitl explained to me that they used to deal in these gold coins to sell to the Indians, but that they had been obliged lately to give up this line.

For silver had fallen in value, and, as a greater quantity of Mexican silver dollars were now required to buy American gold, they had to charge their customers a higher price than before. But the Indians could not understand the fluctuating ratio between silver and gold, and suspected that a larger profit was attempted.



These lady chemists frequently addressed the Indian girls in an endearingly familiar manner, often saying to them, "*Adiòs, chula*" (Good-bye, pretty one).

For this word (*chulo, chula*) is one of those which are misapplied in Mexico. In Spain it would be an insult, being a term applied to the dregs of the population, but here it is an equivalent for something very pretty.

Doña Virginia and her family had come from Oaxaca, the Capital of the State of that name, and were apparently of white descent, but they had lived a good many years in Tehuantepec.

They must have been very patriotic, for besides the daughter called Xochitl, after the famed Indian queen, there was a son called Cuauhtemoc, after the last Aztec emperor. The spelling of this emperor's name is very troublesome, chiefly through the floating *h*, which even Mexicans often put in the wrong place.

As the Aztecs never had an alphabet, and *h* is always silent in Spanish, it is difficult to understand why this letter should have been inserted.

The name Xochitl is not pronounced as would be supposed. The *t* is silent, and the *x* generally sounded as *z*, making the word as if it were spelled Zochíl.

This is the pronunciation generally given by Mexicans of white descent, but I heard an Indian girl pronounce it as Zhochil, almost after the manner in which *x* has been described as being used in words of Aztec origin.

I frequented the *botica* for two or three days, and even got one or two paying patients, and having ascertained that it might be possible to do something here in case of failure in San Geronimo, I bought the few drugs I required, and returned to that place.

At this juncture it would be well to describe the far famed *huipil* of Tehuantepec, and the costume generally of the Zapotec women.

Reference has already been made to this truly Indian garment, as worn by the Totonacs, and, according to Ober, by the Mayas of Yucatan as well.

The *huipil* of Tehuantepec, however, is very different, being here modified from an outer garment for the upper part of the body into an ornamental head-dress.

As before, I prefer to let the photographs speak for themselves and will not venture to describe such an intricate subject in detail.

It will be noticed by the contrast between these two pictures that there is a marked difference in the styles for the *huipils*. For Indians, like other people, have their fashions.

The more elaborate *huipil* of the girl with the handkerchief in her hand is such as might be worn by a Zapotec of some means, or at least attired in her very best clothes, and this very *huipil* belonged to Xochitl, not the Indian queen of that name, but the young lady at the chemist's shop, and was kindly lent to the subject of the portrait.

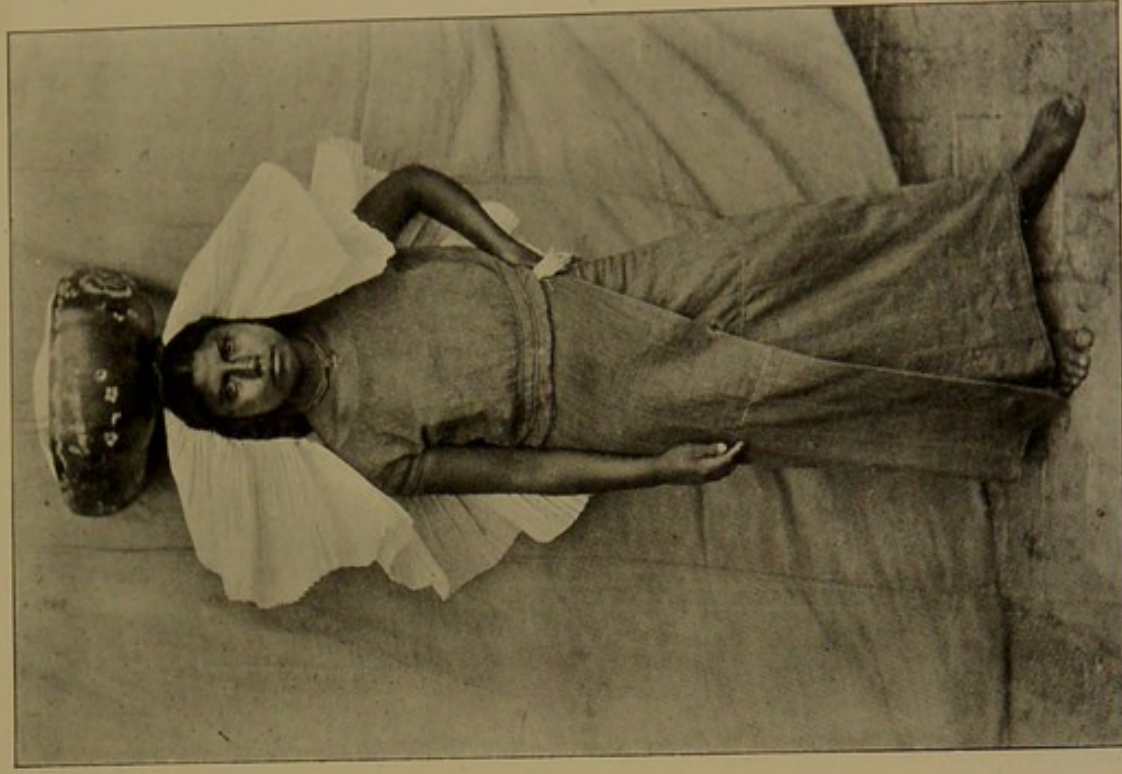
While the simpler *huipil* of the girl with the calabash on her head is what might be expected in the case of a poor woman in her working clothes, as was this *tortillera* or maize-cake seller.

This head-dress is only used out of doors, and is taken off in the house.





Zapotec Girl wearing a Fashionable Huipil—(p. 154).



Zapotec Girl wearing a Common Huipil—(p. 154)





River Scene at San Geronimo—(p. 157).



Group and Huts in San Geronimo—(p. 157)



It will also be noticed that the girl with the elaborate *huipil* has some pretence to be fashionably dressed in Indian style, for she has a chain with gold coins round her neck and a skirt with flounces.

The maize-cake seller makes no attempt to exceed the bare necessities of native costume, and wears a simple *enrollado* of Indian cloth round her loins.

An Indian who manufactured this kind of cloth on a primitive loom informed me that it costs fifty cents a yard, and that it takes six yards to make an *enrollado* or skirt of this kind, which, as its name implies, is merely a piece of cloth rolled round the waist.

With regard to the body or tunic worn, there is but little difference.

The *huipilito*, as this is strangely called, thereby making the body garment of less account than the headpiece by means of the diminutive, is of some such cheap cotton material as might be bought for a shilling. They are always of the same shape, with low necks and short sleeves, and are usually of some flaring colour with a large pattern.

The wearer of a *huipil* should go barefoot. In the rare cases that she might wish to wear boots or shoes, she ought to adopt other European clothing to match them, and would then be said to be dressed like the *gente de razón* (people of reason), as those of white descent are called in Mexico by the Indians themselves.

These extraordinary white head-dresses, together with the bright-coloured bodies and skirts, of which a groundwork of crimson is the favourite hue, have gone far towards making the women of this part famous.

The *huipil* of Tehuantepec is essentially a fashion of the town itself. In San Geronimo, only a few leagues off, it is not an article of daily attire, but most of the women there wear them on great occasions.

Occasionally a draggled-looking countrywoman appears in town with a *rebozo* on her head, just as on the tableland.

But every Zapotec woman who wished to be dressed decently would wear the *huipil* in the streets of Tehuantepec.

The costume of the Zapotec men appears to differ but little from that of other Indians, except that, owing to the heat of the climate, the blanket-like coverings worn on the tableland are generally conspicuous by their absence.

On returning by train to San Geronimo, I put up temporarily at the hotel, and now had to decide whether I should look for a lodging close to the railway station, or in the Indian village, from one to two miles away.

The houses in the former locality were few in number, but were of a better class, being inhabited by white people. The village contained the bulk of the population, but this was chiefly Indian.

It was hard to find out which was the best location, for much of the advice given me was self-interested, so I allowed the question of price to settle the matter.

Hearing that a white Mexican had rooms to let close to the station, I interviewed the owner, who asked me the astounding price of forty dollars a month for three miserable empty rooms that opened into each other, without any doors between them.

I asked this man how he thought that the badly paying business



of a doctor could warrant such an outlay, whereupon he answered that he thought I wanted the rooms for a *cantina* (drinking saloon), but that, as a doctor, I might have them at thirty-six dollars.

This was equally impossible, although he assured me that this was the best place, and that the village was only fit for the *gente pinta*.

This term was used by him in disparagement of the Indians and needs an explanation.

The *gente pinta* means the "spotted people," and not the "painted people" as might be supposed.

This spotted appearance is caused by a skin disease occasionally seen among the Indians of the hot countries, but must be rare, if existent, on the tableland, for I had never seen it there. Without going into details about its primary stages, the result is to leave white patches on the skin.

As these people are considerably darker than those on the tableland, and incline to a light-brown colour, these spots are very noticeable. A favourite place for them to appear is about the ankles, elbows or cheek bones, and the disease thus seems to prefer those parts where a bone projects under the skin.

I have had no experience in its treatment, but it is probably incurable as far as medicine is concerned, although change of food and climate might possibly effect some benefit.

I now went to the village and asked my friend "the king" if he knew of any suitable lodging at a reasonable price, and within a day or two he procured for me a large room, partially subdivided, and close to his own house, at the comparatively moderate rate of six dollars a month.

I paid the owner three dollars for the first fortnight, on the understanding that I might give up the room at the end of that time if I wanted to leave.

There is hardly such a thing as "furnished apartments" in these places, and the desolation of an empty room cannot be imagined until it is experienced.

Owing to the sandy nature of the surrounding desert, the floors of the houses become covered with a slight coating of sand, so, on hiring a house or a room, the custom is to send a man to sweep the floor, generally of brick, after which the occupant takes possession of a place bare from wall to wall.

I was obliged to hire a canvas stretcher for a bed, which I placed in the smaller subdivision of the room. I bought two or three earthenware jars and dishes, such as are manufactured by the Indians, for drinking and washing purposes, and placed two or three wooden boxes on the bare brick floor for seats, and was now installed in my miserable dwelling.

The door at one end of this room was permanently closed, the further part of the building being occupied by other people, and my only exit was into the sandy waste of the main street.

I next had to see about my food, which was not an easy matter, for there was no accommodation house of any kind, and finally arranged to have my meals at the house of an Indian of the better class, paying a dollar a day for the barest necessities of life.

Warned by my experience in Huamantla, I went to the *juzgado* of the village to ask for permission before starting in practice.



Even in these small places there is the same official ceremony, but my papers were favourably received, and I was given the necessary permission without being asked to pay for it.

Although leave to practise in one State gives a person no right to exercise his profession in another State, it is always a help to be able to produce a previous permission, which bears the official seal of the eagle and serpent as the emblem of the Mexican Republic.

I now distributed a few notices of my arrival, and awaited my patients. In a village of nearly three thousand people there must, of course, be some who are in bad health, but Indians do not, as a rule, seek medical advice when their illnesses are in primary stages, and either get better when their complaint has run its natural course, or send for help when it is too late.

I managed to get a few patients, but so few that I began to see from the very start that I should be added to the list of those who had never been able to hold out here.

It was a weary pastime to sit down on a box in my empty room, and to wait for people who seldom or never came.

Long walks would have been preferable, but the heat and the dust are terrible obstacles to a white pedestrian in these parts. The tracks between the thorny bushes are all ploughed up by the traffic into dust or fine sand, into which the feet sink at every step, and the traveller is soon reduced to such a state of discomfort from sweat and dirt that he becomes disheartened, and prefers to sit down in the shade.

The only desirable exercise was a bathe in the neighbouring river, which I frequented daily. This river, although not so large as that of Tehuantepec, had some places where there was water deep enough to swim in. To get a suitable bathing place it was necessary to walk some distance, for there did not appear to be a single well of drinking water in the village, and in the mornings and evenings there was a continual stream of women going to and fro between their huts and the river banks, carrying water in their *ollas*, or earthen jars.

My friend "the king" had made an attempt to procure drinking water close beside his house, but the water from this well was saline, and only fit for other purposes.

In the market-place near my lodging there was some animation in the way of buying and selling, but this was of a very mild description as compared with Tehuantepec; and the women here did not dress so attractively, neither wearing the *huipil* on ordinary occasions, nor paying so much attention to the general costume.

The sandy wastes that formed the streets were of a most desolate description, but the cool mud huts were not uncomfortable, or rather, would not be so if they were kept clean. For on my sitting down outside one of these huts in the evening and conversing with its inmates, one of the women naively remarked that the fleas were very troublesome, just as if she were referring to the state of the weather, or something absolutely beyond control.

The Indians are very fond of keeping pigs, and as they feed them close beside their huts vermin of all kinds are often the result.

Almost the only vegetation that grew in this village was an occasional small palm tree. But there was a certain amount of agriculture carried on near the banks of the river by means of irrigation.



Close to the market there was a good-sized store, kept by a white Mexican, who had been my patient. I used sometimes to stop and talk here, but my favourite visits were at the house of "the king," which was far above the average in comfort and cleanliness, and even had some nice furniture.

Another resting place of mine was at the house of the Indian with whom I had arranged to get my meals.

This house was also of the better class, and had some attempt at furniture in the way of tables and chairs.

Its owner, an elderly man with a grown-up family, had been twice married, his second wife being the good-looking young woman who prepared my food.

His chief occupation was in weaving cloth of the kind before mentioned as selling at fifty cents a yard.

He was an intelligent fellow, and, only for my mind being too much occupied in brooding over my unfortunate circumstances, I might have carried away much information about the surrounding districts. He used to go every year to buy produce of some kind at a distant place where the flies and mosquitoes were so bad that he could hardly endure them, even during his short visit. And if the seasoned skin of an Indian could not bear these pests, what would the condition of a white man be?

The uncivilized character of the people in another district astonished him, and his comment on them was, "I know that I am an Indian, but these were *Indios bárbaros*."

In common with many of his race, he believed there was something supernatural about photography, and asked me how this was done, telling me frankly that it must be witchcraft.

Although I was treated kindly in this house, the food was of a very inferior description. The meat was so unpalatable that when Doña Rosalía, the Indian's wife, suggested fish for a change I willingly consented.

For I thought that, as there was a fair-sized river close to the village, these fish at least would be fresh and good.

My disappointment may be imagined when the horrible taste of the first mouthful warned me that there was nothing fresh about them.

They were, in fact, fish from a lagoon several leagues distant, and so badly preserved that the taste of salt was vanquished by that of decomposition.

The natural despondency, caused by the evident impossibility of success here, was aggravated by dirt and bad living, so it is not surprising that at the end of the fortnight, for which period I had hired my abode, I was quite prepared to return to Tehuantepec, and to brave the keenest opposition rather than endure such discomfort.

On arriving at that town it was necessary to procure a private lodging, for the hotel was very unsuitable for a doctor in practice. There was no privacy even in your own room, for the second bed might be occupied, and although the price of a dollar and a half daily is reasonable enough in the *tierra caliente* there was a notice that all meals served at other than the usual hours would



be charged extra. And who ever heard of a doctor being allowed to take his meals at usual hours, which are just the times when many patients prefer to consult him?

So, in company with an intelligent boy as my guide, I went the round of several places where there might be a chance of obtaining a room, and finally succeeded.

The owner was a fat, lazy, but good-looking Indian woman, who lived on the rent of the rooms of her large, dilapidated house, and spent most of her time swinging in a hammock.

My little dwelling opened into the sandy street in front, and into a courtyard behind. It was usually let unfurnished, but I prevailed on the owner to let me have a bed and a washing-stand, and, having thus succeeded beyond my expectations in obtaining the most necessary furniture, I had not the audacity to press a demand for a table any further.

The sand that blew in through the doorway was swept away from the brick floor, and I entered into possession of my furnished apartment.

There was no window, but there was a small opening of the skylight description, which admitted sufficient light.

It was with the utmost difficulty that I developed two or three photographs in this place. Having no table I had to sit on the ground, and put my developing apparatus on a large box borrowed for the occasion.

The water also had to be carried from a considerable distance in the small jug that was my only means of keeping it.

There was very little choice of places where food could be obtained, and I took my meals in a restaurant kept by Chinamen in the *plaza*, where the daily charge was about a dollar. The food here, although poor enough, was considerably better than in San Geronimo.

My next move was to get formal permission to practise from the *jefe político*, who duly granted it, and I subsequently heard that he was favourably disposed towards me, as I had shown him my papers and had asked his leave, whereas there were some men in practice who had never done so. But in these out-of-the-way parts the procedure is not quite so strict, and the prefect has a good deal of discretionary power.

I now renewed my acquaintance with the *Botica del Comercio* and its inmates, Doña Virginia and Xochitl.

Sometimes after hanging about the shop for hours an occasional patient could be procured, but the fee paid was of a very varying nature.

Everything being dearer in these hot parts, the nominal price for a visit was two dollars, and one dollar for a consultation in the *botica*.

But one had frequently to take less, often only one-half, and occasionally advice had to be given for nothing, the few cents of the patient being devoted to buying the necessary medicines.

The earnings of one day might pay for board and lodging, but the average fell far short.

Still the life was infinitely better than at San Geronimo, for one



could earn more, although not enough, and the cost of living was about the same, while the food was better.

One day Doña Virginia consulted me about her son's foot which was ailing. There appeared to be a slight puncture in the great toe, and, on pointing this out to her, she declared that it was a jigger, or *nigua*, as they are called in these parts. She fetched a needle, and with its aid she soon shelled out the jelly-like substance that this troublesome parasite deposits under the skin of its victim.

If some such operation is not done in time, a sore toe is sure to be the result, with a likelihood of losing the nail and a possibility of blood poisoning.

White people are very liable to come into contact with these vermin while barefoot on the river bank, before or after bathing, and the numerous pigs of the Indians which go there to drink are said to be a principal cause of their existence here.

These pigs run freely about the outskirts of the town, but are not allowed near the *plaza*, and one day, hearing a terrible noise near the *botica*, we looked out and found that the policeman had arrested a pig, which strenuously resisted and fought every inch of the way.

But a seizure of a different description took place about this time.

A diminutive policeman had apparently arrested a big *Gringo*, a man considerably over six feet in height.

They passed near the *botica* walking in harmony side by side. Some difference of opinion must have arisen between them, for we presently heard the sounds of a scuffle and looked out in time to see the *Gringo* lift up the policeman in his arms like a little child.

The big man, however, had sense enough to know that it would not do to injure the representative of the law, so he deposited him gently on the ground, and began to walk away.

The little policeman's face became contorted with rage, and picking up a large stone, he ran after the *Gringo*, and, when only one or two yards behind him, heaved it with all his might between the man's shoulders.

But the big fellow walked sedately away, without appearing to notice the blow.

If, however, drink had deadened his sensation for the present, he would feel the bruise afterwards.

The *botica* did not close until towards nine in the evening, and I often returned there after dinner.

It was for the sake of company and a clean place to stop in rather than from any hope of finding a patient.

Business was naturally slack at this late hour, and the industrious Xochitl, who was generally in charge, used to occupy her time in making up small packets of soda and magnesia, to be sold at three cents each.

I frequently aided her in this pursuit, for she was a most sympathetic companion, and the time thus spent was among the most pleasant passed here.

She could wrap the powders in paper more neatly than me, so I generally did the weighing part.

This young girl, for she could hardly have been seventeen years old, was of an unusually sedate temperament, and seemed as a rule quite absorbed in her professional duties.



Once, however, when there was a kind of carnival in the town, and people with masks passed close beside the *botica*, the excitement was too much for her, and she cried out, "*Máscara, Máscara!*"

In any warm country the river is a place of great resort, especially when, as here, the artificial supply of water is very insufficient.

Fortunately for the inhabitants, the river is large and its water good and swiftly flowing, so there is a continual stream of people the whole day along its banks, some carrying water, and others washing clothes and bathing.

A very characteristic picture might be taken here, and I carried my camera to the river, hoping to obtain the desired photograph.

But wherever I planted the machine, the people vanished from in front of me, having that objection to being photographed so common among Indians, and, as my drop shutter had been stolen with so many of my other things in Cuba, I was unable to take snapshots.

The promiscuous bathing of the sexes makes ablutions in the river disagreeable for a stranger.

Once having tried in vain to find a place where there were no females in the water, I was obliged to bathe near a woman, for the rocks hemmed in the bank and prevented my going any further.

I did not venture to make any uncomplimentary remark until I had finished, lest the male friends in her vicinity might resent it; but when I was dressed, and was leaving the river, I made a passing remark to a bystander that I was astonished that the *señora* should prefer to bathe with men rather than with her own sex. She looked at me somewhat resentfully, but said nothing.

Soon, however, I discovered a way to be able to bathe in comfort. These people can stand any amount of heat, but cannot endure the least approach to cold, and by taking my bath as nightfall was coming on I generally had the whole place to myself.

Inability to stand the heat puts a white man in an unenviable position of inferiority as compared with the natives, when they are inclined to enlarge on their physical capabilities. As another stranger said to me, "You must allow that these people are strong, for a man will take an onion and turn up safely at the end of a fifty miles' walk through the bush, while a white man would die."

The remark of an Indian on this subject was, "Yes, we are strong people here and can stand the heat; but I tell you this, we cannot endure the cold." And he then related how three Indians from this part had camped out one night in the cooler part of Mexico, when two of them got some lung trouble in consequence that proved fatal.

But every race must become adapted to its own climate on the principle of the survival of the fittest, and it does not follow that natives are superior because, under their own conditions, they can do what strangers cannot. And the natives here, although generally of comely appearance, are by no means of powerful build.

The intense heat seemed to have the effect of preventing the hair growing as luxuriantly as it did in the colder parts. And when I showed these Indians a few photographs of the women of the tableland their first remark was that their own people could not grow such long hair.

An interesting Indian suburb on the opposite bank of the river was



practically inaccessible from the main part of the town, for foot passengers were not allowed to cross the railway bridge, and I was too much engrossed with the necessities of existence to find out the head of the department who alone could give permission.

One night I went to see a dance. It is not considered rude here to witness such entertainments from the outside, and I found myself one of a large number of spectators.

There was an inner room, of which only occasional glimpses could be seen, but many of the dancers were on a kind of large verandah, which had no wall to screen them from the public view.

To judge from the size of the house and the number and quality of the guests it must have been an entertainment of better-class people.

There was no such thing as evening dress, but most of the men wore neat morning costumes, generally of a dark colour. The dress of the women was more remarkable. Here, for the first time, I saw the two modes of attire, European and Indian, side by side with each other on terms of perfect equality.

Such a thing would never be seen on the tableland, where it will be remembered that at better-class dances the only women who enter dressed as Indians are the servants, who sit on the floor beside the seats occupied by their mistresses.

The difference of procedure in Tehuantepec shows on how much better terms the Zapotec mixes with Europeans as compared with the Aztec.

If I recollect rightly, there were more women dressed in European style than in the Zapotec. The former wore light morning costumes, such as are almost universal in hot countries.

But such of those who dressed in native fashion had made no attempt to modify their costumes for the occasion.

They did not wear the *huipil*, because this head-dress is not used in the house, but the low-necked tunic or *huipilito* was universally seen, and all so dressed were barefoot. The men, on the contrary, all had good boots or shoes. There was nothing wild about the dances, which were all on a European basis.

From the vicinity of the railway, and of the neighbouring port of Salina Cruz, it was not unusual to see a *Gringo* in Tehuantepec, or to hear the English language.

And on these occasions it was generally the reverse of a pleasure to be so addressed.

In a typical case, two lank individuals of dishevelled appearance might be sitting on a doorstep, or on the narrow pavement only seen in the central parts, with their feet on the bare sand of the roadway, and one of them would introduce himself in this manner, "I think you are a white man; can you help me to the price of a breakfast?"

These people were generally Americans, and their character was well known to their countrymen. For an American who had been in this part and wished to disparage it, remarked to me that there were such a lot of "bonds" here.

I looked at him with astonishment, for I had always supposed bonds to be desirable things, and if I had possessed any I should not have been in my unenviable position.

"Bonds?" I repeated inquiringly. "Why, vagabonds, to be sure," he replied.



It now became evident that a prolonged stay here would only result to my disadvantage.

Xochitl put the matter fairly before me thus, even against the interests of the *botica*: "It is no use practising here unless you keep the medicines yourself. You must tell the patients that the consultation is free, but that the remedies will cost them so much."

This, of course, is rather a charlatan way of doing business; but, even if I could have made up my mind to attempt it, I was hardly prepared for the outlay it would require to compete against two chemists' shops, and the discomfort and dirty places in which I had lived lately had somewhat sapped my energy.

Should I now embark for Chile, or return to Altotonga, where the bad weather had now nearly passed, and a living was assured?

But no one likes confessing himself beaten, so I made an exploratory trip in the train to the port of Salina Cruz, about thirteen miles further on, to find out the movements of the steamers. I subsequently found out that this journey was unnecessary, as there was an agent in Tehuantepec.

The intervening country was of the same desert description, and Salina Cruz was one of the most miserable-looking places I had ever seen.

At this time the firm of Pearson and Company were employing a large amount of labour in improving the harbour for the Mexican Government, and the settlement was in that rudimentary state that marks the influx of a large but shifting population.

The result was repulsive in the extreme. For an uncontaminated desert excites a feeling too solemn to be termed disgust, but when a herd of workers are turned loose upon it, and broken bottles and empty tins are scattered at intervals over the arid sand, the degradation of the place becomes complete.

All may now be changed, as far as lies in the power of man, but the violent wind will continue to hurl the sand in a storm which obliges the traveller almost to shut his eyes if he is going against it.

The Kosmos line of German trading steamers was almost the only means of going to Chile without transshipment, and I made the necessary inquiries about the dates of departure from this port.

While here, I thought it might be worth inquiring at the office of Pearson and Company if they wanted a doctor for their employees. Between two and three years before I had gone to their office in Mexico City, but the head man was absent. The clerk, however, had seemed to be of opinion that there might be a chance for me in the near future, for he said: "Our first doctor lasted one month, the second lasted three months; we have now had the third for four months—but we do not know how long he will last," he added impressively.

So I now presented myself, and would willingly have chanced having better luck than my predecessors, but again the man in authority was in some distant place and I was directed to write to him.

I now returned to Tehuantepec, and, before making definite preparations for leaving, the idea took possession of me that, if I returned for a short time to San Geronimo, I might be able to earn a little as a photographer, for the more civilized people were not averse to having their likenesses taken.



On my arrival there, I asked "the king" if he could not find me a better abode than the undesirable building in which I had been before, where the only exit was into the sandy waste of the street.

And he did find me a better place.

For the school-house was unoccupied in the temporary absence of the schoolmaster, and I arranged to have the use of it for a short period on about the same terms as my former dwelling.

It was decidedly more comfortable here, for the school had its own little yard with high walls at the back of the building, while it faced the road in front.

I hired the same canvas stretcher that had served for my bed before, got a supply of water and a few earthenware dishes, and put up a few photographs with a notice in the window that faced the road.

But the only people who came to look at the photographs were children and idlers generally, and I did not get a single customer who wanted to have his likeness taken for money.

There is a curious custom here, that, after a wedding, the married couple and their friends parade the streets for about three days, preceded by a band of musicians.

An event of this kind took place shortly after my return, and as the school-house was in the line of march, the wedding party made their appearance from time to time.

One might forget all about this function for an hour or two, for the sandy streets were generally quiet with the tropical glare of the sun on them, when suddenly, owing to a change in the wind or in the direction of the wedding party, a blare of trumpets would be heard, and on looking out a cloud of dust might be seen.

On nearer approach the musicians were visible, as they marched in front over the sandy way.

The bridal party, men and women, marched behind in two separate groups, and it was noticeable that, on a great occasion like this, every woman wore the *huipil*, as in Tehuantepec.

Their clothes must have been in a terrible state at the end of three days, but the parade and trumpet-blowing certainly had the advantage of letting everyone know that the wedding had taken place.

"The king," finding that I took an interest in the Zapotec language, now offered to teach me the verbs, and was pleased at the way I wrote them down, noticing that I kept the pronoun apart from the verbal inflection.

He suggested that he should teach me Zapotec and that I should teach him English. This would have suited me very well, only for my inability to remain in a place where a living could not be made.

The idea entered his mind that I might be able to remain if he could succeed in getting me appointed as doctor to the *lazareto* of the village, for such a place existed, although at present fortunately empty, owing to the absence of any dangerous disease.

But I did not encourage the project, considering that in so poor a place an appointment which would generally be a sinecure would only carry a nominal salary. In the meantime the lessons in Zapotec went on for several days.

The inflections of the verbs would be regular enough, only for the former part of the word changing in the different tenses.



The subject would be too long to dwell on here, but it may be permitted to write three tenses of the indicative of the verb "to be." It will be noticed that there is a kind of reduplicated pronoun at the end of the plural inflexions.

Indic. pres., I am, &c.	Indic. imperf., I was, &c.	Indic. fut., I shall be, &c.
ná-ndi	na gúka	na záka
li-ngalá	li gúkalu	li zákalu
lavé-ngala	láve gúkabe	láve zákabe
lakadú-ndi	lákadu gúkadu	lákadu zákadu
latú-ngala	látu gúkatu	látu zákatu
lakabé-nga	lákabe gúkákabe	lákabe zakákabe
(they are)	(they were)	(they will be)

Many of the Indians, translating literally from their own language into Spanish, address strangers in the second person singular. This of course, looks like rudeness, but is not meant as such.

But the lessons came to an untimely end, for my teacher began a prolonged drinking bout.

Although he was no longer able to instruct me, he still appeared to like my company, and prevailed on me to accompany him to a dance in the outskirts of the village.

When we arrived late in the afternoon, the dance was in full vigour. It was being held on the sandy soil just outside a hut, and the cloud of dust stirred up by the dancers' feet was visible a long way off.

"The king" was sometimes very solemn when under the influence of drink, and his present condition did not appear to affect the deference with which he was treated.

We were given good seats under the bough shed that did duty for the verandah of the hut. Under this covering were the musicians and some of the principal spectators.

The dancing here was of a wilder description than at the more select entertainment in Tehuantepec, and some of the figures might be described as a "double shuffle" in the sand.

But I was too preoccupied with the long and anxious journey in front of me to carry away details, and soon retired, leaving my friend, who remained seated with a most serious expression of countenance.

Shortly after this event, the time arrived for the departure of the next steamer from Salina Cruz, and I made hasty preparations for leaving San Geronimo, arranging with the owner of an ox-cart to bring my luggage to the railway station.

I had not taken a single photograph for money, and very few for pleasure. This may seem strange, but it must be remembered that I was now in a very reduced state from dirt, heat and inferior food, and these causes, combined with the anxiety consequent on want of money, prevented my taking interest in my usual pastimes, and urged me to leave before worse befell me.

I remained that night in Tehuantepec, and hearing that the steamer was already in the port, it became necessary to go there the next day.



I cashed the balance of my letter of credit at the mercantile house, presented myself for the last time at the *botica* to say good-bye to Doña Virginia and to Xochitl, whom I was really sorry to leave, and took the train to Salina Cruz.

The railway station there is about a mile from the steamer's office by the sea-shore, so the cheapest way to convey my luggage was in an ox-cart.

The agent told me that I could not be received on board until the next day, but he allowed me to leave my luggage at the office.

So I got a lodging and brooded that night on past difficulties and anxieties for the future.

The rich natives of the Isthmus had been an absolute misrepresentation. It is true they often carried gold coins on their necks, but they had none in their pockets, and except for their showy apparel, were just as poor as others who ground maize and carried water.

The next day, before going on board, I had an arduous hunt. But it was not after those wild domestic animals with which I had been but too familiar lately, it was in search of that prosaic but useful article, a toothbrush.

I visited the principal stores which were scattered here and there in the sandy wastes. In these it would have been easy to buy spirits, provisions or clothing, but there was not a single toothbrush for sale.

The multitude of workers either did not require them, or else had so many in reserve that further importation was useless.

At last some one suggested that this rare thing might be obtained at the drug store attached to the hospital of Pearson and Company.

This building was situated on the rising ground of a barren hill in the outskirts of the settlement, and here at last I was able to purchase the precious object.

While I was in the drug store, the English-speaking doctor entered and asked the shop assistant to tell him the Spanish names of some of the drugs.

Here was a chance which I had lost, for this well-paid post had been given to a doctor, who, however good professionally, could not have been altogether adapted to the situation, from not knowing the language of most of his patients.

A man acquainted with this part told me afterwards that if I had applied in time the appointment would very likely have been given to me.

It was too late now, and with this lost opportunity rankling in my mind I ploughed through the sand on my way to the shipping office near the shore.

Here an unpleasant surprise awaited me.

To avoid the fluctuations of silver, the Kosmos Company exact payment on a gold basis. I was unaware that silver had fallen in value, and on paying the equivalent of twenty pounds in gold, as the price of a second class passage to Valparaiso, I found that it cost me something like thirty silver dollars more than would have been necessary before their depreciation in value.



Thus, after my ticket had been bought, I had only eleven Mexican dollars and a few cents left.

The idea of being landed in a far-distant and unknown country with an equivalent of about one pound in English money was enough to intimidate any one who was even in a more robust frame of mind than I was at that time.

It is true that I had just written to England, directing that a small sum, which represented about half of my worldly possessions, should be forwarded to Valparaiso.

But supposing I arrived before the money! Well, in that case, there was the pawnbroker's establishment to fall back upon, and I remembered my entry into Mexico City, with my second watch and the lens of my camera.

While I was waiting for the boat that was to carry another passenger and myself to the German steamer, there was leisure to notice others who were only going a short distance by a Mexican line.

The prosaic German company does not trouble its passengers with many questions. You pay your money, mention your name, and get your ticket.

But Mexican customs are different. Passengers in their steamers are not obliged, like the American immigrant, to state whether they have been in jail, but there is a demand about age, among other things.

Indeed, it has always appeared strange to me that a witness in Mexico should be asked his age and civil condition, just as if any special period of life, or the fact of being married or single, made the witness's testimony more reliable.

On this occasion a lady of a certain age was buying her ticket, and the shipping clerk, being obliged to ask the delicate question, politely inquired, "What age shall I put you down, *señora*?"

A self-satisfied smile broke over the lady's face, as she answered, "Put me down (*pongane*) twenty-five."

And she had good reason to be satisfied with so charming a choice. The boat was now ready to carry me to the steamer, and the agent assured me that this conveyance would cost me nothing, for I naturally dreaded further inroads on my eleven dollars.

The European traveller may think that the distance between the shore and the steamer is included in the passage, in those cases where shallowness of water, or want of a suitable wharf, prevents nearer approach.

But they manage these things differently in America.

During a nearly two months' voyage from Salina Cruz to Valparaiso, during which period we called at most of the principal ports of Central America, Peru and Chile, the only place where the steamer came in beside a wharf was at Callao, the port of Lima in Peru.

The steamers of most other lines do the same, sometimes standing out more than a mile at sea, and the traveller has to make his arrangements with the rapacious boatmen, who frequently charge a dollar apiece for every article of luggage carried.

My only travelling companion in the boat was an American, who had taken a first-class passage to some port in Central America.



This gentleman was so delighted at escaping from Salina Cruz, which he said was the worst place he had ever seen, that, in spite of the transit being free, he gave a present of a dollar apiece to each of the four boatmen, thereby making me look very mean by comparison.

We soon arrived alongside of the "Ramses," of the Kosmos line of German cargo steamers, and here I hoped to enjoy that cleanliness and comfort necessary to fortify me for starting afresh in a new country.



## CHAPTER XV.

## A REVIEW OF MEXICO.

IT will not be out of place here to make some general remarks about Mexico, partly with the idea of putting everything in a condensed form by eliminating personal adventures, and partly in the hope of doing justice to the country by touching on several of its phases which have scarcely fallen under personal notice.

Mexico presents even more diversities than most other large countries in its conformation, climate, and people, and a few years' residence in it will leave much unknown.

## CLIMATIC TABLE OF REPUBLIC OF MEXICO.

*Furnished by Prof. M. Barcena, Director of the Government Observatory, Chapultepec, City of Mexico.*

Showing the average monthly temperature (Fahrenheit) at various cities on the lines of the National Railways, year ended December 31, 1908.

Location	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Elevation above sea-level
	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	Feet
Mexico ...	53.8	56.7	60.4	64.0	64.6	63.7	62.4	61.9	62.1	58.5	55.6	53.4	7,349
San Juan del Rio	59.2	61.5	65.5	70.5	71.2	70.5	66.9	67.5	65.7	64.8	58.5	56.8	6,245
Queretaro ...	60.1	61.5	65.3	71.1	72.3	70.9	67.5	68.9	64.2	63.0	59.5	56.7	5,904
Silao ...	59.2	61.2	63.3	70.2	74.7	74.3	69.4	69.6	68.9	64.8	59.7	57.7	5,828
Guanajuato ...	56.8	62.4	61.7	69.3	71.1	71.1	68.2	66.0	63.3	62.2	62.1	57.9	6,837
Leon ...	58.3	61.2	63.1	70.9	74.3	74.8	68.7	68.9	67.6	63.7	58.3	56.8	5,863
Aguascalientes	55.0	61.2	60.3	68.5	73.9	74.4	71.4	69.4	68.9	64.0	61.5	55.9	6,179
San Luis Potosi	57.0	59.7	63.3	68.9	71.8	71.6	68.2	68.5	67.8	62.2	56.8	54.3	6,118
Pachuca ...	54.5	58.6	60.1	61.3	61.0	61.9	66.9	61.3	62.2	59.5	53.2	54.1	7,831
Zacatecas ...	54.5	56.1	58.6	66.0	70.0	68.4	62.1	62.8	62.2	60.6	55.4	55.6	8,044
Guadalajara ...	59.5	62.6	69.8	70.9	73.6	73.6	73.4	69.8	69.8	66.4	62.8	60.4	5,054
Lagos ...	60.6	61.0	62.4	63.9	69.3	68.7	69.8	68.7	66.9	64.2	60.6	59.4	6,134
Tampico ...	...	...	...	75.0	77.7	82.4	81.1	81.5	80.1	77.4	69.1	71.2	Sea-level, Gulf Port.

The conformation or physical geography acts on the climate, and the climate acts on everything living or growing under its influence.

The whole country may be roughly divided into four regions, according to their elevation above the sea level. They are:—

- (1) The mountains and hills above the tableland.
- (2) The tableland.
- (3) The broken country between the tableland and the coast.
- (4) The coast country or *tierra caliente*.

*The Mountains and Hills above the Tableland.*—These as a rule



are impracticable for pastoral or agricultural purposes. The summits of the highest mountains, such as Orizaba (over 17,000 feet), Popocatepetl (over 17,000 feet), and Ixtaccihuatl (over 15,000 feet), lie within the limits of eternal snow, which in Mexico is estimated at about fifteen thousand feet.

Even the lower elevations are intensely wild and barren areas which offer but little facility for the support of man, but it is among such places that many of the mining regions of the Republic are situated. These mines occur in innumerable places, almost from the north to the south of the Republic, and a journey from Saltillo to Concepción del Oro and thence to Mazapil would perhaps give as good an idea as could be obtained of the enormous extent of the metal-bearing area.

Mexico has always been one of the principal silver-producing countries of the world, with a relatively smaller proportion of gold. A large number of its mines belong to foreign companies.

In parts of the hilly country where the elevation exceeds eight thousand feet, large pine forests often grow.

The journey between Mexico City and Toluca will afford an example of this, and many of the views here are quite Alpine.

*The Tableland.*—To describe this is to describe what is typically Mexican, as in its area is contained by far the greater part of the Republic.

For the low-lying coast country, with its tropical climate, only extends a comparatively short distance, in many places only from thirty to sixty miles inland, before the steeper part of the ascent begins.

The height of the tableland varies considerably, being somewhat lower in the northern States, but in the central parts it is generally comprised within elevations of from five to eight thousand feet.

The northern parts of the tableland, which as a rule have an insufficient supply of water, are most adapted for stock raising, but the central and southern parts are largely agricultural.

Maize is cultivated over a great part of the Republic without any irrigation, but most of the wheat comes from an area between San Luis Potosi on the north and Lake Chapala and Mexico City on the south, being in fact a district which has the State of Guanajuato for its centre.

The climate varies according to the elevation above the sea level, being mild in the lower parts of the tableland, and somewhat cold in the winter in those parts that approach an altitude of eight thousand feet.

Any reference to cold, however, does not apply to the greater part of the day, when the cloudless winter sun makes the temperature agreeable.

It will be seen from the statistics that the temperature of most of the places on the tableland is a healthy one, and it would be hard to beat that of Mexico City as an all-the-year-round resort, with an average temperature above 53° F. in the coldest winter month, and below 65° F. in the warmest summer month.

The rainfall is heavier in the southern than in the northern parts, but as a whole it must be considered a light one, for most places only register from twenty to sixty inches and very few approach one hundred, while in the neighbouring West Indian islands a rainfall of more than a hundred inches is very frequent.



Most of the rain comes in the thunderstorms of the summer and autumn months, and the winter is the driest time of the year.

The agricultural capabilities of the tableland vary to a great extent, and diametrically opposite epithets such as "fertile" and "comparatively sterile" have been applied to it, which would incline one to suppose that the accidental circumstances of abode or travel have done much to influence the writer's judgment.

Many signs, however, tend to prove that a large part of the tableland is anything but fertile, such as the large amount of uncultivated country on which grows the *mezquite*, prickly pear and other cacti which flourish where ordinary vegetation cannot be maintained, and the shallow stratum of surface soil in many places, through which the rock often crops out.

*The Broken Country between the Tableland and the Coast.*—This, although comparatively small in area, is interesting as comprising all varieties of climate between that of the tableland and of the *tierra caliente*, and from the very fact of containing so many climates will produce a greater diversity of vegetable life than any other part of the Republic.

Thus in a section of perhaps only twenty or thirty miles there may be every variation between cold and dry, cool and wet, and warm and wet.

The lower part of this area is the best locality for coffee, which will grow better in this moist and warm climate, at an elevation of from three to four thousand feet, than in the hotter and drier country of the coast region.

Here also grow the sugar-cane and many tropical fruits. This belt of broken country on the downward slope of the eastern side of the tableland is about the best watered part of Mexico, partly owing to the heavy rainfall, and partly owing to the uneven nature of the country, which lends itself to forming watercourses.

One may travel more than a hundred miles over the tableland without seeing a river of any kind, but when this mountainous region has been entered small swiftly flowing streams make their appearance, increasing in size as they tear down the gorges between the rugged hills, until they become good-sized rivers before the *tierra caliente* has been reached.

Ferns and moss make their appearance on the cuttings of the roadsides, and the excessive moisture would often make the way impassable if some *ayuntamiento* (municipal board) had not occasionally paved some of the worst places with large stones, so that the passing beasts of burden might not sink in a bottomless morass.

The upper part of this wild region is somewhat bleak, for in spite of the abundant rainfall, the cold prohibits the growth of all sub-tropical plants, but the lower part is one of the gardens of Mexico.

*The Coast Country or Tierra Caliente.*—The broken country merges gradually into this without any sharp line of demarcation.

In many places the steeper gradients have been accomplished before descending to the level of four thousand feet.

Jalapa, at an elevation of about four thousand five hundred feet, lies near the boundary of these areas, and but little tropical vegetation



is seen on the Interoceanic railway until the coast-bound train has reached this station.

Here the climate is mild without being very hot, but the mountain drizzle (the so-called *chipi-chipi*) so prevalent at Altotonga some forty-five miles to the west, extends here to some extent.

Although parts of the *tierra caliente* are very fertile, producing sugar-cane, tobacco, vanilla, rubber and other tropical products, such is by no means its character everywhere, and the miles of arid *mezquite* country on the Pacific side of the Tehuantepec railway have already been mentioned.

The tableland and the upper part of the broken country have as a rule a very healthy climate, but in the low-lying coast lands the usual tropical illnesses are wont to occur.

In a country of so large an area and of such striking contrasts a great variety of beautiful scenes may be found in its different parts, such as an Alpine-looking view in the pine hills of the tableland, a mountain torrent in the broken country, or a placid picture of tropical foliage near the coast.

Guide books are fond of enlarging on these, as if they represented the ordinary features of the country.

The general impression, however, is of wonder at the size and novelty of the panorama rather than of admiration for its beauty. The huge tableland with its bare plains and the mud huts of its Indian population is quaint rather than beautiful, the broken country will inspire awe rather than rapture, and the large stretches of infertile land in many places are inclined to weary the eye.

And diverse as are the characteristics of the country, those of its people are still wider apart.

Nearly half of its population are classed as *mestizos* (cross-breds) and more than one-third are Indians.

The descendants of these prehistoric people cling to their old-world ways, and resist all innovations as far as possible, this being in fact one of their reasons for disliking foreigners. Even the white Mexicans, being numerically less than either the *mestizos* (cross-breds) or the Indians, have naturally adopted some of the native customs, and this forms to some extent a bond of sympathy between them.

They still, however, remain colonial Spaniards, by whom the outlying tribes, such as the Yaquis of Sonora in the north, and the Mayas of Yucatan in the south, have scarcely yet been brought under subjection.

Even the Indians themselves differ in language, disposition and other important characteristics, and can hardly be classed as a whole.

This mixture of races in Mexico has naturally favoured a despotic Government, for the white man's customs are not pleasing to the Indians, who continually require coercion.

Therefore Mexico is managed from a white man's basis, although it is not altogether a white man's country.

No attempt is made to detract from the merit of a Government which has so raised the status during the latter years of the Republic, and perhaps a considerable amount of despotism has been necessary to overcome the turbulent nature of part of the white population who had



become accustomed to revolution and civil war, but it is an open secret that the forms of government are liberal in name rather than in substance.

The Indians are said to abstain from voting at a presidential election, and an educated white Mexican informed the author that, if a vote were not acceptable to those in power it would never be registered.

News is sent to a country town that a president has been elected, and speeches by the chief magistrate and others are made in the *plaza*, but the greater part of the people seem never to have voted, and the function is looked upon as a pageant arranged by the Government.

The treatment that a foreigner may receive in Mexico is by no means always pleasant, as many of the personal experiences will testify.

It should, however, be borne in mind that treatment may be official, as countenanced by the law, or unofficial, as given by people in a private capacity.

The official treatment is good, and the foreigner, who generally lives in some great centre, has adequate protection for his life and property from the intelligent Government which knows that such conduct redounds to its credit.

The case of an isolated foreigner who lives in a small town or in the country is somewhat different.

Even here he may receive good official treatment, and will at any rate receive the protection of the law for whatever property he may acquire.

But the very fact of his living in a place of little commercial activity will presuppose that he is not a capitalist, and from his point of view it is much more important that he should receive civilized treatment from the lower classes who form the bulk of the population.

Such is the inherent dislike of many of these people, whites as well as Indians, to the foreigner that he rests on somewhat insecure ground, especially if his occupation takes him alone in the wilder parts, for the law which nominally shields him can be made of little avail if no one will bear witness in his favour.

If, however, the foreigner owned much property, he would not be likely to be molested even in a remote place, for he would be an employer of labour, towards whom these people are generally very submissive.

Mexico, as at present governed, is not a bad field for investment. The law gives a foreigner ample security for his property, and many of the principal industries are worked by foreign capital.

The silver basis acts as a protection to anything grown or made in the Republic, for the wages of the workman are paid in silver, and if the article be exported to a country that has a gold basis it is paid for in that metal, which approximately means doubling its value.

Even on a silver basis the price of labour is cheap. The miner may receive a dollar for his day's work, but the ordinary *peón* only earns thirty-three cents in many places.

So large a country is very lightly inhabited with a population of about eighteen millions, for by far the greater part of Mexico has a good climate.



The better-class people are courteous in their manner, and treat a foreigner with consideration.

The cost of living is cheap in the country, but country life is very dull. This is to some extent due to the large percentage of Indian blood in the people, and the Spaniard made a true observation when he said "*El indole de los Mexicanos es triste*" (the disposition of the Mexicans is sad).

One of the most interesting features in this country of contrasts is its Indian population, which bears so many undoubted traces of contact with Asia in the prehistoric times, and some of whose traditions afford scope for conjecture whether at a period even more remote there had not been also contact with the East.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## SALINA CRUZ TO VALPARAISO.

**I**N these days of a vanishing second class too much credit cannot be given to those companies which still keep good accommodation of this kind on board their steamers, thereby allowing travellers of gentle bringing up, but of small means, to escape from the horrors of a deck passage.

The gratitude of such people is therefore due to the Kosmos line, for fulfilling their requirements in an exemplary manner. These cargo steamers only carry a small number of passengers, but from the very commencement I saw every probability of receiving good treatment.

The civil second class steward conducted me to the accommodation below. Here I was assigned a four-berthed cabin all to myself, and for a considerable part of the voyage I was either alone in the saloon or else had only one fellow-passenger.

All German officers speak English, and the requirements of these parts had taught them a little Spanish as well.

The steward's knowledge of languages was rudimentary, but we got along very well in pidgin-English. The luxury of cleanliness can only be appreciated by those who have been forced to do without it for some time.

The reader may remember that one of the reasons that hastened my departure from Altotonga, between two and three months previously, was the dirty state into which my house had fallen. Since then things had gone from bad to worse as far as I was concerned, for these hot parts harbour the vermin of cooler climates as well as those belonging to the tropics.

My skin had got into such a state in consequence, that I feared that some permanent disease might result, but, before I had been a week on the steamer, the beneficial effect of salt-water baths had quite soothed the irritation, although it took a few months before all visible signs were obliterated.

A passenger has no right to expect luxurious food in the second class, but the meals were good of their kind, although some of the unfamiliar German dishes, such as apple soup before meat, are not relished by those unaccustomed to them.

Almost the only fault one could find was with the lighting of the saloon, which was so dim as to make reading by night difficult. But it would be ungenerous to criticize small details, when the prevailing effect was that of cleanliness, courtesy and comfort.



In a few days I had become at home on board, and with the surrounding associations.

As a second-class passenger I was allowed to go where I liked on the deck, and to mix with those of the first class, of whom there were very few.

There was also a small number of mixed nationalities in the third class, and I was surprised at the knowledge that one of these had of the life of Napoleon, until I became aware that this passenger was also a Corsican.

There were four officers, besides the captain and the doctor, with all of whom I soon became more or less acquainted.

The first officer and the doctor took their meals with the captain and the first-class passengers.

The other officers and the engineers had their own table, but the second officer had a kind of brevet rank, that is to say that, while he dined with the subordinate officers, he had the privilege of frequenting that part of the deck generally occupied by those who sat at the captain's table.

The third and fourth officers were quite young fellows and mixed but little with the passengers, appearing to be strictly confined to their professional duties.

The fourth officer had a very Dutch-looking face, and on asking him from what part of Germany he came, he replied, "I come from an island in the North Sea where they speak German, Danish and Dutch." I have forgotten the name of the island.

The doctor, as is often the case on board ship, was altogether of a different stamp to the other officers, who naturally have a kind of family resemblance as seafaring men.

This young man was taking a voyage to recruit his health after professional studies, and appeared to be deservedly popular with the other officers. He bore on his comely cheek two well-put-in sabre cuts, such as the fighting student obtains, and it was amusing to hear a Spanish lady, unacquainted with German customs, ask him if he had burnt his face. He smiled and replied in Spanish, "Oh, I've been fighting."

The German crew were a fine-looking body of men, only just sufficient in number to work the steamer. For the loading of the cargo was done by a number of "longshoremen," taken on board in the south of Chile, on the outward voyage to San Francisco, and landed at their native place on the return homewards. The language of these men was naturally Spanish.

Under ordinary circumstances the voyage in a coasting steamer, which calls at most of the small ports, would be very wearisome, but these delays rather pleased me than otherwise, as they gave me time to recover.

For as we steamed along the shore of Central America the sight of smoking volcanoes and the rumour of revolution merely excited that panoramic interest which remains when the traveller is practically immune from their dangers.

Our procedure was to stand out at sea on arriving at a place of call, and to spend the day in shipping cargo which came from the shore in lighters.



These unwieldy boats, worked with long sweeps, would hardly have been seaworthy on rough coasts, but the Pacific Ocean is generally true to its name, and its water had frequently the unruffled appearance of a pond.

If all the cargo could be got on board before nightfall, the steamer would time its speed so as to arrive at the next place by the early morning, when the same process would be repeated.

Under these conditions, the deck, although the coolest place on board, was often unbearably hot. For, being stationary all day, there was none of that current of air made by a steamer in motion, and the vicinity of land often sheltered us from the little breeze there might have been.

The principal export from these places is coffee, which is of a very good quality.

I did not go on shore often, for I was afraid of making inroads on my small capital of eleven dollars, but at San José in Guatemala I got the chance of landing in the steamer's boat.

It is, however, difficult to go on shore without spending something, and here I changed one of my precious silver pieces. I was not quite sure whether they would be willing to receive foreign silver, but the Mexican dollar was readily changed, and I received a pile of nickel money in its place.

On my requesting the man to let me have a small silver coin in the place of part of the nickel, he said decisively, "We have not seen silver for three years."

This is the lowest depth to which an unfortunate country can fall. To have gold is to be rich and prosperous. To have silver is to be poor, but respectable. But only to have nickel and paper is to be without credit.

The people in such countries are well aware that their own money is of unstable value at home and practically worthless abroad, and an honest Mexican dollar has a far higher buying value among them than the nominal equivalent in their own coinage.

The inhabitants of these seaboard places of tropical America are of such mixed blood that they do not present a true type of the people of the country, to obtain which one must go inland.

Until the cooler latitudes are reached, the negro seems to have been dumped down everywhere, and mixes with the white and native races, with a tendency to displace the latter.

He is generally a better worker than the mongrel people of these parts, as the following will show.

In a tropical port a gang of mixed breed workers were crowding up the steamer's side to assist in carrying the cargo.

The man in charge let pass a sufficient number, and barred the passage to the rest, but noticing a negro among them, he let this one man pass.

Most of the buildings in these places are, like the population, representative of no country in particular, and are of that weatherboard shanty type seen in so many of the hotter seaports all over the world.

The foliage along the Pacific coast of Central America is not so luxuriant as might be expected in so warm a part, and, although it was charming as compared with the desert region near Salina Cruz,



there were few, if any, places whose beauty would excite the admiration of a traveller.

Occasional palm trees and plantains might be seen in the sandy soil, and the scenery was prevented from looking altogether tame by the chain of mountains always visible some miles back.

In spite of my present comparative comfort, the time would have hung wearily if it had not been for books, for although I frequently talked with the few first-class passengers when they were on the deck, I could not accompany them below.

One of these passengers was a young Englishman on his way to Peru, where he was going far inland, as book-keeper on a rubber plantation, and I could not help contrasting his case with mine, as exemplifying how much more serviceable a commercial education is in new countries than the so-called learned professions, which certainly cost more money, and probably cost more brain work to acquire.

He was being sent to his post by agents, with whom he was so well acquainted that he did not exactly know what salary he was going to obtain, but said he should be disappointed if he did not receive considerably more than two pounds a week.

And how gladly would I have changed places with him, for my previous experience had been hard enough, and I was now, unknowingly, going to what was worse.

He was a great admirer of Darwin, some of whose works he carried with him, and kindly lent me. These were doubly acceptable, both from their intrinsic value and from the travels of this author in Southern Chile, so that I occasionally got some information about the country where I was going.

It is astonishing how rare books find their way into remote places. I had found a translation of the Koran in a colonial homestead, a volume on the knight errantry of the Peers of Charlemagne in Altotonga, and I was now reading Darwin on the Pacific coast.

Soon, however, the placid existence of everyday life became enlivened by the arrival of some new passengers.

They were a party of four, a Spanish bull-fighter and his assistant, and a young operatic singer and her mother.

The connection between bull fighting and operatic singing is not obvious at first sight, and could only be surmised on closer observation. In the present instance the singer, who was rather good looking, appeared to be greatly enamoured with the bull-fighter, who received her attentions in a duly condescending manner.

This man was an ugly little fellow, not at all a favourable specimen of a southern Spaniard, but he had attained some eminence in his profession. He was so ignorant that he could not write, and his correspondence had to be carried on by his humble assistant, who travelled in the third class.

The bull-fighter was now in a more than usually exalted frame of mind, for, in addition to that lofty manner which was his professional right on ordinary occasions, he now assumed that air of superiority which some men are wont to display when they have captivated a prepossessing female.

Prominent bull-fighters and operatic singers naturally travel in



the first class, and these two used to lounge on the best seats on deck, the man frequently having his head pillowed on his companion's lap.

The singer's mother generally remained discreetly in the background on such occasions, for professional stars are not very amenable to parental authority.

When not engaged in this pleasing occupation, the hero of the bull-ring was not averse to talk affably with the officers and first-class passengers, and to display the large gold rings he had received as the reward of his valour.

The chief officer, however, a stalwart man over six feet in height, had not that respect for the noble sport so prevalent among Spanish-speaking people, and used to take every opportunity to turn its exponent into ridicule.

On one occasion he took a stick in his hand, and, presenting another to the bull-fighter, suggested that they should have a kind of single-stick encounter.

But the latter assumed an air of injured dignity, and waved the stick away, whereupon the officer said in Spanish, "Ah, Valentino, you are all right when you are fighting a bull, but not when it is a man."

The real name of the *torero* was Valentín, but the German, like many English, thought that every Spanish name must end in "o."

But it must not be supposed that Valentín was so absorbed in amorous pastimes as to forget to practise that agility so necessary in his calling. In company with his assistant, he used to swing round posts, and make other violent movements to keep himself in condition.

Occasionally he sat down on the deck, and then got up without the use of his hands. This was not always easy to do, owing to the movement of the steamer, and the first officer offered assistance by placing his fingers under the chin so as to raise him. But the bull-fighter scorned such aid, saying that it had "no grace."

After calling at the last Central American port, we went right out of sight of the land, and saw nothing of Panama.

The steamer stops at Guayaquil on the way out, but not on the homeward passage, at which I was disappointed, for the doctor had told me that it was a quaint kind of place.

The first South American port of call was in northern Peru. Here a surprise awaited us which nearly caused trouble.

We had not been in touch with the land for about a week, and were therefore ignorant of the latest events.

The bubonic plague had broken out in San Francisco, where the steamer had been previously to my coming on board, and the port authorities were afraid to admit us to pratique.

The captain and doctor assured them that all was well at the time of their departure, and that the disease had broken out long afterwards.

After keeping us in suspense for some hours, they made up their minds that our health was good, and the loading of the steamer went on as usual.

About this time a lunatic came on board, and was my companion in the second class. This shows well for the way in which the Germans treat their distressed countrymen abroad, and I doubt whether English rule would act so considerately.



For this poor fellow, having lost his reason, was sent home comfortably by their Consul at Government expense. It was considered that a person in his condition needed more care than could have been given in the third class, where, in addition, he would have been more liable to come into contact with rough people, who might have taken advantage of his infirmity.

He appeared quite harmless, and always had his meals by himself. For little Henry, the steward, had decided ideas of decorum, and said that he really could not let any one without a coat sit down at table with other people.

We now entered upon that extent of desert coast line which stretches from northern Peru almost to Valparaiso in Chile, the length of which is so enormous that it can hardly be realized until seen.

It presented the same general characteristics throughout—a belt of sandy coloured ground, on which no vegetation grew, bounded at the back by a mountain range of equally barren aspect.

The details of the belt, as to width and slope, and the height of the range were the only things that varied.

We stopped some two or three days at Callao, the port of Lima, and this was a welcome break in the monotony of the voyage.

For here was the only place where the steamer came right alongside of the wharf. This was a great consideration for those who, like myself, had no money to spare for boat hire.

Besides, as the port of the capital, Callao was superior to most of the other places.

The Englishman and myself went on shore together, and had a nice bathe, at what seemed to be a rather fashionable resort, about two miles from the central part.

This place was a mere neck of land that stretched out into the sea, and the water was therefore cleaner than elsewhere.

There is a good train service between Callao and Lima, which is only about seven miles inland on a slightly higher level than the sea.

The doctor and the Englishman arranged to go there, and asked me to join them. Not wishing to appear unsociable, I had to disclose the miserable state of my finances, and to tell them that I could not afford the trifling expense.

So with a look of kindly commiseration they went on their way to the capital, where they saw the last of the bull-fighting and operatic party which had now left the steamer.

I consoled myself with the inexpensive pastime of walking about Callao, but even so it was impossible to avoid spending a few cents, if only to buy cigarettes, which are good and cheap in every Spanish-American place where I have been, except in Chile, where all the best brands are imported, and are therefore comparatively dear.

I was here introduced to the Peruvian dollar, or sol as it is called, one of the best of the Spanish-American coins of this class. It is worth two shillings, and was therefore slightly more valuable than the Mexican dollar at that period, although the latter has more recently gone up to the same value.

Peru is one of the few republics in these parts which have known how to maintain a fixed value for their silver.



For by having a certain amount of gold coinage, it is able to redeem its silver at the rate of ten dollars to the pound sterling.

It has thus prevented that unseemly state of things that occurs in countries where the native coinage of silver is continually fluctuating in relation to the foreign gold, thereby placing the credit of the country to a great extent in the hands of foreign speculators.

In this harbour there are a number of aquatic animals of the seal family, and it appears strange at first to see creatures generally supposed to belong to ice-bound countries in so warm a place.

We now continued our voyage, and a change of climate was noticeable before we reached Mollendo in Southern Peru.

Up to now the deck of the steamer had remained dry at night, as is usually the case in tropical countries. Now, however, it became moist after nightfall, as in cooler latitudes, and this reminded me in a most unwelcome manner that my journey was drawing towards a close.

Mollendo was rather an eventful place for me, as I subsequently landed here. Although in the desert region, it does not look so miserable as most of the other coast towns, as it stands on high land with a rocky shore, which is less repulsive to the eye than the low sandy desert of other settlements.

There is no attempt at any harbour here, and, whether it be from the greater roughness of the sea or from the conformation of the coast, there appears to be more difficulty in landing cargo here than in most other places.

Here we parted with the Englishman who was on his way to the rubber plantation, and in him we lost a genial companion.

These Peruvian settlements also export coffee, but not so exclusively as Central America, for here the ore from the mining country inland becomes an important item in the produce of those places where the machinery is not perfect enough to extract the metal, which is thus shipped in a more or less crude state.

While we were loading cargo here, I was much perplexed about what looked like an opening for me.

Our doctor had been requested to go on shore on a professional visit, and, on his return in the steamer's boat, he said to me, "Here is a chance for you, doctor; the medical man in this place will not keep sober, and the people would be glad of the services of some one else."

I thought so seriously of this proposition that I asked the captain whether there would be time to go on shore, so that I might find out the facts of the case.

But he would not guarantee me more than one or two hours before the steamer started, and as it was impossible to find out what was necessary in so short a time, I had to give it up. For I could not venture to forfeit a considerable part of my passage money on such an uncertainty, and from after experience I believe that the Government would not have allowed me to practise even if the people wished it.

We now reached the confines of Peru and Chile, that debatable land which was the cause of so fierce a conflict between the two countries, giving rise to what the people of these parts proudly term "the war of the Pacific."

For we were in that region, if possible more desolate than before, which had been worthless before the nitrate mines had been discovered.



In those days a few miles more or less of this barren territory were of no consequence, but when its hidden value was discovered the neighbouring countries became keenly jealous of each other's boundaries, and anxious to extend their own.

Few people are in a position to speak impartially and fairly of this war, for the natives are prejudiced in favour of their own country, and foreigners are not generally sufficiently acquainted with the details.

The dispute began between Bolivia and Chile, the former of which then extended to the coast and owned some of the nitrate territory. Peru made a secret treaty of alliance with Bolivia, and on this becoming known Chile made war against both.

It should not excite surprise that Chile vanquished both her enemies. The inhabitants of cooler climates, more often than otherwise, overcome the dwellers in warmer countries. White races also generally prevail over others, and although there is an Indian population in both countries, this element is much larger in Peru than in Chile.

And it may well be questioned whether the soldier of Chile would be a worse fighting man for having in his blood a slight cross of that valiant Araucanian race which for so long a time defied both the Spanish conquerors and their descendants, the white citizens of the modern republic.

Besides these advantages Chile has had within the last fifty years a strong infusion of *Gringo* blood, from Germany and northern Europe generally, which would be likely to tell in its favour in any conflict with a neighbouring country.

The result of the war was that Bolivia lost her now valuable desert on the coast, and became an inland country, while Peru lost her southern territory of the same class.

As we slowly went southward, calling at these barren settlements whose sole animation is the nitrate industry, and whose population is kept alive by food-importing steamers, it might be a matter of opinion which place looked the worst.

But to my mind Antofagasta appeared the most desolate, from the fact that the graveyard in the desert is clearly seen from on board, being on the upward slope between the town on the seashore and the range behind.

Our mental associations of such places are generally connected with trees or at least vegetation of some kind, but here the graves lie in the open sand, under the glare of the sun, merely separated by a fence from the surrounding desert.

And this most dismal spot on the Pacific shore is almost exactly in the same latitude as the beautiful Rio de Janeiro on the Atlantic side of the continent.

The last important place of call before reaching Valparaiso is Coquimbo. But my thoughts were otherwise occupied than in watching the improvement in the scenery.

I had now been about seven weeks and a half on board, and my little capital of eleven dollars had now diminished to about four, not enough even to carry my luggage on shore, if the money I expected had not arrived in time.

My anxiety probably betrayed itself in my manner, for I noticed



that my companion in the second-class saloon, a Spaniard who was in business in Valparaiso, and had come on board at one of the nitrate ports, studiously avoided giving me any clue as to his whereabouts, as if he feared that his aid might be subsequently implored.

We arrived at Valparaiso at night, and my feeling on beholding the town in the morning was one of intense disappointment, for such an enchanting name as the "vale of paradise" gives a right to expect something very beautiful.

The town itself nestled beside a crescent-shaped harbour, and presented the creditable appearance that might be expected as the principal port of the southern Pacific.

Since this period the town has been devastated by earthquake, but it is probable that it has been rebuilt on much the same lines.

The associations of beauty implied in the name are nowhere. A steep range of hills limits the building space inland, confining the outgrowth of the town to a narrow line along the shore, and the hills themselves are of an uninteresting aspect, with only a few scrubby trees on them.

Darwin has noticed the disparity between the name and the appearance, and suggests that the name-giver must have been thinking of some other place, probably Quillota, a fertile spot some distance inland.

To me it seems not unlikely that the conquering Spaniards, coming from the north, had become so weary of seeing such an extent of desert that they welcomed any approach to fertility by giving it so extravagant a title.

I could not shape my plans until I knew whether my money had arrived, and, indeed, until I had raised money in some way or other I could not remove my luggage, which is a far more expensive affair than landing without it. So, taking my second watch, in case the assistance of the pawnbroker were necessary, I hired a boat for fifty cents, and, on reaching the shore, strolled towards what seemed to be the central part of the town, where I asked for the address of the mercantile house to which my money was to be sent. The house was easily found, but the money had not arrived.

My embarrassment may now be easily understood. Something had to be done, and done quickly, for the steamer would continue its journey southwards in two or three days' time, and if my luggage were not previously removed it would be lost.

On my arrival in Mexico City a pawnbroker's establishment had met my view when its useful offices were not required. Now assistance of this kind was urgently needed, but the establishment could not be seen, and it is not pleasant to ask strangers the way to such a place.

Experience tells one that these houses are more likely to be found in or near the poorer quarters than in the vicinity of the large mercantile offices in the main streets.

So I mechanically wended my way to these parts, and instinct guided me aright.

Books of travel are fond of dilating on the best hotels and other places that minister to the luxuries of the rich, but the necessities of the poor are more imperative, so I make no apology for giving directions for finding a pawnshop here.



On landing at the wharf, walk a few hundreds yards inland at right angles to the sea until you cut the Calle Cochrane. Follow this street to the right for a few minutes until it runs into the Plaza Errazuriz. On arriving at the *plaza*, turn across it to the left, and the right hand street that runs uphill and inland will conduct you in a few yards to the locality where I pawned my watch.

It must not be thought that this important event took place as quickly as described, for that day I only made preliminary inquiries at two places here. Silver watches were not in great demand, as the pawnshops had too many of them already and preferred gold ornaments.

So I reserved my watch until the next day in the hope that I might do better elsewhere.

I returned to the ship that afternoon and asked the captain for leave to stop on board that night. He kindly consented, and next morning I went on shore again, determined to finish this business.

After trying unsuccessfully to obtain better terms, I returned to the shop that had seemed most favourably disposed and pawned the watch for the welcome sum of eight Chilean dollars, which were then worth about one shilling and fourpence each in English money.

It was necessary now to make inquiries about a place to lodge in, so that I might know where to bring my luggage.

I entered a third-class hotel where they asked four dollars by the day, but this was a prohibitive price.

While wandering along Cochrane Street I saw a humble-looking place with "Scandinavian Home" written over it. It looked as if I might be suited here, so I went in and interviewed the owner. He was a Scandinavian himself, but spoke English fluently and kept a sailor's boarding house.

The little cribs at the side of the sitting-room were not inviting-looking places, but I was too near destitution to be fastidious, and gladly arranged for board and lodging at two dollars daily. I now returned to the steamer, said good-bye to the officers, and had to apologize to the nice steward for only being able to give him some two dollars and a half, but my needs were too great to spare more.

The cost of the trip to the shore, for which the boatmen charge one dollar apiece for every trunk, made a considerable hole in my money, and this deficiency was further increased by charges for carrying the luggage to the custom-house and thence to my lodging. Still there were a few dollars left, and I could hold out for some days without extreme measures.

Fortunately in this country, unlike the United States, the immigrant is not asked how much money he has, or else want of means might have caused me to be refused admittance, in which case it is hard to imagine what the authorities would have done with me.

The Scandinavian Home was of that rough-and-ready description suitable to the requirements of sailors. At mealtime the landlord sat at the head of the table and carved. There was no useless excess in the quantity of plates, spoons and other table furniture. The sliced bread was kept on the table in an old biscuit tin with "Ship ahoy!" written on it.

There was great latitude in the way of dress, and I cannot



remember whether or not the greater number of the guests wore coats at mealtime.

It was strange that in a Spanish-speaking country its language should not be spoken in this house. But the landlord had decided ideas of his own, as most caterers are obliged to have. He declared that the house was dirty enough as it was, but that if he admitted Spanish-speaking people it would be unendurable. So English was generally used here, but other northern European languages were frequently heard.

Although an undesirable place for a better-class person, this house was thoroughly respectable. No strong drink was kept on the premises, and there was no suspicion of any of those "Shanghai" propensities which have made sailors' lodging-houses a favourite theme for sensational stories.

The big landlord assumed that somewhat peremptory manner which perhaps is necessary when dealing with people of this class, who are not always able to pay. But if the table was rough the food was abundant, and every one had practically as much meat as he wanted, while at a more pretentious place where I lodged afterwards it was very limited in quantity.

With a knowledge that I might now be on the eve of an arduous struggle for existence, I obtained the address of a leading English doctor, hoping that he might be able to tell me where I could find employment.

This gentleman received me in that frigid manner which many English people adopt at home and abroad when addressing a stranger who appears to be in straitened circumstances.

He informed me of what I had already a suspicion from other sources, that foreign doctors are not allowed to practise in Chile without previously obtaining the qualifications of the country, and that he could not put me in the way of the most humble employment connected with the profession.

On showing him my certificates, which were in due order, he looked at me severely and said, "Doctor, you should have brought introductions with you."

I was so chilled by this reception that I made up my mind never to return, and the only useful thing I obtained here was the address of another medical man who was a fellow-countryman, and behaved as such in the true sense of the word.

Presenting myself to this latter, I was somewhat cheered by being received in a totally different manner.

It was but too true, he said, that foreign doctors were not allowed to practise in this country without first obtaining its diploma; but he was at my disposal in the way of kindly advice, and he asked me to call on him whenever I felt inclined.

I now felt the consequences of the rash act I had committed in taking such a long journey without previously finding out the medical rules of the place.

But my unfortunate position was due to circumstances rather than to want of forethought.

In the remote towns where I had been in Mexico there was no likelihood of finding out the customs of foreign parts, and after prac-



tising in much larger countries, such as Mexico and the United States, it was somewhat natural to suppose that the difficulties in a smaller country would not be harder to overcome. In the meantime what was I to do ?

Some one had suggested that it might be worth my while to present myself at one of the steamship company's offices on the chance of getting an appointment on board one of their steamers. I mentioned this to my friend the doctor, and he advised me to do so.

Like an animal that is hard pressed on land and takes to the water in consequence, I went to one of these houses and explained my case.

I was naturally looked upon with that suspicion which a stranger excites who appears suddenly, and without means, in a far-off country.

Still, my application was not altogether received unfavourably, and I was told that I might call again and present proofs of my qualifications and professional testimonials.

On doing so, it told in my favour that I had occupied the little post of municipal doctor in Altotonga, as this was practically a proof that I had been accustomed to practise among Spanish-speaking patients.

Finally the secretary said, "I wonder with all this (meaning my papers) that you could not have done better elsewhere. Whatever did you come here for, doctor ? Things are much better in Mexico than with us." And, indeed, I began to think so, too.

No definite promise could be made just then, but I was told to return in a few days' time, as there might possibly be a vacancy for me.

But one cannot live on hope alone. Some three days had now passed, and the few dollars in my purse were all owed to the boarding-house keeper. I was made so miserable at the idea of running up an account that I might not be able to pay, that I bluntly told him that I had no more money.

He took the news quietly enough, and merely remarked, "That's hard on me, I have to pay for everything."

However, I asked him to give me a few days more, for I had enough effects in my trunks to cover the cost of a longer period, and he acceded readily enough.

At this time there was a strike in Valparaiso, and it was with great difficulty that sufficient labour could be obtained to load the steamers and ships in the harbour.

I went out to watch the men carrying loads into the boats and lighters alongside of the wharf, to see if there was any chance of my being able to do this kind of work ; but I was obliged to give up the idea, because I knew that my feet would be too tender to walk without boots, especially when carrying a heavy load. For the passage from the wharf to the lighter was bridged by a plank which was often wet. All the other men walked barefoot, and if I were to walk with boots on a slippery plank, I should be very likely to fall, which, with a heavy load on my back, might cause a serious accident.

But after a few days of miserable uncertainty the worst had passed. The anxiously expected money arrived, and a few days afterwards I was told by the steamship company that there would soon be an appointment for me.

My first step was to move into a more suitable lodging. I had



seen a notice at a house not far off, in Cochrane Street, and now went to see what the place was like. The landlady seemed a respectable kind of person, and I arranged here for board and lodging at two dollars a day—the same price that I had been charged at the Scandinavian Home.

This was a change for the better, as the other boarders were middle-class people; but, although the ways of the house were superior to the sailor's lodging, the more expensive food, such as meat, was less abundant.

The next thing was to visit my friend the doctor, and to tell him of my good luck. He was now able to do me a serviceable kindness.

The reader may recollect that, when the German steamer called at the first South American port, there had been some hesitation in admitting us to pratique, as the steamer had come from San Francisco, where the plague had subsequently broken out.

In case I were appointed as ship's doctor, I knew that our course would be towards the north, and I should therefore be likely to meet the plague if it should extend southward along the Pacific coast. And I knew nothing about this deadly disease, which rarely invades Europe.

So I asked the doctor if he would let me read his books on the subject. He kindly put them at my disposal, and even studied the disease with me; so that after some days I had a fair idea of the subject as far as theory is concerned.

In the meantime I was in constant touch with the company's office, and shortly afterwards was appointed to one of their steamers which would soon arrive in port.

For reasons which will afterwards be understood the names of the company and the steamer are not disclosed.

The last few days before my departure from Valparaiso were therefore of a much more pleasing character than those which immediately followed my arrival. For I might consider myself fortunate in getting such speedy employment under adverse circumstances.

The people who boarded in my new abode were of a somewhat mixed nationality, and a description of them will give some idea of the cosmopolitan character of the inhabitants.

The only natives of the country who sat at table were the lady of the house, her little daughter, and a young Government employee.

There was a married couple, of whom the man was a German employed in a mercantile house, and for many years resident in Chile. His wife was born in Peru, and was of mixed German and Peruvian descent.

The only other lodger was a young man, a native of Peru, but of English name and parentage, although he only spoke the language imperfectly.

It will be seen, therefore, that the prevailing atmosphere of the house was foreign, but Spanish was the language spoken, common alike to natives of Chile and Peru, besides being the only one with which everybody was acquainted.

The people of Chile are said to call themselves "The English of the Pacific," but "The Americans of the Pacific" would be a term more nearly conveying the true situation.



For just as in the United States there is a large mixed foreign element, bound together on Anglo-Saxon lines, so in Chile the same element is bound together on Spanish lines.

But the foreign element in each case is so large that the characteristics of the parent country have been considerably modified in consequence of the infusion of so much alien blood. This mixed foreign element in Chile is still very patchy.

With the northern desert, or nitrate zone, I am unacquainted, except with the sight of its settlements along the sea-coast; but the prevailing mercantile influence there is said to be English.

In Valparaiso, the leading business area of the town is largely pervaded by English names, well seconded by German, so much so that the newspapers refer to the "Pacific Anglo-Saxon invasion."

In this Anglo-German element must be included a large number of other northern European races, as my acquaintance with the Scandinavian Home will testify.

But the foreign immigration into central Chile consists almost universally of middle-class people, and the working man or *huaso* is of Spanish descent, with occasional traces of Indian blood.

In southern Chile the German immigrant easily takes the lead in all branches. Here, no matter how poor he may arrive, he is prone to ascend in the social scale, and to displace the colonists of Spanish descent, who remain as the poorest and most ignorant class of white settlers.

It is somewhat hard to account for the fact that the northern European races are more inclined to settle in Chile, while the Latin races, especially the Italians, prefer the neighbouring republic of Argentina.

But these were matters that came under my notice afterwards, and the bitter experience of the last two weeks caused me to concentrate my attention on the subject of gaining a living.

In a few more days my steamer arrived, and I was given a slip of paper appointing me medical officer at a salary of about twelve pounds and ten shillings a month, during the pleasure of the company, and was instructed to go on board at once.

I left the greater part of my luggage at the boarding house, intending to make it my home when in port, for I had already become familiar with the other lodgers.

The steamer was standing out in the open harbour, and I now went up its side in good spirits, save for that anxiety natural to any one who tries an occupation for the first time, for I had never held an appointment at sea before.

Introducing myself briefly to the officers, I said, "I think I had better go to see the captain."

"Rather," replied one of them, somewhat dryly.

And on looking at one of their books, which appeared to be a kind of catechism on the duties of a mate, the first words were:—

"Q. What is your first duty on joining a ship?"

"A. Report myself to the commanding officer."



## CHAPTER XVII.

## ONE MONTH AS SHIP'S DOCTOR ON THE PACIFIC COAST.

PASSENGERS can have but a dim idea of how great a man the captain of a large steamer is, for they either never come into contact with him, or else only find him in that urbane frame of mind which is their due as a valuable part of the company's freight.

But to those working under him he is a being whose solitary grandeur and supreme authority cause a species of respect not often accorded to mortals in these days of equality.

Rare indeed must be those instances in which any exponent of land socialism might attempt to argue the point at sea with the captain, relative to the rights of mankind on board.

In such cases the old-fashioned captain would have been likely to remark, "The ship is private property which I represent, but every man has a right to his share of the sea—try it," and a convenient lurch of the ship might aid in giving a practical effect to this advice.

In these modern days of less dramatic effect, the innovator would hardly be likely to reach the captain, and the second officer with the handcuffs would apply more commonplace but equally irresistible arguments.

The great man was in his cabin, and our interview passed over pleasantly enough. He looked like a proper kind of commanding officer, and I should be quite satisfied if his impression of me were equally good.

The loading of a steamer in port is a busy time, so, after a short conversation, I was dismissed, and went to settle down in my quarters.

The doctor had evidently not been expected so soon, for his cabin had been temporarily occupied by some one else, but the major-domo assigned me a first-class cabin until my own one could be cleared out. He also gave me the key of the drug store, which could hardly be called a dispensary.

For on this ship it looked as if the requirements of a doctor were afterthoughts, and the company would have been probably quite content to do without a medical officer, only for the demands of the law which obliged them to keep one.

It was easy enough to paint the word *médico* on a cabin for the doctor, but more difficult to find that space for examining patients and mixing drugs which had been omitted in the construction of the ship.

The drug store was merely a cupboard in a passage, where I was liable to be jostled by any one who passed, and if the prescription



required much manipulation it was preferable to carry the drugs some distance to my cabin.

But this was nothing as compared with the want of any place for examining patients. This could not be done on deck, nor always in their own sleeping accommodation, which was shared by others.

The result was that some people would try to force a consultation in the doctor's little cabin, which was a most objectionable method.

Every medical man is a fair target for the diseases of his patients in his own home, or in a chamber set apart for that purpose, but he ought not to be exposed to such contamination in his small sleeping compartment.

Many of the commonly used drugs were in stock, but the number of them was far from complete, and there was a tendency to keep old-fashioned remedies but little used now, such as tincture of aconite, which the crew often demanded, and I as persistently refused.

I arranged the more serviceable drugs on the prominent shelves in the locker, and consigned the antique bottles, some of which had lost their labels, to the depths, not of the sea as I would have liked, but of the same locker.

The scales were so rusty as not to be trustworthy for weighing small amounts, but fortunately I had brought a little pair with me.

In a few days I had got at home on board, and did not dislike the life. For it was an improvement on any place where I had been in America to have an assured salary with practically no expenses. And although I should not have liked to live at sea permanently, my idea was now to remain long enough to put together a good cheque, so as to begin afresh in some other part of the world.

The position of a doctor on board ship is not a bad one. He has no superior to obey except the captain, no inferior to command except possibly an assistant, and in this case I had none.

As he clashes with no one the chances are that, if he attends to his duty, he will get along well with his fellow-officers and the crew, most of whom would rather keep on good terms with one whose professional services might be required any day in their own case.

It is popularly supposed that a doctor's life on board ship is a lazy one. This is such a gross exaggeration that it approaches a falsehood, but, taking it all round, it is less arduous than the life on shore.

For there are no distant visits, not much night work, and men as a rule are not such troublesome patients as women and children. Of course these latter are generally present on board, as passengers, but here they are in smaller proportions than they would be on shore where they form the greater part of the patients.

Many people unacquainted with the life at sea think that a doctor's services are only required by the crew in cases of accident, and that these hardy seafaring men do not habitually apply for medical aid.

Unless other places are very different to the Pacific coast, this is not the case. But on the present occasion it is likely that there were more unsound people than usual. For the recent strike in Valparaiso had made it difficult to fill up deficiencies, and men had been taken on board who might not have been admitted under other circumstances.

One of these broke down in a few days time, and kept his bed until



he was dismissed from the ship, and there were many with chronic complaints which had to be treated while their owners were off duty.

This steamer was very different to that of the Kosmos line which had just carried me along the same coast. For, besides the cargo, we had a large number of passengers, and I was here introduced to that mode of travelling which is known as a "deck passage."

The Kosmos line carried the old-fashioned first, second, and third class, all good of their kind.

But many of the steamers in this part, like the one in which I now was, only carry first-class and deck passengers, and those travellers who cannot afford the comforts of the former must undergo the discomforts, which almost amount to horrors, of the latter.

A third-class passenger is entitled to a bunk to lie in, and to that rough attention to necessities which furnishes him with tin plates and pint pots, and he may even be able to have a wash.

But a deck passenger shares the same conditions as the cattle on board. He is entitled to the piece of deck on which he stands, sits or lies down, but he has no further accommodation.

A certain amount of rough food is periodically carried round in buckets, and those unfortunates who have not provided themselves with table furniture must seize it with their fingers, which in the case of soup is extremely difficult.

In one respect the "deckers" have the advantage of cattle. These latter are generally shipped in large quantities from the fertile ports south of Valparaiso, to supply the desert nitrate zone in the north, and, when present, are placed on the lower deck.

Under such circumstances the deckers are promoted to the poop of the upper deck, where they have the fresh air which is not too keen in these warm latitudes.

Here they congregate in a densely packed throng, a family party often travelling together. The females generally carry a basket containing plates and other necessities of this kind, which are unpacked at mealtime.

The nationality of these people is very mixed. The greater part are South Americans of Spanish descent, sometimes with a slight cross of Indian, from the neighbouring republics, but an occasional European in poor circumstances is sometimes seen among them, and now and then there are a few Asiatics and people of colour.

The want of privacy and washing accommodation is very painful to better class people, but most of the deckers are of the lower grades and seasoned to such a mode of living.

It is astonishing how apparently comfortable a family party will make themselves on the voyage. Some attempt at seclusion is made by piling their luggage around them in a semicircular form, and by availing themselves of the shelter of some projecting part of the ship, when the women get into the recess thus made.

It is among such people that epidemics are likely to break out, and one party went on shore with a child in a state of high fever, but the parents had refused medical treatment, and I duly informed the captain, so my responsibility in the matter ended.

There were not generally many sick passengers among the first class, for people in good circumstances are not likely to make short voyages while unwell.



The only accident that happened in the first few days was the loss of a decker who jumped overboard. A boat was sent after him, but he was never found.

Some one tried to frighten me, by saying that the man had become deranged from the medicine I had given him, but, as I had only dressed an old wound and had given him no medicine, I could afford to disregard such talk. With this exception all went well. I was on good terms with the captain, officers and crew, and as far as I was aware with the ever-shifting passengers, who were changing at every port along the coast.

In the first-class saloon, the food, which forms such a general cause of complaint for passengers, was better than what I had been accustomed to for a long time, and I was a sufficiently good sailor to be able to make myself comfortable in my clean little cabin.

We had some recreation in the form of a kind of smoking concert in the room of the purser, or *contador*, as he is here called.

Every evening it was my duty to call on the captain, and inform him of the health of the ship. On these occasions he used to examine the book in which I entered the cases, and had an extreme dislike to the word "fever" being used to designate any illness; fearing that entries of this kind might cause the ship to be refused pratique.

For my part I rather liked these regular interviews with my commanding officer, for, being in constant touch with each other, he could see that I was paying attention to my duty, and I had always timely notice of his wishes.

We had now been about a week at sea since our departure from Valparaiso, and were slowly coasting northward along the ports of the desolate nitrate region.

The time spent in steaming was much more pleasant than when anchored in port, where the horrible clatter of the steam winch, just outside my cabin, made me prefer any other part of the ship.

Everything was in routine order, and the tendency was for passengers and cargo to decrease. For many of the former were bound for the nitrate region, or even further inland, and the cattle and piles of vegetables, such as cabbages and potatoes, on the lower deck, were almost exclusively bound for this part, where the dry sand will not maintain life.

We were now approaching the latitudes of perpetual summer, and were looking forward to the easy times which would follow the discharge of most of our passengers and freight, when, on arrival at a port in northern Chile, we heard the unwelcome news that two neighbouring places were infected with the bubonic plague.

This made me anxious, but, as the health on board appeared quite good, the only precaution to take was to be on the watch.

Next morning I was informed that one of the sailors was ill, and I went to their quarters to see the man.

It has always seemed strange to me that the crew of a ship should be berthed in such an uncomfortable manner.

These men, with such facilities for saving, can probably command more money than those on shore in the same class of life, yet it seems to be a time-honoured custom that their housing should remain in that untidy and comfortless state that a landsman would not tolerate.



The furniture is often confined to rows of dirty bunks and bedding at the side of the space, with an oily table and a few rough seats which remind one of a bad sample of a porter's room at a railway station.

The quarters of the sailors were to the right of the ship, with "*Marineros*" written over the entrance. To the left were the firemen, with "*Fogoneros*" written in the corresponding place, but in point of untidiness there was nothing to choose between them, and the smells here always made me glad to return to the purer atmosphere of the deck.

The sick sailor was in a high fever, and complained of pain in the arm, but although I examined the limb from the armpit to the fingers I could find nothing amiss.

The following day he remained in much the same state, as far as fever and pain were concerned, but, on examining the arm, there was a swelling in what is technically termed the axilla.

This symptom, combined with fever and the ominous news from the shore, was more than suspicious.

For a few hours I was uncertain what line should be taken, apart from the treatment of the patient himself. For there was an objection to either course that might be pursued.

If I informed the captain that, in my opinion, we had a case of the bubonic plague on board, the news would naturally be so unwelcome that it might not be readily believed, and if, by any chance, events did not justify the doctor's opinion, he would be ridiculed as an alarmist, and probably would be considered an undesirable employee who had nearly caused the company to lose time and money through making a statement which would render the ship liable to quarantine. While, if I did not inform the captain of my opinion, I should be failing in my duty, and, if events should prove that my suspicions were correct, all the blame would be thrown on my shoulders, as an official who, from incompetence or interested motives, had not given the captain timely notice of danger.

A short consultation with myself convinced me that it was better to tell the captain at once, and to brave ridicule or even dismissal rather than fail in duty.

So I went to him and said, "Captain, I've got something to tell you that you will not like," whereupon he looked at me hard, and I continued, "I think we have the bubonic plague on board."

"Nonsense," he replied. "What do you know about it? Have you ever seen it?"

I was now sincerely grateful to my friend, the doctor in Valparaiso, who had placed his books at my disposal, and had studied the disease with me, as I answered, "No, I have never seen it, but, thinking that we might come across it, I read up the subject before coming on board, and I fear my suspicions are correct."

Seeing that I was inclined to stick to my opinion, the captain thought for a short time, and said words to the effect that he thought I had made a mistake, but that we should watch events carefully.

Now that I had told the captain, my mind was somewhat relieved, and when he asked me on the subsequent morning how the man was progressing, I said he was in much the same state, but, if anything, rather worse.



Things went on thus for about another day, when I said, "But, captain, what are we going to do about putting the man apart, in case he may infect the others?"

"You don't know the people here, doctor," he said, uneasily. "If the man is put in a place by himself, every one will say that we have something infectious on board."

The captain now thought for a short time, and then said, "I know what will be the best to do. We'll say that the sailors' quarters are going to be cleaned out, and that, as the sick man will be in the way, he has to be put in a cabin by himself."

So the poor sailor was now given a first-class cabin. He seemed a very decent young fellow, and was a white man, a native of the northern part of South America.

But the people of the ship were quick, as the captain had remarked, at noticing such an unusual event as putting a sailor in a first-class cabin. I soon felt myself an object of suspicion, and my services were less in demand than before.

The servant whose duty it was to clean out the sick man's cabin neglected to do so, although I had requested that it might be done, and the captain, coming to the cabin one day, was so impressed by the bad smell that he obliged the frightened attendant to do his work occasionally.

Notwithstanding this, the smell remained very offensive, but whether from the disease directly, or from the accidental circumstances of defective sanitation, I am not certain.

I was now constantly in the sick room, for, owing to the fever, the man was getting very weak, and had to be fed frequently.

There was, of course, no antitoxin on board, and, in default of the most appropriate treatment, I could only dose the man with quinine, and give him plenty of soup and brandy.

But it was impossible to do what was required under the circumstances, especially when everything had to be done in supposed secrecy.

With those, however, connected with the management of the steward's department, the secret was becoming rather an open one, and the major-domo, who was very considerate in obliging me, said one day, "I did not know you had anything contraband on board."

During this time we were slowly going northward, and were now off the southern coast of Peru.

The plague seemed to have broken out almost simultaneously in different places, and several other ports were now declared infected.

These settlements were avoided in consequence, but at those places where the health was stated to be good, the steamer anchored, and the usual passenger and cargo traffic went on.

There was now another very uneasy officer on board besides myself, and this other was the captain.

The serious state of the sick man, together with the spreading of infection along the coast, gave weight to my warning.

And another proof was being furnished, for the rats were dying, and the disease is frequently spread by the fleas on these animals.

So the captain now called together a council of his senior officers, as he is bound to do in emergencies, and, having in his cabin the chief



officer, the purser, the chief engineer, and myself, addressed us in words which were as nearly as possible the following :—

"Gentlemen, the doctor tells me we have the plague on board, and I do not like the look of things. The rats are dying. If you see a dead rat, do not touch it, but pour boiling water over the body before throwing it overboard. I have my duty to the company, but there is my duty to the public as well, for this is an affair which cannot be settled by a fine, and I may render myself liable to imprisonment."

This was a plain exposition of facts already more or less known to the men present, but they had been officially obliged to keep the matter to themselves until invited to speak by the captain.

It is rather a delicate thing to give advice to your commanding officer, for, as in my case, if you suggest what is disagreeable to him, you lay yourself open to unfavourable criticism, unless your view of the case is borne out by facts.

On this occasion the hesitation of the officers was perhaps due to the following circumstances.

The senior present, the chief officer, was in more direct contact with the captain than any one else present, and, although officially first, he did not relish giving advice to his superior.

The purser had attained his responsible position at such an early age, and looked so juvenile that he felt scruples about expressing his opinion, when men so much older than himself had not spoken.

So the chief engineer, who was by far the senior in age, gave in a few words the palatable advice that it would be better to keep the affair secret, as if it became known the ship would be quarantined, and the company would suffer considerable loss in consequence.

No one opposed this advice, which was looked upon favourably by the captain, as representing the best interests of the company, and I had already made myself sufficiently prominent by drawing attention to the disease and by asking for isolation, without presuming to go any further.

So the council separated, and things went on as before.

There would now have been another difficulty in notifying the disease, for, on talking over the matter afterwards with the chief officer, and suggesting that the captain might eventually adopt such a course, the former said decisively, "He should have done so before, he cannot do it now."

For, unless all the dates were falsified, it would be seen that the notice had been given too late.

In the meantime the sailor was getting weaker every day, and had to be propped up in bed and fed with a spoon. But the fever was leaving him, and I had even hopes of his recovery. For he had now been ill for five days, and it is stated that those who do not die before ten days have passed generally recover.

In six days, however, from the commencement of the illness I had reason to expect an unfavourable termination.

The fever had quite left him, but his strength had gone as well.

His feet were now quite cold, and, although the hands were somewhat warmer, his pulse could not be felt.



The captain knew I was giving my patient a considerable amount of brandy, and anxiously asked if I were not overdoing it, saying that any sailor would readily drink spirits if he got the chance; but to my mind there was no doubt about its value in impending heart failure, and I replied, "I do not say, captain, that a man is dying because his pulse cannot be felt, but I say this, that if it does not return soon he will die."

The captain had now a last resource in case of the worst.

There was another doctor, whom we will call Zutano, on board, in the employment of the company, although he was not attached to the ship.

So the captain said, "In case anything bad happens, we had better call in Dr. Zutano, so that he may not feel himself slighted."

So the doctor walked to the cabin door, during which time I was explaining the history of the case, when he said, "Let me examine the man by myself." He did so, but I was so near that I could not help hearing much that was said.

The doctor found out that the sailor had previously had malaria, and told him that he was a foolish fellow (*tonto*) for making so much fuss about his present condition, which was merely a return of his former complaint.

I could not help feeling disgusted with a man who talked thus in the face of death, and when Dr. Zutano turned to me triumphantly and said, "The man has no fever," which was indeed true in this last stage, I pointed to another swelling which had now appeared in another part, the first one having subsided.

The doctor, however, dismissed this symptom with the words, "It is chronic," and returned to give the captain the pleasing news that I had made a mistake and that the sailor was merely suffering from weakness owing to past and present attacks of malaria.

The dying man, however, had still strength enough to resent such treatment, and, after the doctor had gone, remarked reproachfully, "To call me *tonto*."

Shortly afterwards I saw the captain, whose face was now beaming with satisfaction, when he said, "Oh, doctor, how you frightened me," and then proceeded to state Dr. Zutano's opinion.

"Well, captain, I hope I may be wrong," I replied, but he could see that my opinion remained the same, and I believe he respected it as more nearly representing the truth. The day following made seven clear days from the commencement of the illness, and the eighth had already begun.

The man's hands were now as cold as his feet, and he was dying by inches, but could still speak, and readily took a little liquid food.

I had propped him up in bed, and was feeding him with brandy and water with a little quinine in it, when he made a slight choking noise.

The least mechanical difficulty was fatal, and, after a few spasms, all was over.

I reported this to the captain immediately, and he said, "Would you like me to see him?"

"It would be better," I replied.

So he looked in through the half-open door, and remarked, "He is



dead enough," and I retired to my cabin, for I felt disheartened and run down.

We were now near Callao, but as this place was declared infected, we stopped at another port instead.

On arrival there it became necessary to inform the health officer of the death on board, but the captain was equal to the emergency.

Dr. Zutano was a Peruvian, and known to the officials here, so the captain got him to write a certificate, before going on shore, to the effect that the dead man had been suffering from a return of malaria.

The captain presented this certificate to the health officer when he came on board. The latter seemed at first rather suspicious, for, although the length of the illness had been stretched a few days, it was still a very short time for a fatal termination to malaria.

The captain explained that the man had previously suffered from malaria, and I was obliged to bear out this statement, which indeed was true, although conveying a false impression. Finally the official said, "Well, I suppose if Dr. Zutano says so it must be true."

And here the captain displayed a boldness in the interests of his employers, which, however mistaken, cannot but be appreciated.

For he now said to the health officer, "You know, doctor, the scare that there is on shore about the plague. If the sailor is buried there, the people might say that he died of that disease. Would it not be better to give him a burial at sea?"

The health officer made no objection and the interview ended.

So the body was put in a boat belonging to the steamer, and towed out to sea for the regulation distance by a steam tug. On the return of the boat, the first officer, who had been in charge, asked me to have a drink with him.

"Well, now that it is all over, what do you think of it?" he said.

"Just the same as before," I replied.

The strain of the last week had been very severe on me. For quite apart from any risk to my own health, there was the question whether I had not rendered myself liable to imprisonment as well as the captain.

On mature consideration, however, I think that I had acted in a proper manner.

I had given timely notice of the disease, and had tried my best to save the patient.

It is not the duty of a subordinate to act as a spy on his commanding officer, especially when, although doing wrong, he is actuated by a motive which must always guide those in charge of any undertaking, the subordination of details to the carrying through of the plan.

The captain was determined to go through without quarantine in the interests of his employers, and none of the employees under him had a right to interfere.

Besides he now had a plausible reason for his conduct, owing to the certificate of Dr. Zutano, for when professional opinions disagree, the recipient can choose the one that suits him best, and it did not lie with me to decide whether the other doctor was right, or had acted from incompetence, or from the interested motives of pleasing his employers.



Now that I had leisure to think of other things I found myself unwell. I had certainly something wrong with my respiratory organs, for I had a bad cough and a partial loss of voice.

The next morning, while we were still in port, I received a letter from the purser's office. To my surprise it was a notice from the agent of the company in this place, stating that I had been transferred to another of the company's steamers, and that I was to go on shore to await its arrival. I was sorry to leave the ship, but there was no help for it. When my few belongings were packed up, I said good-bye to the captain, with whom I parted on good terms.

But before I went down the ship's side, I was called into the purser's office, where some of the officers were assembled, and, ill as I was, it was pleasant to receive a cordial farewell, and, while we were having a parting drink, the purser in a little speech said that they were sorry to lose me, but that we might be shipmates again some day.

On landing I was taken to a large wooden building that appeared to be the only hotel in this settlement in the sandy desert.

And here I spent two miserable days, awaiting the arrival of my new steamer. For I had more than the mere circumstance of my illness to contend with, as the following will show.

The bar of this hotel was well patronized, and among the visitors who entered to refresh themselves was the health officer whom I had seen on board the steamer.

This gentleman, although courteous in his manner and greeting me with "*Buenos dias, doctor,*" evidently regarded me with suspicion, and it was natural enough that he should do so.

Ships in times of sickness do not generally part with their doctor, and it did not require an expert to see that I was ill myself.

I could notice his inquisitive glances, and was apprehensive that he might demand some explanation, for in my weak state it would be almost impossible to show a good front to anything approaching an accusation.

Professional courtesy, however, probably restrained him from asking for information which would have been unpleasant for me to give, even though it might now occur to him that something underhand had been done.

I would willingly have spent the day out of doors, and have avoided company, but was too unwell to be out in the sun.

The desert descended to the outskirts of this town, whose streets were floored with their native sand, with rows of the inevitable shanty houses on either side, but much as I should have liked to see more of the surroundings, the state of my health made me keep quiet.

When the steamer arrived I gladly went on board and reported myself to the captain. We were bound southward and the ship was quite clear of any infectious disease.

I was still uncertain about the motives that had caused me to be transferred, although it was evident that it had something to do with the fatal illness lately described, but in the light of subsequent events the reasons were not hard to discover.

The agent and my former captain, after conferring together, had come to the conclusion that, if any other suspicious illness



should break out, I might be placed in an awkward position, both for the company and myself, with relation to the health authorities, and that it would be more convenient to have an officer like Dr. Zutano, who was so well acquainted with the different phases of malaria.

For the first few days on board the new ship, my health improved, and I was able to go about without misery to myself, appearing to have merely a bad bronchitis.

We were now returning along the coast of the desolate nitrate country already described, touching at places that were not infected, and avoiding those which were so declared.

No unusual event happened on this voyage, except for taking an insane woman on board.

The major-domo warned me that this was going to be done, and I referred the question of receiving her to the captain, who was willing to take her if she were accompanied by attendants.

As two people, a man and a woman, were with her, no objection was raised, and the poor creature was watched in her cabin, where I periodically visited her.

Her madness was said to have arisen from a love affair, and she was continually talking in a most excited manner.

Presently, however, we got into rough weather when only some two days from Valparaiso, and sea-sickness appeared to have a calming influence on her mind, for she then talked but little and more quietly.

The temporary improvement in my health had already changed for the worse. I was just able to do my routine work and to go to the first-class saloon for my meals.

The rest of the time I passed lying down in my cabin, but always dressed, so that I might be available when my services were required.

My present captain did not require a daily report of the health of the ship, but of course I had occasional interviews with him, and he remarked in a kindly manner that I appeared ill.

When we arrived at Valparaiso, we found that a great disaster had lately occurred. The harbour is quite an open one, with but little shelter in rough weather, and the storm which we had felt two days further north, was here so violent that some of the ships had been wrecked while at anchor close to the shore, and there had been considerable loss of life.

The company to which I belonged had suffered with others, and business was rather at a standstill.

Two days after our arrival I asked the captain for leave to go on shore, in order to present myself at the company's office, with a view to asking for a few days rest, as I was now too unwell to work.

The captain made no objection, telling me that the company had appeared to have forgotten all about me, owing to their recent losses, so I landed without further delay, and went to the office of my employers.

Here I briefly stated that I felt ill and wanted a short leave of absence.

The official in charge told me that I was wanted to go north on



the following day, whereupon I said, "What is the use of my going if I am not able to work?"

So he told me to rest that night, and report myself the next day.

On returning to my headquarters in Cochrane Street, the other boarders welcomed me, but remarked that I looked ill, as indeed was the case.

In the morning I presented myself again at the office, saying that I felt worse, and was given leave to rest on shore.

It was with great difficulty that I forced myself to hold out until I had taken my things off the ship and brought them to my lodging.

I then took to my bed, where I remained day and night for over a week, with about another week between bed—and chair. It was evidently not a simple bronchitis as I had thought at first, but a septic pneumonia or lung poisoning which I had caught from the smell in the badly cleaned cabin.

I was evidently rather susceptible to noxious odours, for it may be remembered that something like this had happened to me in Calpulalpam, only in a less degree.

The worst of it was there was no one to look after me. I tossed about and coughed all night, and when morning came, could not eat the ordinary food brought.

Perhaps when the midday meal came I might take a few mouthfuls, but my principal diet was starvation.

When, however, more than a week had passed, the worst was over, and feeling stronger, I had a serious conversation with the landlady, and told her that I must have some food more suited to an invalid.

After this was provided I progressed every day, and in another week sat again at the boarders' table, fairly well, but with my respiratory organs in a far from sound state.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### INVALIDED IN VALPARAISO.

WHEN my health began to mend, one of my first thoughts was to consider in how short a time I should be able to present myself at the company's office to ask for re-employment, but the slowness of my recovery and the inclement state of the weather soon caused me to abandon all immediate thoughts of going to sea.

My first arrival in Valparaiso had been towards the end of April, and even when I started on my disastrous voyage in May the weather was still fine.

But on my return invalided in June, the short southern winter in these parts had already begun. The seasons in different parts of Chile vary more than in most other countries, owing to the extent in a straight line north and south, but near Valparaiso the winter may be said to last through the months of June, July and August.

The cold even then is not intense, but is sufficient to make a house dreary in a place where, like Mexico, the people will not use fireplaces.

There is also a considerable amount of rain in these months, and I soon found that if I exposed myself much out of doors, I brought on a return of the hardly cured bronchitis, although no longer accompanied by graver symptoms.

Of necessity therefore most of my time was spent in the house and I only took a walk outside when the weather was fine.

There were the same boarders, and the one with whom I came most in contact was the young Peruvian of English parentage, who was also often at home, as he was not then following any occupation. When my health improved I gradually extended my knowledge of the town, which was so limited by the hills at the back that it was fair to assume that it had been rebuilt on the same lines since the earthquake.

Although possessing fine mercantile buildings, it seemed to be very deficient in *plazas*, the principal one being where the theatre was situated, and a long way from Cochrane Street.

There was, however, a *plaza* much nearer, which has already been mentioned in the directions for finding a pawnbroker's house.

Its official name was Errazuriz, but it would be more appropriately known as Plaza Beachcomber, from the people of this class who frequented it.

This old-fashioned term is still frequently used in Valparaiso, and



reminds the traveller that he is approaching the region of the South Sea Islands, where it seems to have originated.

In the islands a beachcomber may be supposed to have had shipwreck as an excuse for his undesirable position, but in Valparaiso it has come to mean that class of persons who, without money or inclination to work, endeavour to live on the public.

Living on the public is a comprehensive term, and will include thieves, sharpers, tramps and beggars.

The beachcomber is too versatile to be included in any of these callings, although more nearly allied to the two latter classes, for he would prefer not to break the law, if only he could live without work.

Yet he is not a mere beggar, and would scorn such a description of himself.

His character may be illustrated by the following typical case.

You have been walking, and, desiring a short rest, sit down on one of the seats in Plaza Beachcomber, for want of a better place.

A person, by no means dressed in rags, but still of rather untidy appearance, will soon sit down on the same seat, and after a decent interval, during which he has been taking stock of you, he will ask you some commonplace question.

This question is frequently as to your nationality, when, if he cannot assume the same, he will have a near relation, or at least a dear friend who comes from the same country as yourself.

When this stage has been reached, it is advisable to plead an important engagement and to walk away before assistance is asked in the form of money, drink or food.

The way in which they will follow the lead in nationality is marvellous, for the young Peruvian in my boarding-house told me that he was with a person who, on being asked this question, replied testily, "I am a Chinaman."

But the wily beachcomber was equal to the occasion, and, turning to others present, said, "It appears that this gentleman is a countryman of mine; I too was born in China."

It will probably seem strange that such an English-sounding term as beachcomber should be used in a Spanish-speaking country, but it must be remembered that Chile is unusually cosmopolitan, and many foreign words are incorporated into the language spoken here.

Whatever claim the beachcomber may have as a national type there is no doubt about the right of the *huaso* or working man to be considered as such.

He probably appears at his worst in Valparaiso. Here he often falls into a state of squalor, which appears more repugnant to strangers than the condition of a semi-civilized Indian in Mexico or Peru.

For the *huaso* is in the main a white man, although sometimes with traces of Indian blood, and white people who fall below par appear more miserable than other races under similar conditions.

And herein lies one of the differences between Chile and some other Spanish-American republics, for Chile has but a small surviving Indian population, while the others have incorporated the native races.

This in its turn has altered the social status of the poorer whites, who, as long as civilized Indians are present, do not usually fall to the bottom of the social scale.



But, as there are not many available Indians left in central and southern Chile, part of the white population must represent the working class.

The *Gringo* immigrant is either superior from the commencement or else, by his intelligence and industry, gets the upper hand of the poorer descendants of the Spanish colonists, who thus form the bulk of the working population.

Poverty in the country is not so lowering as in the town, and the ragged *huaso*, mounted on a cart-horse in the streets, with a spur on one of his naked feet, is not a pleasant type.

While on the subject of types the *futre* must not be forgotten. This word is certainly not of Spanish origin, although pronounced as such, and is used to designate that class of young men who go about well dressed without the means to keep up their assumed style.

They are justly dreaded by those who cater for the public, as they run up accounts for such necessities of life as food and lodging, and go away without paying.

This was in fact one of the reasons given me for the higher prices ruling, for those who could pay were obliged to make up for the deficiency of those who did not.

A poem has been devoted to describing the *futre* and warning the public against him. A few of its lines, with a translation will give some idea :—

" Güen da el futre,  
Cuello de goma.  
No paga nunca,  
Lo que se toma."

" How is the *futre*?  
Celluloid collar.  
Whatever he takes,  
He ne'er pays a dollar."

It has not been recorded whether a beachcomber ever made the mistake of accosting a *futre*, with a view to getting money from him; but, in spite of the differences in outward appearance, it will be seen that they are equally objectionable characters.

In many ways it became forced on my mind that Mexico, with its old-fashioned ways and large Indian population, was really a richer and more prosperous country than Chile with its cosmopolitan customs and population.

The value of the dollar in Spanish America is a very good index of the commercial prosperity of the country.

In Mexico and Peru they were each worth about two shillings and were made of good silver.

In Chile the dollar was worth much less, and the silver had so much base alloy that the money tarnishes on keeping.

The Spanish spoken in Mexico and Chile is good in both countries, but there is a considerable difference in the manner of address.

In old-fashioned Mexico, where everything is Spanish that is not Indian, it is but rarely that a man is addressed as *Señor* So-and-so, although the word is frequently used by itself, as meaning "sir," or respectfully in front of titles, as *Señor capitán*.

For this style would not be considered complimentary, and any one fairly well up in the social scale would consider it his right to have the word *Don* prefixed to his Christian name, whereas in the more up-to-date and cosmopolitan Chile it is quite usual for a man to have the



word *señor* placed before his surname, just as "mister" is with English-speaking people.

There is one Spanish custom, not quite lost here, which is rather unsuitable, owing to the mixed nationalities in Chile.

In Spain a man often assumes his mother's name in addition to that of his father, but when, as is frequently the case here, the father and mother are of different nationalities, the result is incongruous, for if a German of the name of Swartz were to marry a woman of the name of Blanco, the full surname of the child would be Swartz y Blanco.

Foreigners have left their impress on Chile from the very commencement of its history as a nation.

Many of the leaders in the war of independence were foreigners or of foreign extraction, and their names have been perpetuated in the streets and places called after them, as in Cochrane street where I was lodging.

The most prominent case of this kind is that of O'Higgins, and every Irishman must feel a pride in the manner in which this name is still revered in Chile.

For these two illustrious men, father and son, were foremost in the land—the one shortly before, and the other during the war of independence, and each behaved in a manner which commanded the admiration of all.

The father, a poor Irishman who emigrated to Peru, became an official, and conducted himself so well that he was made governor of Chile. In this capacity he earned such respect that he was subsequently promoted to Peru as viceroy, the highest colonial post under the Spanish crown.

And unpopular as Spanish rule afterwards became in Chile, Governor O'Higgins is still mentioned in the history used by the school children of that country as the best of all the Spanish governors.

His son, a native of Chile, was afterwards the hero of the war of independence, and became the first president of the new republic. His political career was as glorious as his military, for directly he perceived that his exalted position caused envy, and was likely to endanger the welfare of his country, he voluntarily resigned the supreme command, and retired into private life.

But his memory lives in the hearts of the people, and his name in the ships, streets, and national undertakings of his country.

There is a great pleasure resort called Playa Ancha (broad shore), about two miles outside Valparaiso, and a large number of people assemble here on Sundays and other holidays.

A park-like extent of land affords exercise for the boys and young men who are fond of practising football.

The walks are largely used as a promenade, and there are buildings which do a thriving trade as refreshment houses.

In some of these the peculiar national dance, the *zamacueca* or *cueca*, as it is usually termed, is kept up with vigour.

It is a sight not to be forgotten, and a somewhat barbaric effect is introduced by the shrill voices of the women who play on the harp or guitar, when they animate the dancers by a kind of piercing chant.





Lady wearing the Manto—(p. 205).







The dance itself seems to be derived from Spain, and there is nothing Indian about it.

A further insight into its character may be obtained from the name of the kindred dance in Peru, which is called *La Marinera*, plainly intimating that its origin came from over the sea, rather than from the original inhabitants of the country.

Both these dances have a family resemblance to the Spanish style, the handkerchief being waved in one hand instead of the castanets in both hands, and the couple, who face each other, advancing and retiring in the same way.

The *cueca* in Chile and the *marinera* in Peru are so much alike that a stranger will be inclined to look upon them as identical; but a Peruvian explained to me the differences, while admitting that there was a great similarity between them.

To my mind the *cueca* is not to be compared to the Spanish dances for grace. But whatever may be the opinion of the dance, there is no doubt that the female dancer, who, after all, is the principal figure, is not so graceful as in Spain,

In that country only girls and younger women attempt the national dances in public places, where they are very careful to be neatly dressed; while in Chile a fat woman, with unkempt hair and an apron over her working dress, will stand up for the *cueca*, and the result, although animated, is not so pretty.

While on the subject of female dress, it would be appropriate to mention the *manto*. This in Chile corresponds to the *mantón* in Mexico, but they are not the same.

Here, again, I will not venture on a rigid comparison, and will allow the photographs to speak for themselves.

It will, however, be easily seen that the *mantón* is worn loosely about the neck, while the *manto* is pinned tightly around it, so as to form a kind of hood.

The wearers of both are good types of their respective countries, the faces in Chile being generally broader than in Mexico, but in this instance the *manto* has hardly been drawn far enough forward over the head.

In the matter of a national head-dress, Mexico has an advantage over Chile. In the former country those who cannot afford the black *mantón* wear the *rebozo*, which is cheap, and washes well. In Chile there is no *rebozo*, and an old rusty-black *manto* is most undesirable.

Fortunately there is a comparative latitude here in the matter of dress, and some of the lower-class women do without any shawl-like appendage, and wear hats, or go without any head covering.

Even in the larger towns the better-class people frequently wear the *manto* in the morning, but hats are considered better style in the afternoon. Following the custom of other Spanish-speaking countries, women do not wear hats in church, and countless *mantos* are seen about church time in Valparaiso.

But, generally speaking, Spanish customs sit very lightly on the inhabitants of Chile, where they have suffered more innovations than in most other places, owing to the mixture of nationalities.

Playa Ancha is, of course, quite close to the sea, and there is a good bathing-place. There is also a bull-ring, but no bull-fights took



place in it while I was there, for the local authorities wished to discountenance this sport, and those who wished to see it had to go to a place further from the town.

My Peruvian companion brought me one day to the museum, where he indignantly showed me antiquities from his country which were carried to Valparaiso by the conquerors in the "war of the Pacific."

There were Indian mummies in a fair state of preservation, and Peru has certainly contributed more objects of interest to this museum than Chile, for the simple reason that the Peruvian Indians were a more or less civilized people before the Spanish Conquest, and had, even in those days, antiquities of their own, while the Araucanian Indians of Chile, although far superior as fighting men, were mere savages, and possessed little of interest.

Without expressing any opinion on the merits of the dispute that caused the war, it certainly does not seem proper that the conquering nation should despoil a national museum.

Conquered Peru, however, may be said to have had its revenge, for it is financially in a better position than its conqueror.

The generally accepted reason for this is that Chile obtained such a sudden influx of wealth by the conveniently termed process of annexation that she did not know where to stop her expenditure, and misspent her spoils to such an extent that she became poorer than before, while her defeated enemy slowly but surely recovered.

Some of the more religiously-minded Peruvians, however, look on this evolution as a direct punishment from above.

The bad feeling produced by this war is likely to be continued while Chile keeps the conquered territory, and it would be a broader-minded policy for that country to restore part of it, at any rate, to Peru, and thus obtain a friend on the northern boundary. For she is well situated in having the ocean on her western and southern limits, and has now a well-defined boundary between her and Argentina on the east: but she is more vulnerable towards the north, and in case of any powerful invasion from that quarter it would be an invaluable advantage for all the Latin republics to stand together, and to make a defensive alliance, by which an attack against one would mean war with all.

Chile still imports a large proportion of her commodities from Europe, in contradistinction to the northern part of South America, where they come from the United States.

The Panama canal is confidently expected to alter this, and it appears likely that the completion of this enterprise will give a great impetus to American commerce in the southern part of the continent.

It was amusing one night to hear the German boarder and a visitor, both employees in commercial houses, argue on the respective merits of German and English imports.

The German naturally advocated the goods of his own country, saying that they were cheaper.

"Yes," replied the other, who, being a native of Chile, may be presumed to be impartial, "they are cheaper, but English goods are better, and when we unpack a German case we frequently find some of the things broken."



And the argument continued, without either speaker giving in to the other.

Although the winter was not yet over, I was now getting stronger, and went out frequently.

I visited my friend the doctor, who had lent me his books, and told him of my adventure at sea, when he said it was a very remarkable thing that I should have studied the epidemic just before it broke out.

The plague had now extended southward, and there were a few cases in Valparaiso, but, as isolation was strictly enforced, the disease never assumed alarming proportions.

One of the first days of my convalescence I was out in the vicinity of the *malecón*, as the wooden wharf along the shore is called, when I saw a face that I knew, although I could not recall who it was.

The recognition was mutual, and the man proved to be the second major-domo on board the ship from which I had been transferred.

He insisted that I should have a drink with him, and, of course, one of the first questions was, "How did you get on after I left the ship?"

His reply was, "Why, you had hardly left before another man became ill, and died in two days. When we got to Panama they quarantined us for twenty-three days, and, on our return to Antofagasta, they kept us under observation for five days. When we arrived here they pulled all our furniture out, and gave us a holy old fumigation with sulphurous acid!"

From this account it would seem to have been better policy to submit to quarantine in due season, when the time lost would not have amounted to anything like twenty-eight days, to say nothing of the possible loss of life from contagion or from insufficient treatment on board.

I now began to consider whether I could not gain some employment on shore, without hazarding my health at sea before I became strong.

With this view, I anxiously read the advertisements in the newspapers.

Some one was wanted to look after a *güa-güa*. The name is rather terrible, and I thought it might be a fierce animal of some kind.

Fortunately before applying for the post I asked my fellow-boarders what kind of a creature this was, when they told me that it only meant a baby.

Perhaps this extraordinary word is of Indian derivation, for it certainly is not good Spanish.

But there were other more suitable employments in which there were vacancies. Among them were demands for a secretary who could write English, and for a schoolmaster to teach junior boys the same language.

I applied for both, but did not even receive an answer to my applications. It appears that I had no idea of the overcrowded state of the market, and of the number of necessitous people asking for work.

For on mentioning to my German and Peruvian fellow-lodgers my surprise at not having even received an answer, they looked at me rather compassionately, and answered in nearly the same terms, "Do you think that they take the trouble to answer all the applications?"



They only choose from a few they like the best, and generally those of people that they know something about."

From having now lived a good many weeks in the same house, these two young men and myself had become rather familiar, and we arranged to have an expedition together on Sunday, which was the only available day for the German, who was in regular employment.

So we started early one morning to walk to a place several miles away, where we intended to have late breakfast.

The Peruvian and myself carried our cameras, but the more practical German carried a revolver, as it was known that the high land at the back of the town, over which we should have to pass, sometimes harboured robbers.

The steep ascent of the hill behind the town is somewhat tiring for those who are not in good walking condition, but, when once on the top, the worst is over, and the change from town to open country is sudden.

These hills are wild, but not pretty, having hardly any trees, a defect which is shared by almost the whole of central Chile.

Still we enjoyed the walk, after having been pent up in the town for so long, and on duly arriving at our destination, had earned an appetite for a substantial breakfast.

The walk, with the accessories of breakfast, rest and conversation, took rather longer than we expected, and no photographs were taken. There was indeed not much inducement to do so, for these somewhat barren and uncultivated hills would not make a pleasing picture, and we were not far enough from a large town to get good types of country people.

On the return journey, as the robbers had never appeared, we stopped for a short time and fired at a mark, but the German prudently kept about half a dozen cartridges in case of emergencies.

After this target practice, we resumed the walk towards home, when I imprudently got quite out of sight of the others by walking ahead of them.

I had hardly sat on a high bank at the side of the road, awaiting my companions, when a stalwart beggar came along, and asked for alms. I may have been too suspicious, but I was really glad that the steepness of the bank prevented actual contact, for, to reach me, he would have had to go round on one side or the other and this would have given me due warning.

So from my point of vantage I simply told him that I had no money to spare, and that he had better ask richer people.

He graciously accepted my excuses, and walking on soon met my companions, to whom he made the same request.

They likewise excused themselves, but in a manner which might have been troublesome for me, if the beggar had met them first.

For they asked him if he had seen a man answering to my description on the road, and, on his answering in the affirmative, said that they were very sorry, but that I was their secretary, and was carrying all their money.

We reached home at nightfall without further adventure, and were so satisfied with our expedition that we determined to have another later on.



In order to have more funds for this, we began a system of fines, by which every one who was more than a limited number of minutes late for meals, had to pay so many cents towards the next outing.

Another innovation was now proposed. As there was a lady among the contributors, and it would be practically impossible for her to accompany her husband on a walking expedition, it was suggested that the amusement should take place in the form of a dance.

This proposition was not looked upon with equal favour by every one.

The German was passionately fond of dancing, and welcomed the idea. The Peruvian was, perhaps, not quite so enthusiastic about it, but he too preferred it to a walking trip.

The change was not acceptable to me, for I felt too depressed by my bad fortune to care for festivity of this kind.

My opposition to the dance was, strange to say, strongly supported by the only lady in the party, the German's wife.

Her reason was jealousy, and she openly said that dancing was not a suitable pastime for a married man.

This lady, as before mentioned, was a native of Peru, but of mixed German and Peruvian parentage. She was decidedly good-looking, and, having some means of her own, exercised considerable authority over her husband.

There was another most important person to be consulted, and that was Doña Ignacia, the lady of the house, and, as she was a discreet sort of person, there were hopes of her not consenting to an entertainment which might cause discord among her boarders.

She sat at the head of the table every day, and heard the dance mentioned, but, although she appeared tacitly to countenance it, she never gave a decided opinion.

It soon became evident that the money from the fines would not be sufficient, and the German and the Peruvian, who were now deeply interested in the project, suggested that every one should contribute a few dollars so that substantial refreshments might be bought.

Great stress was laid on having a turkey, so that this memorable dance was called, *El baile de los pavoros*, and to use a Spanish pun, it was destined to become an affair both *pavero* and *pavoroso* (of turkey dealer, and terrible).

There had been hope to the end that Doña Ignacia would forbid the dance, so I now asked her plainly whether she intended to sanction it, and, on her saying that she would do so, I resigned myself and paid my contribution.

But that did not of necessity involve being present, and I said that I would go out for the evening.

To my surprise the German-Peruvian lady said, "I do not mean to be there either, so we will go to the theatre together."

This was rather an awkward position, for I did not wish to refuse such a simple request, but had to be careful about doing anything which might give rise to unjust suspicions.

So I suggested to Doña Ignacia, who was present, that she should accompany us.

A few days of uncertainty passed thus, when some two or three days before the dance the German-Peruvian lady said to me, "We



will not go to the theatre, we will go to the dance and enjoy ourselves very much."

The news was a decided relief to my embarrassment, although the hopes of enjoyment were very faint.

The lady to all appearances now entered into the project with goodwill, although she said she would not forget to scold her husband about it afterwards, and even offered to help the Peruvian in buying the provisions for the supper.

The date of the entertainment was now fixed, and a few invitations were issued, chiefly to three or four young ladies known to Doña Ignacia.

Within a day of the appointed time, the last refreshments were bought, when most unfortunately there was a disagreement between the Peruvian and the lady who had offered her assistance, about the spending of the money, which he declared she had not laid out to the best advantage.

This dispute culminated on the afternoon of the approaching dance, and the lady took it so much to heart that she shut herself up in her room, and a rumour got about that she was consoling herself by drinking beer.

No one, however, outside the house, was supposed to know anything about the dispute or the consolation; and when the guests arrived, the German, beaming with satisfaction, apologized for his wife's indisposition, which probably was most agreeable to him, for he could now dance without being watched with jealousy.

There was no display about the entertainment, for we were all people in humble circumstances, and the ladies took their turns at playing the piano.

I had finally made up my mind not to absent myself, as it might look like an ungracious act, and, throwing myself into the prevailing environment, stood up with my partner, and led off the waltz with which the dance began.

This proceeding was applauded by my fellow lodgers, as they appreciated my desire to make things pass off pleasantly.

And indeed, if I did not enjoy myself as much as the German or the Peruvian, I was far from bored, for dancing is a pastime which is apt to cause temporary oblivion of bad fortune.

There were some dances which I could not attempt, such as the German lancers. In this dance, which appears very popular here, the partners salute each other repeatedly in the military style.

No attempt was made to dance the national *cueca*, which appears to be more appreciated by the lower classes.

Thus the entertainment was passing in a much more pleasant manner than we had a right to expect under the circumstances, and the face of the worthy German was radiant with pleasure.

Nor was there any break in the harmony of the proceedings, until about midnight, when—a form appeared at the open door of the room.

It was the indisposed lady, who looked like—a good-looking woman neatly dressed.

But this was not the impression received by the young ladies who had been invited.

For unfortunately Doña Ignacia appears to have somewhat



deviated from her usually discreet conduct by divulging household secrets to the guests, who were personal friends of hers.

So that when the German had made excuses for his wife on the grounds of indisposition, the true facts of the case were known.

When therefore the supposed invalid appeared at the doorway, she was looked upon by the lady visitors as an enraged female, who whether from anger, jealousy, or the less noble motive power of strong drink, was likely to use violent means to vent her displeasure.

So they ran to a small recess in which their cloaks and hats were deposited, and prepared to leave the house as soon as possible.

But they wronged the lady, who had slept off whatever disabilities for dancing might have affected her in the earlier part of the night, and who could no longer resist the music which reminded her that every one was having a pleasant time except herself.

When this welcome state of affairs became known to the guests, they relinquished their cloaks and hats and returned to the dance.

The supposed invalid was apparently in a most gracious frame of mind, and even condescended to share our pastime, when it must be admitted that she danced well.

Whatever might be the after results, the success of the entertainment was now assured, and we were all in an apparently amiable frame of mind when we sat down to supper.

But the German's face was the one which displayed most satisfaction. He had danced vigorously in the presence of his wife, who had looked upon him indulgently, and it would be inhuman to brood over possible retribution while the charm of the moment lasted.

So when supper had proceeded for some time, he stood up to make a speech, which was probably outlined beforehand.

This oration was in a serio-comic style. It began of course by stating his pleasure at receiving the guests and by paying a tribute to the personal charms of the ladies, but, passing into a tragic mood, he continued, "But for this happy event a worthy being has had to die. He had well fulfilled his family duties, and his sorrowing relations will lament his loss."

Needless to say he was referring to the turkey on the table, and he became so eloquent on the subject of turkeys and *paveros* (these turkey dealers meaning ourselves on this occasion) that he had to be reminded that there was only one turkey in the present case.

He floundered through the speech with considerable facility, for he had lived many years in Chile, and usually spoke to his wife in her native Spanish, but towards the end he made a dreadful mistake, which proved his wife's assertion that he was still *muy Gringo*.

For in his final words, in which he intimated that he had been speaking long enough, he said, "But, ladies, I see that you are *secas*."

It was no wonder that the best-looking girl present made a gesture, such as French people would call a *moue*, when he said this.

His meaning was obvious enough to *Gringos*, being a literal translation of, "I see that you are dry."

But this somewhat beer garden figure of speech does not even convey the meaning of "thirsty" to Spanish ears.

The student of that language will remember that this epithet was



applied to the immortal Don Quixote, as meaning dry in the sense of outward appearance, and it would more nearly approach our term of "dried up."

Fortunately this expression, which, so to say, brought down the house, was at the close of the speech, and the speaker sat down in a high state of satisfaction, and apparently quite unaware of the barbarity he had committed.

After supper the dance continued in uneventful peace. The German-Peruvian lady, who may be called the heroine of the evening, made a prolonged sitting with a chaperon at the supper table, and enjoyed conversation and refreshment, so that when it became time for the guests to leave every one connected with the dance had reason to be thankful that the affair had passed off so smoothly.

Certainly Doña Ignacia had done her part well, for she had given us the use of her drawing-room and piano, and had arranged the supper nicely.

But the after-effects of this event were serious, and the house never recovered its wonted harmony.

The Peruvian never spoke again to the lady with whom he had the dispute. The lady did not forget her husband's action in promoting the dance, and she shortly afterwards made some unpleasantness for me, so that we no longer spoke to each other. Uncomplimentary remarks were made by her about the ladies invited to the dance, in consequence of which they said that they would never come to the house again.

Conversation at mealtime thus became very strained, and there was such an undercurrent of disagreement that Doña Ignacia formulated a saying on the lines of a beatitude, "Happy are those who have their daily bread assured," although out of courtesy she did not add, "For they are not obliged to keep boarders."

But the affairs of the house were becoming of little moment to me. The winter was now over, and with the mild weather came the return of my health and a resolution to get out of this forced state of inactivity.

I had already answered advertisements without success, and now applied at the office of my former employers, hoping to be appointed to a steamer again.

They did not refuse to give me work, but kept me waiting so long that I lost hope.

It seemed impossible to get any employment in Valparaiso, and I could not practise my profession, except as an unlicensed practitioner, of whom there were already several, one having written over his door, "Specialist in Russia."

But no one would like to descend to such a position, and foreseeing that I might not be able to remain for long in the country, I determined to take a trip to the south, so as to see something of the fertile parts of Chile, and to shape my course as events might render expedient.

I had some difficulty in making up my mind about my destination, as all the inland parts were unknown to me, and one of my chief reasons for choosing the vicinity of Temuco was that this district was still inhabited by those valiant Araucanian Indians who appear to be



destined to share the fate of other fighting native races in becoming extinct.

There were but few preparations to make for the journey. I left my heaviest trunk, which contained things connected with the profession which I was now unable to practise, in charge of Doña Ignacia.

Hoping that it might be possible to earn a little money by photography, I bought a fair supply of sensitized plates and paper.

Unlike Mexico, where practically everything photographic comes from the United States, the English Ilford plates are largely used in Chile, and give uniformly good results. As far as I am aware this line of American trade had hardly penetrated so far south, and most goods of this kind were English or Continental.

In my proposed journey there was no choice about the route, for one main line sufficed for the narrowness of this maritime country, and, after taking a somewhat easterly direction as far as Santiago, the capital, the train goes almost due south.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## FROM VALPARAISO TO TEMUCO.

THE national life of a country cannot be thoroughly studied in a large town or on a coasting steamer, but I was now going to see that desirable part of Chile which had been described in glowing terms as "the beautiful south."

On leaving the coast, the train winds through some rather barren hills before it arrives at the fertile district of Quillota.

Although quite at the commencement of my journey I remained a day here, being desirous to see the place which Darwin suggests was in the mind of the person who gave the name of Valparaiso to the very ordinary scenery of that locality.

All large towns are more or less cosmopolitan, and it was not until I stopped at Quillota that I began to realize that this attribute strongly pervades even the country towns of Chile.

In Mexico, Central America or Peru, and probably in most other Spanish-American republics, the traveller is reminded of the predominating influence of Spain by the sense of sight alone, without hearing a word of the language spoken.

This is not the case with many of the country towns in Chile, and there is in consequence a difficulty in reproducing anything that looks like a national type among surroundings whose component parts are taken from many European nations.

This was the chief reason I made no attempt to take a photograph of the neat little brick buildings in this rather pretty town.

It looked at its best when I was there in the early spring of September. The suburbs are an orchard of fruit trees, which were then in blossom, and the effect was very pleasing.

But this is a beauty which changes with the season of the year; at other periods such a claim would have to be modified.

The nice little hotel where I stopped was kept by an Italian, as if to enhance the cosmopolitan effect, and after a short rest here I went out to explore for views.

There is a mule tramcar service between Quillota and La Cruz, the next station along the railway line, and this was the direction I took.

The distance, some three miles, lies through this orchard country, but the effect was much marred by the high walls on either side of the road.

On arriving at La Cruz, I turned away from this village and the continual walls which render all views impossible, and made for the open country; but here, again, I was confronted by another



difficulty, which had better be enlarged upon at once, as it applies to the whole of central Chile.

There are no native trees, and this makes the composition of a view a very artificial affair. For comparatively flat and quite open country will not make even a passable foreground, and the good background that is sometimes obtainable in the shape of mountains will not atone for this defect.

So that the photographer, if he has any pretensions to be an artist, must plant his camera in the vicinity of a building, or be at the mercy of such moving objects as people or domestic animals, if he wishes to obtain the requirements of a good picture.

This dearth of timber is, of course, unnoticed in towns, or even in suburban districts, where fruit and ornamental trees have been planted, but, where the hand of man has not assisted, the country remains in what many people would term its native nakedness.

Only those well acquainted with the history of the country can decide to what extent the open plain and the forest regions of Chile are due to natural causes.

Some writers assert that the now open country in central Chile once had its forests, which were destroyed subsequently to the arrival of the Spaniards, and a most ingenious theory has been suggested to account for the forest region in the south, the pith of which is, that the Araucanian Indians, being molested by the Spaniards, could no longer devote themselves to tilling the ground. Thus the forests increased, and the Indians became hunters instead of agriculturists.

Whatever the causes may be, the fact remains that throughout the fertile and populated parts of central Chile there are no forest trees, which are not seen before arriving well south of the River Bio-Bio.

Trees, however, grow well when they are planted, and it is not unusual to see rows of willows, apparently marking some boundary, in the huge stretch of open country between the railway line and the mountains.

As there are virtually no trees, the huts of the poorer country people are made of sun-dried bricks or clay, in some form or other. There are no Indians in this part, and not many traces of Indian blood, the great majority of the country-people being of Spanish descent.

On leaving Quillota and arriving at Llai-Llai, where the Transandine and Santiago lines diverge, I followed the former eastward as far as San Felipe, hoping to get a good picture of this town, with the Andes in the distance.

The *plaza* here is very pretty, but the mountains were not conspicuous enough.

At this time the Transandine railway had not been completed, and some ten hours of driving or riding were necessary to connect the gap between the lines on either side of the mountains.

There are many vineyards between Llai-Llai and San Felipe, and it is from near this part that the Panquehue wine comes.

Without making any comparison between this and other vintages, it must be admitted that the native wines of Chile are good and very cheap, and were it not for the distance from Europe, might compete favourably in the home market.



Returning now to Llai-Llai, the train goes southwards towards Santiago, which was my next stopping-place, for most of the intervening country is neither pretty nor fertile-looking, and does not tempt a traveller to break the journey.

As my stay in Santiago was to be limited to some two days, I brought my luggage to an hotel close beside the railway station, where the charge was two dollars a day for the room alone without food.

This seemed rather dear, but other places charged so nearly the same price that it was not worth while going further.

The railway station is at one end of the beautiful *alameda*, which is said to be one of the finest in the New World.

This may be readily believed, for it must be more than two miles in length, and is very broad, having a walk shaded by trees in the centre, while the trams and other traffic pass on either side in opposite directions.

The houses, however, on each side of this lovely avenue do not correspond to it in the vicinity of the railway station.

But this, it was explained to me, was owing to the station being a comparatively new construction, as a result of which houses were run up quickly to connect it with the town.

The best buildings are a long way off, towards the other end of the *alameda*, and back from it.

Here may be seen handsome solid houses several storeys high, built in the real Spanish style, at the sides of somewhat narrow streets, and this is the business part of the town.

At this end of the *alameda* is also situated the hill of Santa Lucía, from which a good view of parts of the town may be seen, with a glimpse of the Andes in the distance.

This hill is freely adorned with fountains, statues, terraces, and other embellishments, with the view of making it a delightful promenade, but the general impression is that these improvements have been overdone, and that a more graceful effect would have been obtained by assisting nature less lavishly.

Much nearer the railway station is the Quinta Normal, a kind of public park in which there is a small zoological garden.

But I could not expect to know the town in two days and was anxious to get away, for it seemed a decidedly expensive place to live in.

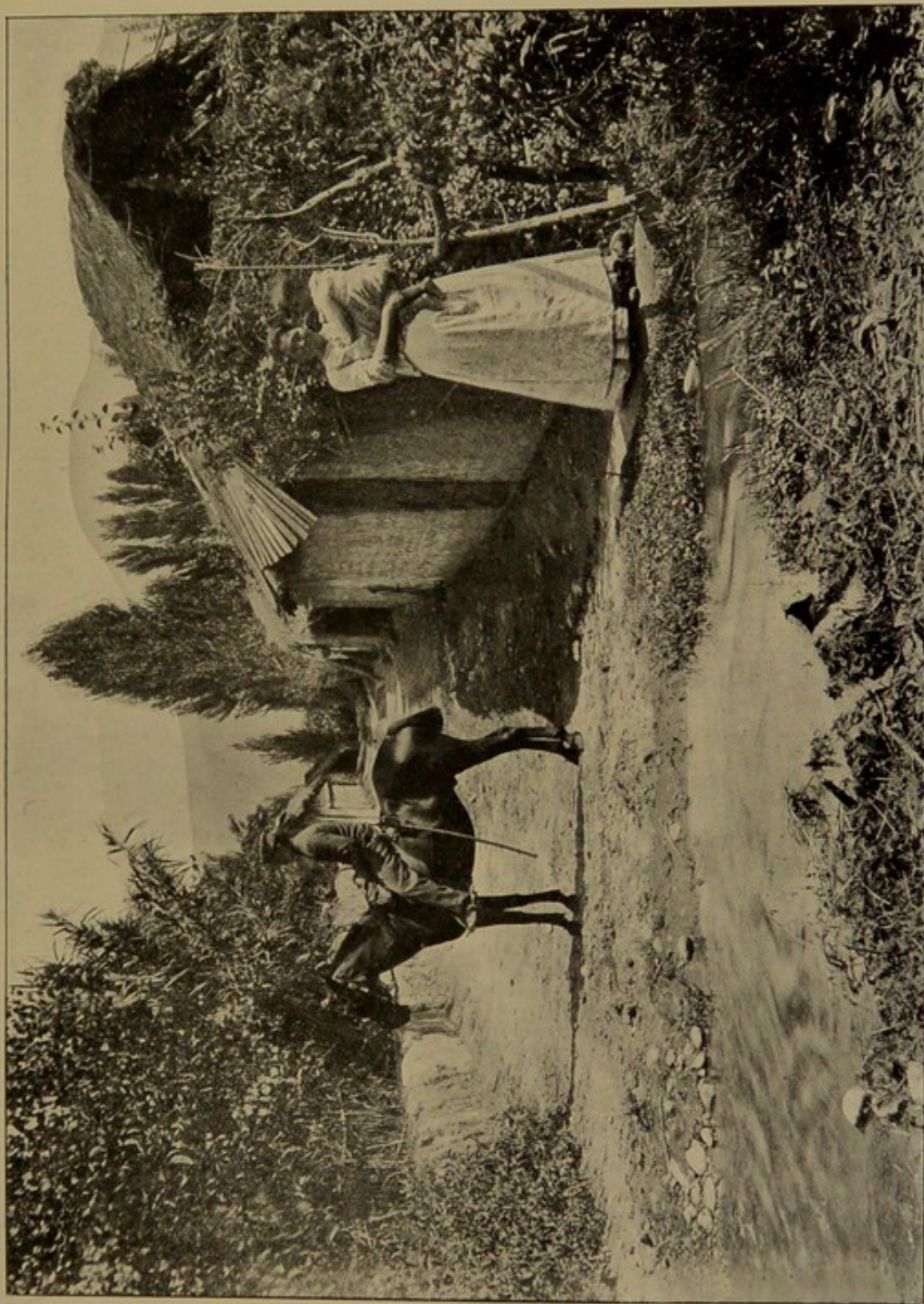
On leaving Santiago the train continues its journey southward through the central valley; for there is a range on either side that can be seen at intervals, the one to the left being higher and occasionally covered with snow from its vicinity to the main spurs of the Andes.

The northern part of this valley is largely agricultural, but towards the southern extremity the pastoral element prevails.

The time of the year, however, was not favourable for seeing agriculture, for the winter was only just over in September. At this season the vines had only just begun to sprout and looked almost like brown crooked sticks in the ground.

The stretch of country between Santiago and the River Bio-Bio, on which the southern capital of Concepción is situated, is about three hundred miles in length, and may justly be called the heart of Chile.





View at La Cruz, near Quillota—(p. 216)





Independence Day at Linares—(p. 217).



A White Indian (to the right) in the Family Party—(p. 219).



Rather more than half-way towards the latter place lies the neat town of Linares, where I made a break in the journey.

I happened to be there on the eighteenth of September, which is kept in Chile as Independence Day, being only two days later than the same festival in Mexico.

The town was in an unusual state of excitement owing to the occasion, and the long space in the central avenue was partially filled with booths for refreshment and dancing. These temporary structures were made of wood, but nearly all houses in this part are made of brick or clay in some form, as there is no timber on the northern side of the Bio-Bio.

The photograph taken of the scene was only partially successful, for without a drop shutter it is impossible to do justice to a group who are not under control.

Most of the people, however, were willing to be photographed, and the picture will give some idea of their appearance.

There can be no doubt that their features and dress are of a cosmopolitan European type, and the only person with any pretence to national costume is the stolid-looking *huaso* in the foreground, the *poncho* on whose shoulders is fairly representative of a countryman's costume. The low-crowned palm-leaf hat, of solid make, is also typical of this class of people.

The Indian element, which in Mexico is very much in evidence among the lowest classes, and causes them to avoid social contact with foreigners, is so slight here that it does not produce any hostile effect, and strangers, especially *Gringos*, are so common in Chile that they give rise practically to no comment.

As one journeys further south the increased rainfall is distinctly perceptible. The ground in the earlier part of the journey had been dusty; at Linares it was damp, and when I arrived at San Carlos, not far from the Bio-Bio, a good deal of water lay on the ground.

The railway line crosses the Bio-Bio about forty miles above Concepción, which lies near where the river flows into the sea.

My reason for wishing to remain a short time here was that the river has always formed a prominent landmark in the history of Chile. It is very broad in its lower part, and in the times of the Spaniards formed the boundary of their permanent settlements, for the Indians so strongly resented encroachments on the southern side that it was considered expedient to leave them in undisturbed possession.

At the present time it forms the boundary of that part of Chile which is popularly termed "the south," and Concepción on its northern bank is the principal town in this region.

I was so disappointed with the scenery here that I only remained one night. The river is a noble one, but only scrubby bushes grow on its banks, and the utter absence of forest trees spoils the appearance of the country here in the same manner as further north.

But although trees were not yet visible, the proximity of timber was suggested by wooden houses, and the Bio-Bio may be stated to be the line of demarcation between clay and wooden buildings. It is practically also the limit for growing vines, which are seldom seen further south.

It must be about seventy miles further on before trees are seen



from the railway line, and when once the forest region is reached the clearing of the land goes on to such an extent that timber bids fair to recede further south as civilization advances.

I was now reaching the end of my journey, and made up my mind to stop for the present at a small town called Lautaro, a few stations north of Temuco, thinking that perhaps country life might be studied better here than in a larger settlement.

Lautaro, so called after the prominent Indian chief, is not an interesting-looking place. The railway line runs through the main street in the middle of the town, and many of the wooden shanty houses on each side had a rather damp and deserted appearance. This may be accounted for by the following circumstance.

The railway was said to have reached here about twenty years before. The number of people employed in making a line and the arrival of a train give a temporary impetus to a place, and may even cause a settlement to spring into existence; but if there be no other motive for the settlement it will tend to fall into decay when it no longer remains a terminus.

Still, in spite of its rather dismal look, the main street had its pretensions, for on asking a woman in front of one of the shanties if she could direct me to a lodging, she somewhat loftily said that "in this street of commerce" it would be impossible to obtain one.

Eventually I obtained a room, not too far from the centre, and went to a clean little hotel for my meals.

I was now in that somewhat vaguely defined region to the south of the Bio-Bio which is still termed "the frontier."

This name seemed rather inappropriate to a stranger who did not know the reason, for it implied that the border-line of the country had been reached and that foreign territory lay on the other side.

But on being informed that not more than twenty-five years had lapsed since the Araucanian Indians had finally laid down their arms, the reason became evident enough, for the name still clung, although its cause no longer existed.

This fine fighting race had kept itself independent throughout some three hundred years of Spanish rule, and more than fifty years of the subsequent republican government.

It had been gradually forced backwards considerably south of the Bio-Bio, but the final surrender seems to have been due to the advance of civilization rather than to any crushing defeat.

The arrival of the railway in this district and the surrender of the Indians almost coincide in point of time, and there can be little doubt that the train was a valuable ally to the white man in carrying supplies from the north.

Even at this period the German settlements in Valdivia had acquired strength, and the unfortunate Indians had been, so to say, taken in the rear by having a large colony of foreigners dumped down upon them in the south.

For the country between Temuco and Valdivia was a wild-forest region of some eighty miles, and here the Indians are stated to have made their last stand.

Another reason for surrender is pithily stated in the short account which says that the Indians were "tired of fighting"; and this may



be said to be self-evident, after maintaining a losing cause for more than three hundred and fifty years.

There is still another reason which probably had its influence—the race was no longer pure.

For two races cannot remain in contact for centuries without mixing to a certain extent, and if the smaller number of Indians have left a slight, but still noticeable, impress upon the present inhabitants of Chile, the larger number of whites must have left a correspondingly greater mark on the Indians, many of whom, although brought up as such, had some white blood in their veins, and would not be so likely to endure the privations of savage life so well as those of pure stock.

The Araucanian Indians, like other races that inhabit temperate climates, never were very dark in colour. A small number of them, in spite of their sun-burnt appearance, are of fair complexion, and I have seen at least two or three with red hair and freckles on the face.

As in the timber question, only those with an intimate knowledge of the history of the country can determine how far this is indigenous, and how far due to the white settlers.

To quote from Mr. Anderson Smith in his book called "Temperate Chile": "The Indians on the banks of the river Imperial (not far from Temuco) were always noted from the first appearance of the Spaniards as being reddish, both of countenance and hair."

This may be the case, but it is more than probable that some of the lighter-haired and blue-eyed Indians owe these attributes to settlers from the northern parts of Europe, and on remarking to a person in this district that two young so-called Indians did not look like people of that race, the reply in Spanish was, "There is much crossed blood here."

The photograph entitled "a white Indian in the family party" will illustrate this. On arranging the group, this man appeared so unlike the others that I got him to stand a little on the outside, thinking that he was either a white man or a cross-bred who was attached to the others, but on mentioning this afterwards I was assured that he was an Indian. He certainly looks like a white man, and even one from the north.

It will be observed that these men are dressed in European style, although the more conservative women still keep much that is native in their costume.

This picture was taken under considerable difficulties. In carrying the camera about, the ground-glass mirror had got broken, and I had to be content with seeing a small part of the image reflected on the fragments left. I was subsequently obliged to use oiled paper on ordinary glass until the breakage could be repaired.

The natives are rapidly assuming the dress of their white countrymen, and this makes it difficult to depict them such as Indians are supposed to be, and in reality were only a few years before.

There is one custom which seems inherent in these people—their preference for riding. This is more noticeable in savages who had no horses until the arrival of the Spaniards, but they soon learnt their use, both for warlike and pacific purposes, and it is quite usual to see an Indian riding on his way to or from the town.



On such occasions the pace they prefer is that slow canter which is so easy for a horseman, especially for one who, like them, only has a sheepskin for a saddle.

It is not infrequent to see a man and woman on the same horse. The animals, although well trained as to paces, are not of a superior quality. I was told that these Indians once had good horses, and this may well be believed in view of their spirited resistance, but that, after their submission, their best mounts were taken from them.

The Government, however, allows them a certain amount of land.

Apart from humane motives, this may be said to be a necessity, for these Indians do not mix much with whites, but till their ground and keep their livestock.

Thus, as they do not hire themselves out for manual labour, they would become beggars, or break out again into rebellion if they had not sufficient ground to maintain themselves.

They all live in the country, but ride to town to do their marketing, and some have carts and teams of oxen.

Their custom is here solicited by some of the lower class eating-houses, where the owner will address them at the door as *hermano* or *hermana* (brother or sister) as the case may be, copying the style in which the Indians themselves speak to people.

The name of Araucanian, probably applied from some mistaken idea on the part of the first Europeans, is unknown to them, and their own word for their race is Mapuche.

These Mapuches maintain a uniformly dignified attitude towards white people which will compare very favourably with that of the Aztecs in Mexico.

For having now surrendered, they loyally accept the fact, and make no attempt to molest a stranger if he should meet them in a lonely place.

I have frequently met them miles from town, as they were riding while I was tramping on foot, with the camera over my shoulders, but they never appeared to take any notice of me.

But the conditions in which these two races of Indians find themselves placed are totally different, and the Mapuches could not, even if they wished, molest a peaceful traveller with comparative impunity.

For they are now an alien race in their native country, and if they committed any outrage the indignation of white settlers of all nations would be universal.

While the Aztec in Mexico is the backbone of the country population, and even meets with sympathy from some lower class people of white descent in the case of maltreatment of a foreigner.

The little town of Lautaro did not improve upon acquaintance.

If I wanted to see Indians, Temuco, a few stations further on, would be a better place.

There was also another reason for trying to get into more comfortable quarters in a larger town, for a few weeks at any rate.

It has already been mentioned that the rainfall had perceptibly increased before reaching as far south as the Bio-Bio. But when the traveller arrives about a hundred miles south of that river, both rain and cold become troublesome, and the winter season lasts much longer.

I had now travelled about four hundred miles south of Santiago,



and, having hardly spent one week on the journey, had outrun the summer.

In Valparaiso and Santiago the winter is over in the beginning of September, but in the part where I now was it lasts to the end of the month.

The wet weather prevented expeditions into the country, and the little town was muddy and uninteresting.

It lies on the bank of the swiftly flowing river Cautin, which carries a considerable body of water, and is here bridged by a wooden structure on piles.

By the river side I once had occasion to ask for shelter from a storm. The hut was as poor as that of a Mexican Indian, if larger, but the blue-eyed white man willingly extended me that courtesy which civilized people show to each other.

I now made an expedition in the train, first to Temuco, a few stations further on, where I had breakfast, and then went to the end of the passenger traffic, a few stations beyond Temuco, at a place called Petrufquen.

At this time the line was not open to the public beyond Petrufquen, although the rails were laid for a good many miles further, but as the railway was also being pushed northward from Valdivia to meet it, the train either connects these places now, or will do so soon.

Petrufquen would have been a more undesirable place than Lautaro for comfort, being quite a new settlement, so, after seeing it, I returned as far as Temuco, where I spent the night.

Temuco was decidedly the best place for winter quarters, being a good-sized town.

All the buildings here, as in Lautaro and other towns in these parts, are made of wood, but they were better of their kind, and the town showed greater signs of activity.

I slept at the house where I had taken breakfast, and, being rather favourably impressed, determined to move into it at once.

So next morning I returned to Lautaro for my luggage, and brought it to Temuco by the first available train.



## CHAPTER XX.

## IN AND NEAR TEMUCO.

THE house into which I had moved was called the *Pensión Chilena*, the French term having been incorporated into the Spanish spoken in Chile, where it usurps the proper name for a boarding house, which is *casa de huéspedes*.

It was not in the best part of the town, being near the railway station, but the food was good and the terms were moderate, the ordinary board and lodging costing one dollar and a half daily. This only included the customary two meals and morning coffee, and, as I wished for the luxury of tea in the afternoon and evening, like the family of the house, my daily expenses amounted to nearly two dollars.

Afternoon tea, or indeed tea of any kind, would be unobtainable in a Mexican country town, and probably in most other places of the same description in Spanish-America where coffee is grown, but, as both tea and coffee have to be imported into Chile, its inhabitants use both.

The arrangements of this house were very different to those of my former lodging in Valparaiso. There every boarder was also a lodger, but this was not the case here, for the sleeping accommodation was very limited, and I was frequently the only stranger in the house after closing hours.

But the table was deservedly well patronized, and there were often seven or eight who sat down to meals, besides the family and myself.

The lady of the house was a rather young and good-looking widow, and the family were her father and two children.

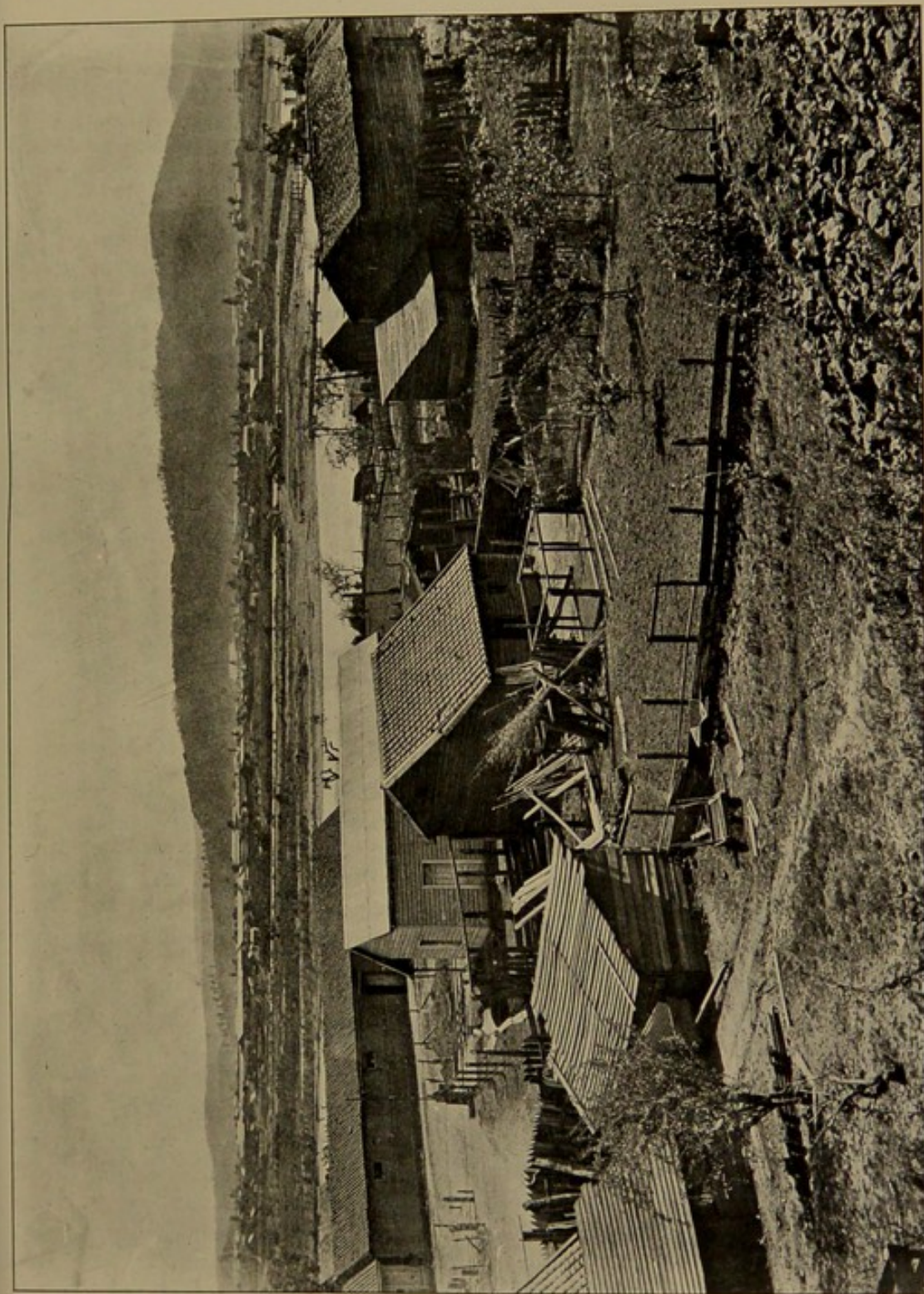
She appeared to be rather popular, and had earned that expressive Spanish attribute of being *simpática*, partly perhaps from singing to the accompaniment of her guitar, which she often did at the request of her guests.

The company was of the respectable middle-class kind which one might expect to meet in a good-sized country town.

Among those who usually came for their meals were a storekeeper, two or three men of the agent or office class, and one or two police officers. All these were natives of Chile, and there were usually no foreigners except myself. Small tables were placed at the sides of the room in restaurant style, so that to some extent people might choose their own company.

The wintry weather continued until the beginning of October. The cold was less severe than in England, but sufficient to be felt in a place where the wooden houses had no fireplaces, and on several occasions we had to use that last resource of people who will not





Temuco, from Villa Alegre, a Suburb on the other side of the River Cautin—(p. 222).







warm themselves in a more comfortable manner, the charcoal brazier, which deadens the sense of cold and mental activity at the same time by its noxious fumes.

Some of the outlying streets were still a sea of mud, into which an ox-cart would sink axle deep, making extraction difficult even when the cart was empty.

Still the town was much more cheerful looking than Lautaro, and the central part made some attempt towards appearances. There was a *plaza* with its bandstand, and near here were some shops that aspired to keep something more than the bare necessities of life. In one of them, kept by a German, music, books and stationery were sold.

Close to one corner of the *plaza* was a pawnbroker's house, with *Banco del Pobre* (bank of the poor) written over it, and the Indians had already come to know its use, for it was no unusual sight to see three or four of them in front of the door, with their horses hitched to a rail placed for that purpose.

Among the forfeited pledges were some of the Indian women's jewelry, and I should have liked to have bought a massive pair of silver earrings, but the price asked, some four or five dollars, was more than I could afford.

Occasionally an ox-cart belonging to Indians might be seen in the streets, as in the accompanying photograph.

One of its occupants, the woman with the silver ornaments on her forehead, was very good-looking, and had such a light-coloured skin that I doubt her being a pure bred.

I would have liked to photograph her by herself, but she refused. These round silver ornaments look like coins, but they are not, being merely pieces of that metal hammered round and flat.

Only a short distance from the centre of the town was an open piece of ground, at the side of which some cavalry were quartered.

On this space the jumping capabilities of the troop horses were tested. The officers stood at the side of the obstacle, and the soldiers were made to ride their horses over it in turns.

If a horse refused, he was made to try again, and generally ended by getting over it, for the mounts were good, and only required training.

The Government of Chile has taken the German army as a model for its own troops, and the uniforms are so much alike that a civilian would hardly distinguish between them.

I managed to get into prison here without committing any offence. For one day as I was walking along the street some one called out behind me, "*Alemán, Alemán!*"

Not being a German, I took no notice, although I suspected that this mode of address might be meant for me, for most strangers in southern Chile are of that nationality.

But when the man called out, "Doctor, doctor!" I turned round and found out his reason for speaking to me.

He had mistaken me for a German doctor who appeared to be favourably known, and had come to ask me to visit some one in the prison.

As I could not altogether convince him that I was not the person



he wanted, we went to the prison together, where there was no difficulty about admission, as my companion was or had been a prominent official.

We were taken to the cell of a better-class prisoner, who was paralysed. It was easy to see that little could be done for the patient, and, as my opinion was then asked about some one else, I hurried my departure from the building, for I could not help resenting being called to give free advice in a country where I was not allowed to make a living by it.

Temuco is also on the River Cautin, but lower down than Lautaro.

There is a good railway bridge over the river, but only the train was allowed to pass over it and ordinary traffic was carried on by means of a rough wooden construction on piles, until the completion of a better bridge.

This was the direction I generally took in my walks, not merely on account of the scenery on the other side of the river being better, but because the traffic from both sides converged here for the purpose of crossing, and there was more likelihood of seeing something of interest.

On the opposite side of the river from town was the suburb of Villa Alegre. Here close to the wooden bridge were some low-class eating-houses, for the entertainment of such travellers as *huasos* and Indians.

The Indians were rather partial to Villa Alegre, although it would be hard to explain where the joyfulness implied in the name comes in. Perhaps tired travellers on their way to town were so pleased with the refreshment here, that the name was bestowed in gratitude.

It was here that I photographed the three Indians in the picture. They are as good types as I could procure on the occasion, but I freely admit that I found it almost impossible to determine all the characteristics that the features of these people should have, partly perhaps from not having been long enough among them, but also I think from want of uniformity among themselves.

They certainly have big heads and heavy features, and their appearance is not on a par with that of the Aztec Indians, whose faces have a stronger similarity to Asiatics, and are generally more intelligent looking.

Like the Aztecs, these Araucanians also seem to have two distinct types, represented by flat and prominent noses, as in the man in the centre of the group, and the girl to the right.

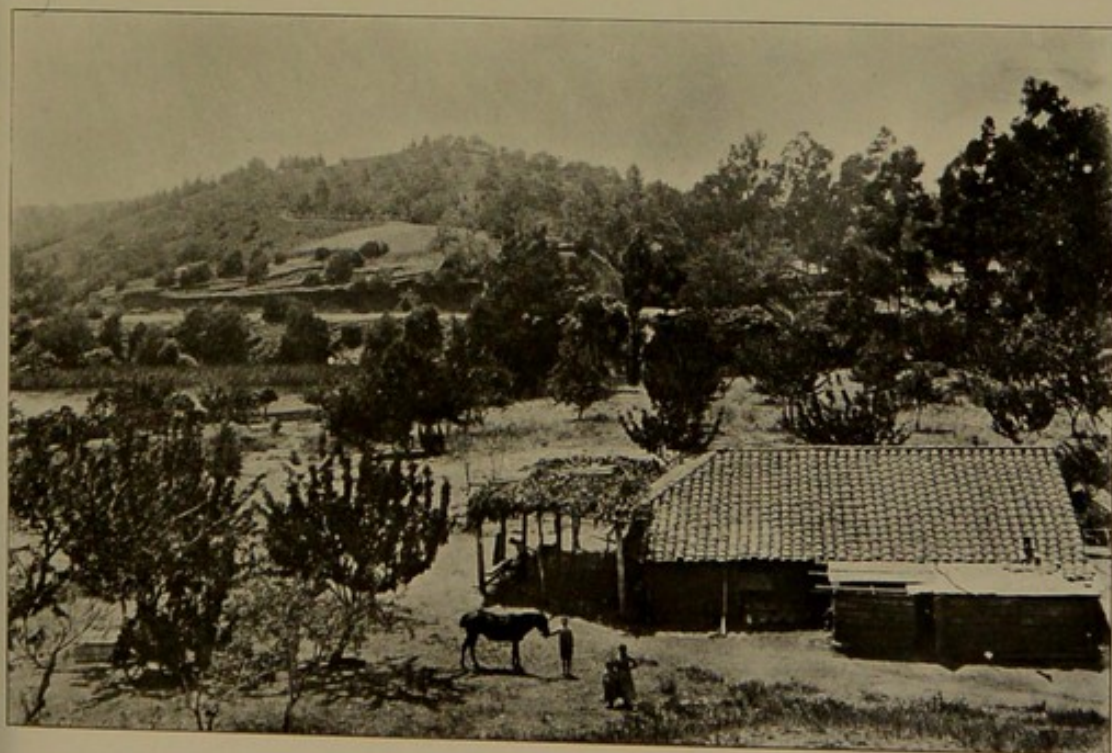
But beyond this I do not feel competent to define, and it would probably need a sojourn in some more outlying part than Temuco to speak with authority on the subject, for even allowing the tradition of red-haired and red-faced people to be correct, it is a step further when some present-day Indians have grey or blue eyes, and in these cases mixed blood must be suspected. A white Indian to my mind represents an Indian with some white blood, and it is probable that this light-coloured race would become whitewashed very easily.

They do not seem to fear the ghostly influence of photography, but many of them are keenly alive to the practical idea of being paid for having their likenesses taken.





Indian Cart in Street of Temuco—(p. 223).



"La Miseria," on the Laguna Mendez, near Concepción—(p. 237).





Three Araucanian Indians.



Once I planted the camera about twenty yards from a hut, intending to photograph it with the surrounding view.

An Indian woman came out and told me somewhat peremptorily that if I wanted to take her house I must "pay, pay."

I asked her if all the country included in the view belonged to her, whereupon she felt herself rather at a loss and smiled, but on seeing that I was not inclined to pay, she shut herself up in her hut.

Another time I had plain proof that a photographer had been there before me and had not treated the people well.

For on my return from an unsuccessful photographic expedition, I saw a hut placed in a favourable position for making a picture. In front of the door was a good-looking Indian woman weaving on a native loom.

On asking if I might take her picture, and offering to give it to her, she replied that she did not want the picture, but that I might photograph her if I paid a dollar.

While we were arguing the point, a blue or grey-eyed Indian man came up to me, and said in Spanish, "What is the matter, patron?"

In case he might have any savage propensities I hastened to explain that I wanted to photograph the woman at her work, and had offered to give her the picture, but that she would not consent to the terms and wanted a dollar instead. "It must be as the *señora* wishes," said the man decisively, and they then explained the reason why the money and not the likeness was wanted.

A photographer had previously taken the house, and the picture had been promised to these Indians. But although it had turned out well, the man had not kept his word, and the aggrieved Indians would not trust again, and preferred cash.

And as my dollars were too scarce to be lightly parted with, the most picturesque hut and surroundings I had seen escaped my possession.

On another occasion I had an excellent opportunity for photographing an Indian hut, although the result hardly came up to expectation.

Don Pedro, the storekeeper who used to take his meals at the *pensión*, had occasion to visit an Indian's homestead at some five or six miles distance from town, and knowing that I was interested in scenes of this kind, kindly offered to provide me with a horse and to take me with him.

He had another companion besides myself, and after a few brisk canters over ground that was still muddy after the winter rains we arrived at the place.

It was somewhat unusual that a storekeeper should visit an Indian's hut, and I guessed the reason, which was that Don Pedro either had advanced or was going to advance some money, and wanted to inspect his security for the debt.

So we rode slowly through the Indian's cultivated ground, while the man pointed out his crops, which appeared to be in a satisfactory condition.

We then returned to the large hut, in which two families lived, and the Indians entertained us with a meal which was good enough,



as they gave us a fowl for the occasion, but to my mind greasy food of any kind without knives or forks is not pleasant.

It must now have been past the middle of the day, and an Araucanian's hut presents a difficulty in photographing if not done in the morning, for these primitive people always have their doors facing the rising sun, and if the view be not taken early the picture will show too much shadow if any attempt be made to include the front of the house.

Within two weeks of my arrival in Temuco the wintry weather cleared up rather suddenly. The cold and rain ceased and the ground began to dry.

I had already made an attempt to earn something by photography, and had put up a card in the window of the *pensión* with some of my best pictures.

No customers, however, seemed to come in consequence, and the little work I got came from those who frequented the house.

The prices charged for photographic work are very high in Chile, and are misleading, for they make a newcomer think that a good living can be made by it. But although the profits are nominally greater than in Mexico, they are in reality less, for these high prices are not easily obtainable.

I subsequently found that there was a permanently established photographer in Temuco, and on talking over the subject with him, found that the greater part of his work consisted in taking those small likenesses that do not command a high price in any country.

As soon as I found out that it would be impossible to make a living by this means, I no longer inconvenienced myself by waiting at home in the hope of getting work, but walked about a good deal in search of objects of interest.

Occasionally I used the railway, going one or two stations northward or southward, and then tramping about with my camera until it was time to return by the afternoon train.

Travelling in the third class would have excited attention in Mexico, where most of such passengers are Indians, but Chile is a white man's country and most of its poorest people are of European descent. Here a *Gringo* has a compensation for being no longer an object of curiosity in the security which results when many kindred races mix.

The *huaso* is a rough fellow, but he does not generally molest strangers, although often rowdy in his own company.

A marked instance of this kind came under my notice in a third-class carriage near Temuco.

A big fellow, presumably slightly under the influence of drink, was constantly making the round of the long American-shaped carriage, which had a central row of seats with a passage and seats on each side. Occasionally he mounted on the seat and performed a step dance to the extreme inconvenience of the people, and two or three young women used to move from their seats and go on the opposite side when he came near them. Every time he came round there was a prospect of exciting his enmity, for he stopped from time to time, and endeavoured to force his company on some one. He remained opposite me for at least a minute, appearing to consider what course



he should pursue, but, as I appeared to take no notice of him, he passed on without speaking.

Eventually, however, a resolute man objected to his conduct, and a wordy warfare went on in consequence at the other end of the carriage, causing the *huaso* to discontinue his excursions.

The atmosphere in a carriage full of people of this class is not pleasant, for the cool climate requires thicker clothing than in the warmer parts of America. This means that a large proportion of the things worn are not made of washing material, and the result may be imagined in the case of poor people of not very cleanly habits.

The long wet winter in southern Chile makes it desirable that those engaged in country pursuits should wear strong boots, and the poorest white men are seldom seen barefoot, although they sometimes wear sandals.

Long boots are very popular for riding purposes and even the Indians are getting accustomed to use them.

With the women the use of clogs may be said to begin near the river Bio-Bio, and to increase as one goes farther south.

For light shoes would be of no use, and it is a choice between something strong or nothing.

Near Temuco it is quite usual for women of the poorer classes to wear clogs over the naked feet, and in the far south they frequently go barefoot.

The *manto* also becomes a rather vanishing female asset in these parts, and women often go about without any attempt at wearing the shawl-like covering so universal in Spanish-speaking countries. Thus many of the poorer women are dressed like northern Europeans rather than people of Spanish descent.

At this season of the year, that is to say in the early spring, many mornings begin with a fog, which does not clear away until towards ten.

This is awkward for a photographer who wishes to be miles distant before that hour has come, and has to leave home in the hope that the day will be fine when the fog has gone.

On one occasion I started early to photograph an Indian hut which I had noticed in one of my previous walks.

The distance represented about six miles, for I had to cross the bridge over the River Cautin before taking the right direction.

On arriving at about nine in the morning the fog was still thick, but the sun appeared to be trying to pierce it.

In the meantime an Indian boy came out of the hut, and I had the utmost difficulty in making him understand why I was waiting.

Most of the grown-up Indians understand some Spanish, but this boy, although he must have been from twelve to fourteen years of age, hardly understood any.

It was very important to keep good friends with him if I wished to photograph the scene, so we sat down on the grass and I pointed upwards at the light which was beginning to penetrate the vapour, and told him that I was waiting for the sun.

He knew enough Spanish to understand what *el sol* meant, for when I mentioned its name he smiled and repeated the word. The fog cleared in time and the view was taken.



The girl and the woman in front of the hut are presumably the boy's sister and mother.

It will be noticed that the boy is wearing those lower garments which the natives are beginning to discard for the use of trousers.

Sometimes I was induced to go to places where the scenery was described as very beautiful, but which would not show to advantage in a photograph.

A man once described a view of this kind to me in glowing terms, but, on arriving at the place, the only unusual object was a snow-capped mountain in the far distance, probably more than thirty miles away.

This, however pleasing to the eye, would only appear as a minute object in the picture, so the view was never taken.

As a rule the inhabited parts of Chile are very disappointing as a field for photography. For the grandeur of a range of mountains like the Andes with snow-capped volcanoes make one expect beautiful views as one's right.

And these views no doubt exist in certain places, but not where the ordinary traveller is brought by the train. For this part of the central valley is so far to the west of the main chain of the Andes that these mountains do not appear to advantage.

The difficulty in making a picture in those parts where there is no timber has already been mentioned, and, when one arrives where the trees grow, there is still no great photographic inducement.

For when green fields appear in the midst of trees, there is too much monotony of colour.

And where the trees form the so-called virgin forests which extend for miles, the timber grows so thickly that there is absolutely no view.

Many of these trees have large trunks and are lofty, but they grow so closely together that there is no room for their boughs to extend, and the pleasing effect of graceful foliage is lost.

In fact the tangled vegetation between the trees would be well designated by the name of scrub.

If the traveller wishes to see the beauties of the Andes and of the valleys and lakes in their neighbourhood, he must go far from the railway line, but this will cost a good deal of money for horse hire, guides and camp requirements, and expenses of this kind were quite beyond my means.

Once only I came so near to this desirable region that I was able dimly to conjecture the glories of that promised land which want of means prevented my entering, and the adventure will be subsequently related.

The scenery near Temuco was by no means unpleasing to the eye, and bore evidence to the prosperity of the settlement, but it was not of that kind that lends itself to photography. The amount of grass and trees in the view seldom gave scope for sufficient contrast, and the character of the country is outlined in the accompanying picture.

The man in the foreground is dressed in *huaso* costume, and the saddle on the horse is of the kind generally used. It is much more like a European saddle than the one of Mexican make, and it is far more comfortable than the latter to ride upon.

The cottage is evidently inhabited by white people of the *huaso* class.





Indians in front of their Hut—(p. 228)



Huaso Costume, View, and Cottage near Temuco—(p. 228).





Street in Imperial    Indians' Horses in the foreground—(p. 229).



The Cueva (Dance), from a Picture—(p. 232).



The children of the lower classes in Chile give plain proof of being of white descent by the way in which they play and romp, like children in European countries, contrasting strongly with the melancholy appearance of Indian children in Mexico.

I had now been several weeks in Temuco, and was getting anxious about my future prospects. My hopes of making a temporary living by photography had not been realized, and I had long ago given up any idea of obtaining the medical degree of the country, as the expenses of a prolonged stay in Santiago would be too heavy for me.

It seemed likely that I might have to return to Mexico, and I wrote to my friend, the chemist in Altotonga, in the hope of finding out whether a doctor was still required in that place.

The more I thought of it, the more did this step seem necessary, for I could not return to Europe under present circumstances, and could not live in a country where I was not allowed to follow my profession.

As there was not much more to see near Temuco, I began to consider where would be the best place to pass the time until I could get an answer from Mexico.

One of the police officers who boarded in the house had occasion to ride to Valdivia, some eighty miles further south, and, thinking that I would like to see the country, offered to take me with him if I could procure a horse, but I could not afford the expense, for horse hire is dear in these parts.

The ride would have been very interesting, for the greater part of the country between Temuco and Valdivia was wild, and full of forests.

I had some thoughts of making for the sea-coast down the River Imperial. This at first seemed easy to be done, for there is a branch train to the town of Imperial, about twenty miles distant, which lies on the river of the same name.

But the river is not navigable as far as the town, and it would be necessary to have my luggage taken some miles down in a boat.

This looked like an expensive journey, and as there was some uncertainty about means of transit when I arrived at the coast, I gave up the idea.

I went, however, to Imperial in the train, and remained there one night. The scenery did not present anything of interest, and the town was of the same kind as Temuco, all the buildings being of wood.

The Indians are also numerous here, and there is a mission not far from the town to christianize these people.

In my rambles in the outskirts I saw a lot of horses tied up near a chapel. On coming nearer, I found that an Indian baby was being baptized.

A man came to the door of the building, and asked if I would like to come in and photograph the ceremony.

Much as I should have liked to have done so, I knew that an instantaneous picture could not be taken in the interior, so I did not enter.

But I could hear the voices of those who were engaged in proselytizing the Indians, and the frequent inquiry, "*Es usted Cristiano?*" (Are you a Christian?)

Even when taking street views in the direct sunlight, I always had



extreme difficulty in being quick enough to escape the disastrous effects of people moving, for it must be remembered that I had no drop shutter.

The Indians here, although far more tolerant of photography than the Aztecs, are uncertain in their behaviour.

I planted the camera near where an Indian cart was stationed in the street, and the only occupant of the cart, a woman, threw herself flat down on her face in her determination not to be taken, to the amusement of the white bystanders, who, unlike the lower-class Mexicans, actually sympathized with me rather than with the Indian.

Shortly afterwards another Indian woman came up, and implored me to take her likeness so that she might give it to some near relation as a keepsake. But as she was not a good type, and was deeply marked with small-pox, I was unable to oblige her.

The street scene in Imperial shows the horses of some Indians in the foreground. The sheepskins that serve for saddles are plainly seen, and the man with the long boots appears to be an Indian.

While I was in Temuco I became aware that even at this distance from the Andes there was a considerable movement across these mountains for trading purposes.

There were also some settlements on the other side which were described as belonging to Chile. This perplexed me at the time, for, as the Andes form the boundary between Chile and Argentina, I could not understand how any place on the east of the main range could belong to the former country, and a small extent of elevated land lying on the top of a watershed did not appear to be a matter of much importance.

This subject will be touched upon in reference to the valleys and lakes of the Andes.

What affected the people of Temuco and other towns in these parts was the heavy tax on cattle which were brought from the Argentine side. This tax was presumedly made in favour of the cattle-owners of Chile, for Argentina is more of a pastoral country, and cattle can be raised cheaper there.

I saw a notice posted in a public place in the street, calling on the people of the "virile frontier towns" to attend an indignation meeting on this subject, with a view to having the obnoxious tax removed.

As the lower mountain passes between the two countries are easily crossed in the summer time, the question of bringing cattle from Argentina is a very important affair for both nations, for cattle near the Andes could probably be driven to a market in Chile in much less time than to one in their own country.

Although there was no wholesale colonization by Germans or other foreigners in the neighbourhood of Temuco, as in Valdivia and other places further south, there were still a good many foreigners; but these were middle-class people, and not the peasants, who appeared to be chiefly of Spanish descent.

Several of the storekeepers were Germans or northern Europeans. The Hôtel de France was presumedly kept by a person of that nationality.

Even the language spoken in the railway carriages varied considerably according to the class in which a passenger travelled.



At the time of my first arrival in Temuco in a second-class carriage, I heard German and French spoken in the train, and an English-speaking man addressed me in that language.

Subsequently, travelling in the third class on my photographic expeditions, I never heard any other language except Spanish. But among every class of people there was a spirit of tolerance towards foreigners which contrasted favourably with Mexico, or even with a good many European countries. One more foreigner in Chile, where there were already so many, made practically no difference.

And yet the Mexican Government treats strangers well—more liberally, indeed, than that of Chile—and I was now expecting to experience this in my own person by returning to make the living which was denied me here.

But Chile is a white man's country; Mexico is not so, although managed on a white basis.

The republican form of government in these two countries is very different. The constitution of Mexico is borrowed in form from the United States. Every state is "sovereign," and has its own governor. In Chile there are no separate states, and the country is merely divided into provinces, as in European countries.

It does not require a very long residence in either country to estimate the power which the respective Presidents possess.

In Mexico the conduct of the President would hardly be criticized unfavourably in a newspaper. The editor who did so would not have many opportunities for repeating the offence.

In Chile the conduct of the President is criticized so severely that the press seems lacking in that respect which is presumedly due to the person chosen to fill that high office.

I had finally made up my mind to await my answer from Mexico at the town of Concepción, which, being a little out of the way of the direct return northward, would give me the chance of seeing something new.

On one of the last days of my stay in this town I heard that the Indians were holding a ceremony at a place called Cajon, a few miles to the north of Temuco.

I would have given a good deal to obtain a photograph of this function, and took the first available train, but on arriving at the place the ceremony was finished, and the Indians had gone.

I was naturally disappointed at having made the journey for nothing, for the scenery was of the same kind as about Temuco, and was wandering about somewhat aimlessly when I saw a group of people in the distance.

As I approached them it became evident that they were not Indians, but a party of people of the *huaso* class, who were enjoying a bucolic festivity of the kind often celebrated in poems and pictures, but not often seen in real life.

A cart was drawn up near, in which there was a barrel of refreshment, and some of the company had been dancing to the accompaniment of a guitar.

The level ground was covered with short grass, and between the trees there was a large glade, on which, in harmony with such a scene, a flock of sheep were pasturing.



I was somewhat diffident about the manner in which these people would receive me and advanced cautiously, for although I had seen many *huasos* before, I had never met a party of them, so to say, on their native heath.

As I came nearer they called and made signs to me to join them, behaving in the friendly manner which I had hitherto experienced among the lower classes in Chile.

These kindly overtures encouraged me to ask if they would object to my photographing them while they were dancing.

Most of them were quite willing, but one morose fellow, apparently under the influence of drink, came up and forbade me to do so on any account.

One of the friendly men told him that the others wished it, and my opponent retreated a short distance, but showing such signs of displeasure that I was apprehensive he might attack me while I was engaged with the camera, as had happened in Mexico.

Not having a drop-shutter, I was unable to photograph the group in the movement of dancing, and was obliged to ask them to pause, when they naturally assumed such stiff attitudes that the result was not good enough to reproduce.

In order to show how animated the dance may be, another reproduction of the *cueca* is given. The scene lies in a booth, similar to those in the picture of Independence Day at Linares.

The original of this picture came into my possession thus.

A few years subsequently, just before the publication of this book, I was travelling on a steamer and entered into conversation with a Peruvian gentleman of German descent.

He was engaged in the tea business, which had caused him to go to London, where he had ordered a number of small metal tea boxes, with a picture of the *cueca* on each of them, to hold the tea he was going to sell in Chile.

He kindly allowed me to use this picture, which we criticized together.

I asked him why the soldier was dressed in a manner quite unlike the uniform of Chile, which has adopted the German style as its model.

His reply was to the effect that the uniform of Chile would not be popular in Peru, and that he wished his tea boxes to do duty for both countries.

He then informed me that he had been thinking of having the reproduction of this picture done in Italy, but that finally he had decided on having it done in London.

"London is the best place after all for having anything done," I remarked.

"No," he replied, "it would have been done better in Italy. They wished there to modify the design, saying that the picture was not artistic enough, and that the mountains looked too near"—as, indeed, they do.

"But," he added, with an expressive gesture, "the tea was in London."

And thus commerce prevailed over art. For the advantage of having the reproduction made where the tea was bought overcame the superior artistic capabilities of Italy.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## IN CONCEPCIÓN.

THE first part of my journey to Concepción lay in retracing the ground over which I had travelled as far as the river Bio-Bio, and which, therefore, presented no novelty.

After crossing the river, the branch railway to Concepción leaves the main northern line and turns towards the north-west, hugging the river's bank nearly all the way down to the sea.

This watercourse, although not deep, is imposing from its breadth, and prevents the scenery from looking tame. But the timbered country already lay a good many miles to the south, and want of trees marred the scenery, for the foliage along the sides of the river did not exceed the size of bushes.

Concepción itself gives rather a favourable impression, as indeed it ought, being the town next in importance to Santiago and Valparaiso, although far behind either of them.

It is not a comparatively new town like Temuco, but an old Spanish settlement and built in solid style. The streets lie at right angles, and do not boast of many adornments.

The *plaza*, situated in the central and best part of the town, is large and pretty, being well paved and tastefully ornamented with those sub-tropical trees which can endure the mild winter here.

The town is not on the coast, but is so near that, on looking down the river, the sea is plainly visible only a few miles away, and it is connected by the train with the port of Talcahuano. On one side is a range of hills at the foot of which lies the fine *alameda*, from which walks extend for a considerable distance in the rising ground.

A good view can be obtained here, although the trees make a photograph a matter of great difficulty.

As the town is hemmed in between the river on one side and the hills on the other, extension in either of these directions is not possible. Notwithstanding the breadth of the river here, a railway bridge carries the train southward near the coast beyond Lota.

On arriving at Concepción, I went to a kind of hotel near the railway station. This place had been recommended to me by the cook in the *pensión* at Temuco, on account of its cheapness.

It certainly was cheap—a moderate price for a room, and a meal of several inexpensive courses, out of which the customer had the option of selecting those which were most suitable to his means; but the dirty ways of the house were unbearable.

This is a rather common disadvantage to cheap living in Spanish-America. The food is often good enough for a person "without



pretensions," to use the phrase often used here by the humble aspirant to employment, but the other necessary things comprised in the term "lodging" are of such an undesirable kind that a better class foreigner would hardly be likely to tolerate them.

After one or two days I saw it would be impossible to remain in this house, and looked in the newspaper in the hope of seeing a suitable lodging advertised.

Appearing to find something that might suit, I went with the newspaper in hand to a house in a neighbouring street.

A nice-looking person opened the door, but, on explaining my errand, she said that the advertisement did not come from her house, although it appeared to do so.

It was one of those addresses with both a number and a letter, which give rise to so many mistakes in all countries.

After a short conversation the idea gained on me that it might be possible to arrange for accommodation here, and I asked to that effect.

Her reply was that this might perhaps be done, but that her husband would have to be consulted, and it was settled that I should return on the next day to know the result.

I was pleased to find that after a short interview all details were arranged, and moved into the little house where I was more comfortable than in any other place in Chile.

Mr. Davies was of British extraction. I do not know if he had been born in Chile, but he had lived there since childhood.

He was a mechanic by trade, but, as work had not been plentiful lately, he was not averse to receiving a lodger.

His wife, Doña Alvina, was a native of Chile, and the pleasing impression made by her appearance improved on further acquaintance. She understood English fairly well, but preferred to speak her native Spanish.

It was an unwonted piece of good luck that brought me to their house, where I lived comfortably at a price somewhat less than it would have cost me at the dirty hotel.

For here were combined the niceness of Spanish manners, and the cleanliness of British customs, good qualities that are but too often isolated from each other.

Before I had been long in the town I had what may be called a dog adventure. A poor old woman had been knocked down in the streets by a large dog.

I sympathized strongly with her, recollecting my previous encounters with dogs in Spanish-America, when only extreme prudence and a judicious use of sticks and stones had prevented more or less damage to myself.

She accepted my offer to bear witness in her behalf, and a policeman was called, who told me when and where to appear to give evidence.

On arriving in due course, I was told to come on a subsequent day.

On my return, the waiting room was crowded with people, presumably those concerned as principals or witnesses in other cases.

After waiting about two hours until the room was empty, I was told I might go. One of those who had been in the room subsequently told me that the person who represented the owner of the dog had appeared early and had left soon after, the case having been presum-



ably settled privately without letting me know. On hearing this I no longer felt inclined to take much interest in attacks by dogs on other people.

The fault generally lies with the owners of these animals, which are trusted to keep intruders away from open premises that are temporarily unoccupied. The faithful dogs resent the approach of any one, and the unoffending traveller is annoyed or injured according to circumstances.

Mr. Davies told me of an incident of this kind which happened to himself in another place.

While passing a butcher's shop, the dogs had rushed out and torn his clothes. On complaining to the owner, the only satisfaction he got was the sarcastic reply, "The dogs will pay you."

He passed the shop on a subsequent occasion, but this time with a companion and armed with a revolver.

The dogs rushed out again and one of them was shot. The infuriated owner then came out to demand the reason for shooting his dog. "*El perro me ha pagado*" (The dog has paid me) replied Mr. Davies.

The scenery around Concepción was of a very ordinary kind, the absence of native trees marring the effect here as elsewhere.

One of the best sites for a view was at the river Andalien, about a mile outside the town. A large number of washerwomen used to utilize this place, and the photograph depicts them at work. The usual way to wash clothes here was to place them on a smooth stone in the water, and to pound them with a flat stick.

All these washerwomen had thoroughly Spanish names as is usual with people of the lower class in Chile, where most of the immigrants from northern Europe now seem to outstrip the descendants of the original colonists.

It is rather curious that Spaniards should be nicknamed *Godos* in Chile. The Goths certainly colonized the north of Spain, yet most people do not associate Spanish blood with this northern ancestry.

A Spaniard, however, told me that to this day in some of the northern parts of his country when a man is asked if he is Spanish, he will answer, "*No, señor, soy Godo-Español*" (No, sir, I am Goth-Spaniard).

I was now extremely anxious to obtain employment of some kind while awaiting my answer from Mexico, for my small funds were slowly but surely coming to an end.

On confiding my desire to Mr. Davies, he kindly proposed to introduce me to an employer of labour who might be able to put me in the way of doing something.

This gentleman was one of two British partners in a foundry. He received me cordially, and, having no employment that would suit me, said he would do his best to find me something.

And he very nearly succeeded, for shortly afterwards an English-speaking person arrived in Concepción with some machinery, and, not being able to speak Spanish, was in need of an interpreter. But Chile is so full of foreigners who speak several languages, that unless an applicant as interpreter is very early in the field some one is likely to be before him.



And so it was in my case. My friend did not know about the matter until a few hours after the need had been made known, and the post had already been filled.

I continued to call occasionally at the foundry, to ask whether anything had turned up, but my visits came to a sudden end, owing to the rudeness of my friend's partner.

This person, finding out who I was, on a subsequent occasion, came up to me, and remarking that a medical man was no use for anything outside his own profession, advised me to apply for work at a hospital in some menial capacity.

His contemptuous manner was so irritating that I somewhat stiffly answered that I was not altogether without means, and resolved at the same time to return no more.

I wandered about the town for a few days hoping that I might hear of something, but without success, although on one occasion I had the audacity to invade a large tea warehouse, and asked to see the manager.

He interviewed me, when I briefly told him my object was to obtain temporary work, and volunteered to carry tea chests, write labels, or to do anything for a small salary.

The manager was an Englishman, but he received me in a more courteous manner than many of his countrymen adopt towards those who, being in reduced circumstances, ask for employment evidently below their station in life. He said he was only the sub-manager, and that I might call again if I liked, but that there would not be much chance of my obtaining employment.

I thanked him for his kind manner, and remarked about the rudeness of some English-speaking people towards those who merely ask for employment, saying that the Latin-speaking nations were much more considerate under such circumstances. He quite agreed with me on this point, and we parted on friendly terms.

Being quite disheartened with my bad success in town, I now turned my attention to the country just outside.

The transition from town to country in these parts is abrupt, for there is practically nothing to take the place of an English suburban villa, and after getting beyond the last street of whitewashed houses of the poorer class, I found myself on a track that winded through sand-hills.

The ground was of the poorest description, and the loose soil only supported a sparse covering of grass.

There were but few houses here, and I made no attempt to approach them, for their shanty-like appearance made it seem improbable that their occupiers were employers of labour, and the fierce dogs that barked at me from a distance did not tend to encourage a visitor who had not urgent reasons for calling.

I soon got clear of these undesirable dwellings, and, after walking about a mile through the sandy waste, found myself in the proximity of a habitation. For although no house was visible, the sound of an axe could be heard, and a good many fine eucalyptus trees had been planted, as is often the case in settlements that are deficient in native timber.

Presently I saw a man cutting some scrubby wood on a small hill,



and began to watch him with interest, for he might want help, and I had learned to use the axe in the colonies.

But it soon became evident that the man was not wearing boots, and this made it more than doubtful that he could be an employer of labour. On noticing me, he asked what the time was, and finding it was close on midday, he shouldered his axe and walked away.

I now resumed my search, and soon came to a large open gateway among the trees, and, passing through, sighted a house, which did not indeed appear to be the habitation of a wealthy person, but was of medium size, and appeared at least comfortable.

In the verandah were two or three people with fruits and vegetables, and I asked them where the owner of the house was.

They replied that he was in a room round the corner, and following their directions I saw an elderly man of rather pleasing appearance, who made me welcome and asked me to sit down. He gave me some cherries to eat, and behaved so kindly that it made me feel rather uncomfortable, for perhaps he thought I was a rich stranger, instead of being so poor that I should have been thankful for any kind of employment.

So I remarked as soon as possible that his place seemed very nice, but that I had not come there as a visitor, but to ask if he could give me some work.

Although somewhat surprised at such a request, he did not assume that frigid style which is but too often adopted under such circumstances, but merely said, "I have no work that would suit you, and could not give you wages, but if you like to come here and will see that the people do not rob, you shall eat with me."

I thanked him for his kind offer, which after all was one that promised food and shelter, and told him that I would probably return in a few days with some of my things.

My new friend now showed me the house and its surroundings. He was a market gardener and grew vegetables and fruit. The house of some four or five rooms was somewhat untidy, as is often the case when a man lives by himself, but what took my fancy was the rather pretty lagoon that lay at a short distance down a slight incline, partly concealed by the foliage.

The fruit trees grew here and there over the ground, but the vegetables were cultivated along the margin of the lagoon, so as to be close to the water they required.

Any traveller will understand the inestimable advantage of having a bathing-place quite close to where he lives, especially in a part of the world somewhat lacking in facilities for ablutions, for here was a place where I could indulge in the luxury of a swim, after getting hot and dirty from working in the garden.

The kindly Don Juan, who was a Portuguese, did not own the property he cultivated. It was rented to him for a nominal sum, as the sandy soil was so poor that the place went by the name of "La Miseria."

But even if the ground were worth little for cultivation, it would have been a picked site to make a nice country residence for a person who wished to live within two miles of the town, and "La Miseria" on the Laguna Mendez could probably be bought at a low price. The



scrubby hill where I had seen the man cutting wood formed a natural boundary on one side, and the lagoon of about a quarter of a mile in length hemmed it in on the other side, thus ensuring a privacy to the few hundred yards between them that is not often found near a populous part. The soil was certainly far from rich, but the goodness of the cherries was undeniable, and it is surprising how well sandy ground will produce vegetables if only there is plenty of water at hand.

I was so pleased with the place and the adventure that I returned in a few days' time, with a few clothes wrapped up in my blanket, leaving all my other things in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Davies, where I knew they would be quite safe.

Don Juan seemed pleased to see me again, and I soon fell into the ways of the place.

Of course I could not consider that "seeing that the people did not rob" was an equivalent for my keep, especially as there were so few people about the place.

So I went into the cultivated ground every day with Don Juan's gardener, and became this man's humble assistant. But he was a very decently behaved fellow and never abused his position; perhaps Don Juan had instructed him to behave respectfully towards me.

Under his guidance I became initiated into the mysteries of binding the cabbages with strips of reeds from the lagoon, so that the outside leaves did not trail upon the ground.

Other routine work was to stretch wire at certain elevations, so that the tomatoes might have a support, and to water the vegetables in the evening.

There was also plenty of barren ground to hoe in the spare time, but Don Juan most considerately never ordered me to do any hard or disagreeable work, and allowed me to help just as much as I felt inclined.

We had our meals together, and the food was simple but good, with the very fair wine that can be bought here at so low a price.

I slept in a lumber room, in which harness and odds and ends were kept, but there was a bunk in it with some attempt at bedding, and I had my own blanket.

The climate near Concepción is very good, rather cooler of course than in Valparaiso, but still milder than in England, and this time of the year, being midsummer, the weather was almost perfect.

After the day's work was over it was delightful to bathe in the clean water of the lagoon, and towards nightfall Don Juan and I had our dinner.

After dinner came the most melancholy part of the twenty-four hours, for my host retired into his room and went to sleep, which it was impossible for me to do so early.

The gardener did not remain after work was over, and the cook generally slept out, so I was left in solitude, and as the lamp had been put out, books would have been useless.

There was a bough shed on one side of the house, with a bench under it, and here I used to sit down and smoke. But I had some companionship in the shape of the two watch-dogs which were let loose at night. These soon got familiar with me, and used to accom-



pany me in my nightly walks to the cherry trees, where I used to go partly to pass the time and partly to eat a little fruit.

On one or two occasions Don Juan's son came to see him. He was a young fellow just grown up, and lived in town with his mother and his grandmother. They were Italians, but the young man was a regular Chilean, although his parents were of different foreign nationalities, and I doubt if he could speak any language except Spanish, in which he always conversed with his father.

Under the friendly shelter of this place, which as far as I was concerned was certainly misnamed "La Miseria," I spent a tranquil Christmas and New Year's Day, and my short visit of less than a fortnight was certainly among the happiest of my dark days in Chile.

My most immediate trouble was a neuritis, which had been probably caused by my illness in Valparaiso, for this was the only time I have ever had such a complaint. The pains were in the legs, and hurt me so much that for the moment I could hardly walk or work, but after a short rest they passed away.

When I told Don Juan that I should soon have to leave he seemed as sorry as myself, but he quite understood that I could not remain permanently in my present position.

The day before I left he took me out for a ride, to show me another piece of cultivated land he rented about two miles away.

The soil here was much richer, but the place could not be compared with La Miseria as a site for a homestead, for the fruit and eucalyptus trees, together with the vicinity of the lagoon, made this a most desirable locality.

The country through which we travelled was open and sloping, being not very far from the neighbouring port of Talcahuano, and almost the only native timber here was the *boldo*, which generally grows in patches, and is of such a small size that it may be called a bush rather than a tree.

During the ride we passed several huts of people of the *huaso* class. Although of white descent their dwellings were little, if anything, superior to those of Mexican Indians, and through an open door I saw a woman sitting on the bare ground beside a fire of a few sticks, just as one might expect to see among the more primitive races.

The horse which I was riding is the one in the foreground of the picture of La Miseria, and Don Juan told me that he had bought the animal for forty dollars.

As the dollar of the country was then worth something less than one shilling and sixpence, this would represent less than three pounds of English money.

The little horse, like the humble applicants for employment, had certainly "no pretensions," but he was a good pacer and carried me well, and by comparing the value of a horse with the price subsequently charged me for horse hire, it will be seen how dear travelling becomes for strangers in Chile, when they get beyond the reach of public conveyances.

On the following day I said good-bye to Don Juan with much regret, and walked back to my comfortable quarters in town, where Mr. and Mrs. Davies welcomed me.

Soon after this the long-expected answer from Mexico arrived.



The letter of Don Desiderio Alvarez contained the welcome news that Altotonga was still without a doctor, and that the people would be glad if I returned.

The cordial tone of the letter put me in better spirits than I had been for a long time, and I considered that the best use I could make of my few remaining pounds was to leave a country that would not afford me a living and to return where my bread was assured, even though I had to eat what is known as "humble pie."

Before making preparations for returning to Valparaiso on my way northward, I now began regretfully to realize that I had only just managed to reach the borderland of "the beautiful south." Temuco was the only place where I had reached as far as the timbered country, and, with the exception of the Araucanian Indians, there had not been anything of great interest in that place, for it lay at a considerable distance from the region of the valleys and lakes of the Andes.

Looking back on these events, it seems almost foolhardy to have thought of making further expeditions when only a few pounds lay between me and absolute destitution, in a country which had already evinced such unwillingness to afford me a living.

But the instinct of an experienced traveller told me that I had missed what was best worth seeing, and there was but little probability of my ever returning to these parts.

So I resolved to make a final attempt to go further south than I had already been, and to do this in the cheapest manner possible.

A careful study of the map induced me to form the following outline of a journey, which bade fair to be instructive and inexpensive.

I was already near the coast, and travelling by sea is generally the cheapest, if the traveller is willing to put up with hardship.

So the first stage of my proposed expedition was to take a deck passage as far as Puerto Montt, the last southern port of call of the steamers before they arrive at Punta Arenas in Magellan's Straits.

A short distance inland from Puerto Montt is situated Lake Llanquihue, the largest in Chile.

The map showed me that the inner side of this lake is bounded by the spurs of the Andes, which here come very close to the Pacific coast, so that I should be able to see one of the wildest regions in Chile, even if I were not able to enter it.

There were several volcanoes in the immediate vicinity of the lake, and other lakes eastward among the mountains, but I had no hope of reaching these, for travelling in such wild country would be expensive.

Water carriage over the large lake would be sure to be cheap, and between its northern side and the town of Osorno lay a distance of forty miles.

This long stage had to be got over somehow, and on reaching Osorno everything would be easy, for the railway line was complete from Osorno to Valdivia, and from Valdivia, which is near the sea coast, the steamers go regularly northward.

This was the outline of my journey, which bade fair to contain adventures, for it certainly comprised travelling by sea, lake and train, and by one or all of the slower means of locomotion, such as on horseback, in a cart, or on foot.



The excursion was estimated to last a little more than a week, and to cost only a very few pounds, the chief item being the deck passage to Puerto Montt. The preparations were few, such as strong boots under me, a change of clothes in my blanket, and a little handbag with a lock to hold my photographic plates, for of course the camera accompanied me.

To a person of means a land journey in these parts is gradually becoming a matter of less difficulty, for a railway will connect Osorno with Puerto Montt in the same manner that Valdivia is being connected with Temuco.

When these connections are complete there will be no break between Valparaiso or Santiago and Puerto Montt.

In choosing the port where I should embark I selected Lota, some twenty-five miles by train south of Concepción, instead of the neighbouring one of Talcahuano, for the following reasons.

These coasting steamers spend a great deal of time in each port, and by going on board at Lota, which was the most southerly railway station in touch with a port of call, I should cut short the deck passage by one night.

Lota is also rather a marked locality in Chile, being a place where there are coal mines and smelting works. These belong to the rich Cousiño family, whose name is mentioned by almost every traveller who visits these parts.

And here also is the far-famed statue of Caupolicán, whose name has become a household word in the early history of Chile.

This statue has often been photographed by adventurous Germans, and I had become so tired of seeing postcards of Caupolicán in shop windows, with the announcement that "this card is the property of Carlos Sneider," or some such name, that I determined to have a picture of my own of the historic Indian.

For in Concepción and elsewhere the Germans seem to have exploited the local postcard industry, and "Carlos Sneider" has induced Indians to simulate deadly conflicts for the benefit of himself and the public.

Before leaving Concepción, Mr. Davies gave me a letter of introduction to a hotel-keeper in Lota, and, bidding a short farewell to my kind hosts, I took my little bag and bundle in my hand, put the strap of the canvas bag which contained the camera over my shoulder and walked to the railway station in good spirits at the thoughts of being on my way to a closer acquaintance with "the beautiful south."



## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH.

THE railway line as far as Lota is never at any great distance from the sea, and the only impress left on my mind of this short stage is that the carriage was very crowded, for the train supplied no third class, and the poorest people were thus obliged to travel in the second.

On arriving at Lota I went to the hotel-keeper to whom I had a letter of introduction, and he very civilly offered to accompany me to where the statue of Caupolicán was situated, but for several reasons we decided that it would be better to take the photograph on my return.

So I went to the office of the steamship company and bought a ticket for a deck passage to Puerto Montt.

The employee, thinking that I did not understand what a deck passage was, warned me about the hardships; but of these I was already well aware, owing to my month's experience at sea, although up to now I had not proved them in my own person.

The journey would not be likely to last more than two nights, and a seasoned traveller could well endure these privations for so short a time.

On this southern part of the coast there were not so many deck passengers as north of Valparaíso, still there were several, most of them, of course, of the lowest class.

I deposited my few belongings on the deck, which was none too clean, and stood up for some time, not being in a hurry to make a closer acquaintance with the uninviting-looking planks.

Presently I became engaged in conversation with a youngish man evidently somewhat superior to the ordinary deck passenger, and after talking together for a short time he said to me in Spanish, "Come, and I will show you a cleaner place than this where we shall be able to rest more comfortably."

I followed him to another part of the deck where the planks were indeed somewhat cleaner, so we deposited our luggage here and sat down.

The first evening did not pass so unpleasantly, for it takes at least two or three days to produce that miserable feeling of squalor which ensues on the privation of the ordinary comforts of life. When night came on I gave my camera in charge of a steward, promising him a recompense for his trouble.

We smoked and talked until long after dark, but when it became time to sleep I had cause to envy my companion, for he had a long



box on which he lay, with a large bundle for a pillow, while I had to spread my blanket on the deck, and had only my change of clothes rolled up in a small parcel and the little bag under my head.

His box made probably just as hard a couch as the deck, but it seemed a nearer approach to a bed, and was at any rate clean.

Towards the middle of the night, however, he found that the box was not after all such a desirable resting-place, for it was not long enough for his legs, so he moved down on the deck beside me and asked leave to share the few things on which my head rested as a pillow. I readily consented, and we slept without being disturbed until between dawn and sunrise, when I was awakened by hearing my companion cry out, "*Mi fardo, mi fardo!* (My bundle, my bundle!). Where is my bundle?"

The unfortunate man had become aware that the large bundle which he had left on his box, instead of more prudently putting it under his head, was gone, and there was no clue as to its disappearance.

The man was a pedlar, and the bundle contained five hundred dollars worth of lace.

An officer was called and a complaint was made about the theft, but although the pedlar offered a reward of fifty dollars the lace was never recovered.

The only efficient means of doing this would have been to search every one on board, but this would have annoyed the better class passengers without a certainty of finding the stolen goods, for the culprit might have thrown the lace overboard if he feared discovery.

The poor pedlar had in some measure become resigned to his loss before he went on shore at a port where we stopped during the morning, and I now saw that I had acted wisely in giving my camera in charge of a steward instead of leaving it on the deck beside me.

In the afternoon of that day we arrived at the mouth of the Valdivia River, and as we remained here several hours I went on shore and enjoyed the luxury of a good meal at an hotel.

Valdivia is considerably to the south of Temuco, and the coast was already well lined with fir trees, for we had already entered the zone of the timbered country.

Among the deck passengers there were several other pedlars, some of whom had also been robbed, but only to a trifling extent, and fearing a repetition of the event of the previous night we slept in a semicircle round their goods, which they fastened as much as possible together with straps and chains, but no further thefts occurred.

I had now been two nights on board, and had hoped to arrive at Puerto Montt before the end of the day. It was therefore very disappointing to hear that the steamer was going out of the direct course to call at the island of Chiloé, where we did not arrive until next morning.

Under ordinary circumstances I should have liked to have seen this important island, but I was now so depressed after three nights on the deck, without washing and only such scraps of food as I could eat out of my hands, that I only looked at the land while the steamer was discharging cargo, and made no attempt to go on shore, although we remained there all the morning.



The scenery, however, was disappointing. It was by no means ugly, but decidedly tame. There were no high mountains, and the character of the place was sloping land, in parts covered with trees, with open pasture land between them, and here and there whitewashed houses.

The verdure of the landscape was undeniable, for Chiloé has an exceptionally damp climate, and it is popularly said to rain here for the greater part of the year.

This fresh appearance, together with foliage that bespoke a cool climate, gave it some similarity to the British Isles.

Some of the Chilotes (inhabitants of Chiloé) came out to the steamer in small boats. These people were of fairly white descent, but of what may be called very retrograde appearance, many of the women having dishevelled hair and naked feet, and the person who told me that there was "*mucha miseria*" in these parts had evidently spoken the truth.

Not that the Chilotes bear a bad character. Being hardly able to maintain themselves at home, many go for months on the mainland, where they work industriously and return with their savings to their native island.

I was glad when the steamer was ready to leave, and began to wend her way through the *canales*, or canals, as the passages between the islands and the mainland are called, for there are many other islands, but Chiloé is by far the largest.

The sea here is very smooth, and the continual sight of land on either side makes it appear like a large lake.

We made a short stay off the island Calbuco, which I had good reason to remember afterwards as the home of two pleasant companions, and it was almost sundown before we arrived at Puerto Montt.

How glad I was to leave the steamer, for the dread of a fourth night in discomfort had made me anxious.

In my hurry to get under shelter before dark I had no time to find a very cheap lodging, but I was assured that the hotel to which I was directed was moderate in price, and I was soon enjoying the luxuries of a room, a wash, and a civilized meal at a table, with a plate, knife and fork.

The harbour here is decidedly pretty. The town itself is chiefly composed of those wooden buildings which seem almost universal in southern Chile, and the greater number of the better class people are Germans or other northern Europeans.

Many of these people were so dressy that I felt my humble costume was quite out of place, and resolved to go inland as soon as possible.

Early next morning I settled my account, which had not had time to become excessive; and it may be stated here that the average price for a day's board and lodging at an hotel in these parts is about three dollars and a half, which is not so dear when the low value of the dollar is considered, but still far from cheap for very ordinary accommodation.

Leaving my few belongings in charge of the people of the hotel, I went out to make inquiries about means of transit to Lake Llanquihue.



There appeared to be only one person who provided horses, and his lowest price for horse hire to Puerto Varas, some fifteen miles distant on the south-western shore of the lake, was five dollars.

As horses were cheap and this was a fertile part of Chile the charge seemed excessive, and I began to think of other ways of doing the journey.

It was an easy day's stage on foot, but my three small packages, the camera, the bundle, and the bag, although not heavy, would have been awkward to carry.

Ox waggons not infrequently go between Puerto Montt and the lake, and I spoke to a man who was on the roadside with his team, but he was not going to return until the following day.

I next tried a man who appeared to be on the way out of town. He was just starting for the lake, but promised to wait a short time for me, so that I might bring my things from the hotel.

I asked him anxiously how much he expected for the journey, when he replied, "Whatever you like."

Vague bargains of this kind are frequent causes of trouble, so I asked him if he would be contented with a dollar, and on finding that he was satisfied with it, I brought my effects to the waggon without delay.

This *huaso* had just brought the produce of the farm on which he was employed into town, and was returning with the waggon nearly empty, so whatever he received for giving a traveller a lift was a grateful addition to his wages.

The long four-wheeled waggons of these parts are not an uncomfortable means of conveyance on a fairly good road, for they have an awning stretched over hoops, something like that of a carrier's cart, so that there is ample protection against the rain and heat of the sun. There were plenty of empty bags which made a soft seat, and I felt very contented at having procured so easy and inexpensive a means of transit.

The coast near Puerto Montt is high, and as the waggon climbed the road which sometimes nearly doubled on itself in order to make the ascent less steep, I admired the picturesque view of the sea, and regretted that I could not stop to photograph the scene.

When we arrived at the summit of the hill which forms the coast line, the ground became fairly level, and here we found three people at the roadside, a man and two girls. Just then another waggon came up behind us, and after a short conversation between these people and the drivers, the two girls got into the waggon in which I was, while the man got into the one behind.

The girls were very fair specimens of the peasant class, sunburnt, but of white descent, with their somewhat untidy hair in a long plait behind the head, barefoot and wearing coarse print dresses, but comely looking withal, and with that fresh complexion which is generally associated with a temperate and moist climate. They soon entered into friendly conversation.

The elder girl might have been nineteen or twenty years of age, and her name was Florinda; while the other one, some two or three years younger, was called Margarita.

After travelling about three or four miles through the open country,



both waggons drew up at a hamlet of a few rather untidy wooden houses on the roadside, and as German propensities have caused beer to be cheap and plentiful in these parts, I proposed to get some for my companions, remarking at the same time that bread would be a welcome addition to the beer.

"But I have no money to buy bread," said Margarita.

"Here is enough to buy some," I replied, giving her a few small coins, and we were soon enjoying an *al fresco* repast on some logs near the huts.

Nor was the girls' companion, who was the father of Florinda, forgotten in the partition of the bread and beer, for his daughter dutifully brought him his share.

When this welcome refreshment was finished, we resumed our journey, but under slightly different conditions, for Margarita had already proved herself to be a competent ox-driver, and the *huaso*, seeing that she was trustworthy, got into the other waggon, and left me with the two girls.

It may have been that he wanted to talk with the other men, or perhaps the bread and beer had put him in a friendly frame of mind, and he might have thought that I should enjoy the girls' company more in his absence.

Whatever the cause of his action, we were soon out of sight of the following waggon, for Margarita, sitting in front, goaded the two oxen into a somewhat faster speed, while Florinda and myself were leaning back on the bags, and conversing with each other.

There was a touch of romance about the situation, which the immortal Sancho Panza might have cited among the few adventures which recompensed the many hardships which he endured with "the Knight of the Doleful Countenance," and I question whether many people, not to the manner born, have had a similar experience.

It was a perfect summer day, and the narrow road over which we travelled bore a great resemblance to an English country lane.

On either side were high blackberry bushes, which occasionally rasped against the awning of the waggon. The character of the landscape was that of undulating pasture land from which most of the larger trees had been removed, although their stumps attested to their former size, and there were but few stones or logs on the track, so that there was not much of that jolting which often mars travelling on wheels in such parts.

I asked Florinda what she and her companions were going to do at the end of their journey.

She replied that they had come from the island Calbuco, and were going to cut *alerce* (larch) at a place not far from the lake.

"But cutting trees is not suitable work for girls," I remarked.

"My father will cut down the trees, and Margarita and I will carry the wood," was her answer.

Even this seemed rough labour for them, although the girls made nothing of it.

At the end of some five hours we reached the margin of the lake, where we drew up and awaited the arrival of the second wagon.

When it came up there was a hurried parting between the girls and myself, which was at least regretful on my part, and had I been



a younger or a richer man I might have been tempted to continue the adventure by going to cut larch with them.

The two girls and Florinda's father began their journey on foot along the right side of the lake, while the *huaso* in charge of my waggon took the road by the left margin. We were now near the settlement where I was going to stop that night, although the waggon was going several miles beyond. I now asked the driver if he could recommend me any place to lodge at.

He, having probably formed a correct idea that a person who travels in a waggon is not blessed with much money, replied rather roguishly, "There is an hotel where they charge five dollars a day."

I besought him not to leave me at such a place, and he interested himself faithfully on my behalf, for when we arrived at the first houses he made some inquiries, and finally told me that he had found a lodging at a German shoemaker's, where the cost of living would be two dollars a day.

This was as cheap as could be expected, and we parted on good terms at the door of the house.

To what extent the little town of Puerto Varas, on the shore of Lake Llanquihue (pronounced Yankeeaway), is German a stay of less than two days scarcely gave time to discover, but there is at any rate a strong German element.

My host was not a bad type of his countrymen.

He had been settled here for some time, and seemed conscious that he and others of his nationality had done well in Chile. We conversed in Spanish, which he spoke fairly well.

"Yes," he said in a self-satisfied manner, "when the Germans came here the Chileans thought that they would be the masters, and that the Germans would be the servants; but now the Germans are the masters and the Chileans are the servants."

And he spoke with reason, for most of the Germans here seem to get into some middle-class sphere of life such as tradesmen or shopkeepers, and if a stranger wishes to become acquainted with the true sons of the soil he must find them among the *huaso* class.

The small town was decidedly neat. The buildings were of the universal wooden type, but rather more picturesque here than elsewhere, and the large sheet of water on which the settlement stands gave it some resemblance to a Swiss village.

The lake, although deep enough in some places, is very shallow here, and a pier has been built to receive the small steamer that plies between this port and Puerto Octai on the northern side.

An attempt to bathe was very unsuccessful, for the stones under the shallow water were too sharp for much walking, and I had to be content with merely wetting myself.

There is a small hill a few hundred yards at the back of the town, and from this elevation a good panoramic view of the lake and the distant mountains could be obtained in clear weather, but unfortunately the atmosphere over the water is often hazy, and I could not wait to take the photograph under more favourable circumstances. The smoke also from bush fires, which are often kindled on the spurs of the mountains in summer time, contributes to obscure the scene, part of which is very distant, as the lake appears to average over twenty miles in many of its dimensions.



In the picture will be seen the town of Puerto Varas on the shore of the lake, together with a large part of the lake itself, and two volcanoes whose summits are covered with snow, Calbuco to the right and Osorno to the left. The higher of these (Osorno) does not attain seven thousand feet, but this is sufficient to bring it within the limits of eternal snow in such a southern latitude.

It is almost impossible to do justice to an immense view of this kind, and here the question will have to be answered whether Lake Llanquihue is as beautiful as has been described.

In my opinion it is not. The vastness of its extent and the chain of mountains on the eastern side induce that feeling akin to awe which we are wont to experience on beholding nature on a large scale, but many reasons prevent the term "beautiful" being altogether justly applied.

On its western and part of its northern and southern shores the ground is comparatively flat, and these situations, although fertile and green with grass, do not merit extravagant praise.

On its eastern side there is a magnificent view. Some of the mountains run down steeply into the lake, and their sides have a barren and desolate aspect.

Behind these are some of the higher peaks, covered with snow even in the summer.

The scenery in this direction comes up to what might be expected of one of the great mountain regions of the world, the chain of the Andes. But it was all on one side and far away.

The most beautiful lakes in the world are not very large sheets of water, but are of moderate area, and hemmed in for the greater part with mountains, and this is the character of the Swiss lakes.

Lake Llanquihue lies just on the edge of that enormous region which may be described as that of the valleys and the lakes of the Andes. Only a few miles to its east lies the lake Todos los Santos, much smaller in extent, and surrounded by mountains. From its position I had an intuitive idea of its beauty, but want of means prevented my extending my journey in that wild region.

For it must be remembered that, although lake Todos los Santos is not many miles from Llanquihue, this must be taken to mean from the extreme east of the larger lake, from which I might have been over twenty miles distant by water, and considerably more by a land journey round the shore.

The steamers also which ply regularly between the populated and fertile districts of Puerto Varas on the south-west and Puerto Octai on the north-west, go comparatively seldom to the frowning chain of the Andes on the eastern side.

But a few years afterwards, on reading that interesting book of Colonel Holdich, called "The Countries of the King's Award," I found that my expectations of the beauty of this region had not been exaggerated.

The journey between Llanquihue and Todos los Santos is thus described, "A forest ride of such fantastic beauty that the like of it is not to be found in Chile," and the author further describes Lake Todos los Santos as the most beautiful lake he had ever seen.

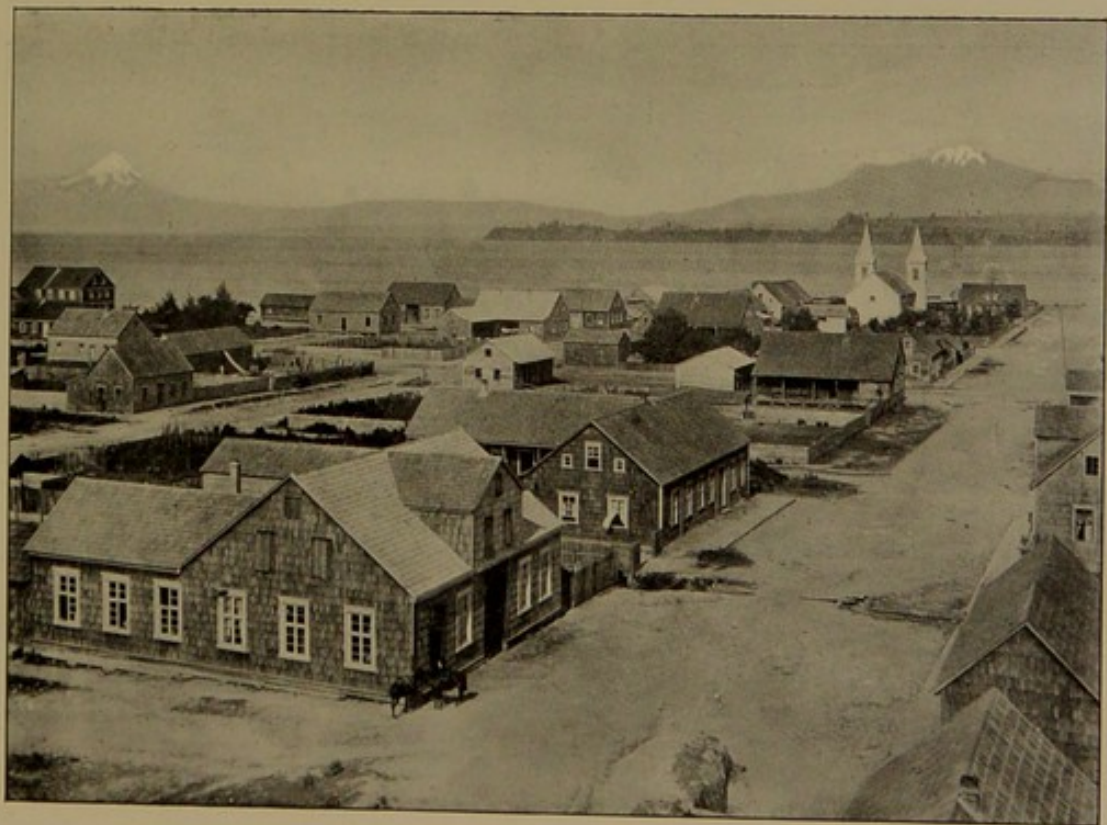
This lake is still on the Chilean side of the watershed and there is





Puerto Octai and Lake Llanquihue—(p. 247).

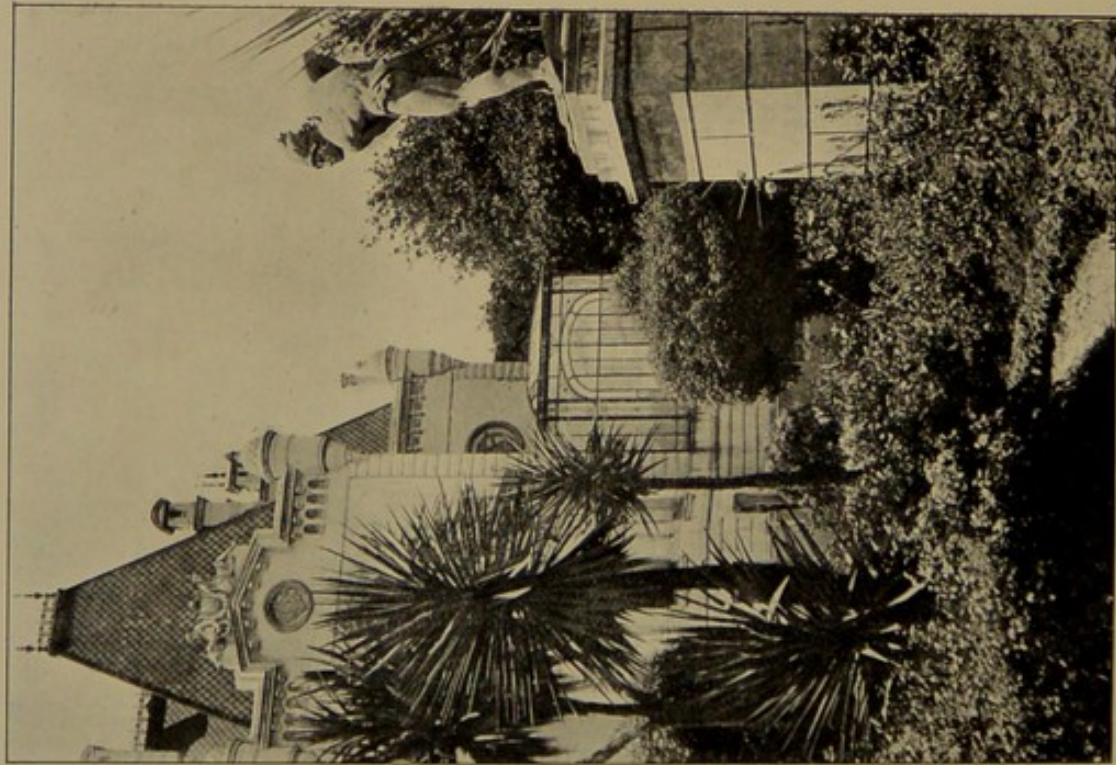
Showing the volcano Osoerno in the distance.



Puerto Varas and Lake Llanquihue—(p. 248).

Showing the volcanoes Osoerno (to the left) and Calbuco (to the right).





Cousiño House and Statue of Caupolicán.



Peruvian Indian Women—(p. 260).



a mountain road connecting it with Laguna Frias on the Argentine side. From Laguna Frias to the western end of the enormous lake, Nahuel Huapi is described as a walk of only three-quarters of an hour.

This latter lake occupies a similar position on the Argentine side to what Llanquihue does on the side of Chile, each being bounded by the spurs of the Andes on one side, and lying in comparatively open country on the other.

Colonel Holdich describes this mountain and lake region as "the Switzerland of South America."

It is always refreshing to read books of travel written by people whose occupations lie in the more remote regions of the country they describe, as the information thus obtained gives a much clearer insight into its true character than the anecdotes of the tourist who has his headquarters in the large cosmopolitan towns, and whose idea of the country part is limited to a few hurried visits, eked out by much second-hand information.

This will account for much that is interesting in the writings of Ober in his travels in Mexico and in the West Indies, for he was a naturalist and his material consequently lay in the wilder parts.

The same reason applies to the book of Colonel Holdich.

For when the Republics of Argentina and Chile had such a serious dispute about their confines that they were on the eve of war, they prudently resolved to ask the King of England to arbitrate between them.

Colonel Holdich was sent at the head of a boundary commission to survey the disputed area, and had thus exceptional advantages for seeing an enormous extent of wild country, almost unknown, in the vicinity of the Andes.

It seems at first sight absurd that two countries should think of going to war about an apparently small extent of mountainous and barren country on the watershed of a dividing range, but, when the facts are known, the gravity of the points at issue becomes more apparent.

While in Temuco I had already heard that there were several settlements among the Andes where the inhabitants did not know to which Republic they belonged.

It was difficult to realize how this could be the case, for the highest mountains and the watershed are generally synonymous terms and every resident must know in which direction the water in his locality flows.

But in this extraordinary instance the highest mountain range and the watershed did not always coincide, for rivers which had their sources many miles on the Atlantic side of the Andes discharged their waters through large gaps in this range into the Pacific Ocean.

Each Republic, therefore, somewhat naturally claimed the boundary that was most to its advantage, Argentina asserting her right as far as the highest mountains and Chile claiming her dominion as far as the sources of the western waters.

The most marked instance of this kind is in the case of lake Buenos Aires, which lying well to the Atlantic side of the Andes in its huge dimensions of probably more than fifty miles in an easterly and westerly direction, discharges its waters through a cleft in that range into the Pacific Ocean.



An adjustment of this disputed territory necessitated a good deal of "give and take," so that the amended boundary in many places neither corresponds to the highest mountains nor to the watershed, but is a compromise between both.

My return journey now lay northward over Lake Llanquihue to Puerto Octai.

The captain of the steamer was an English engineer, who had learnt enough navigation at sea to be able to handle his little craft.

This means of transit was well patronized by local people, many of whom carried their horses on board to save a long ride round the lake.

The journey across occupied about two hours and a half. Puerto Octai is almost the opposite of Puerto Varas in every respect, as far as facilities for shipping are concerned.

In the latter place the margin of the lake is very shallow, and there is practically no shelter when a strong wind blows over the large extent of water.

But Puerto Octai is a good natural harbour, being sheltered by several headlands.

As the steamer winds round the first of these, there is a fine view of the eastern side of the lake, with the volcano Osorno showing out well against the sky.

After doubling round some smaller necks of land, the steamer runs up a small but fairly deep creek, and is moored to the landing place.

The wooden houses of this settlement were hardly as neat as in Puerto Varas, although perhaps the natural scenery was better, as the ground here is more undulating.

Here also the German element prevails to a great extent, and the hotel to which I was recommended was kept by people who spoke that language.

Although there was no fireplace in this wooden building, there was a substantial stove, showing that artificial heat was considered necessary in the winter.

A better-class Chilean family lodged here one night, and, while we were dining together, insisted in a friendly way that I should try a national beverage which goes by the name of *Chicha*.

*Chicha* is a generic term which comprises drinks made of several distinct materials. In this instance it was made from apples, and was in fact a kind of inferior cider. But further north, in the vine-growing parts, it often consists of the unfermented juice of the grape, while in Peru it is sometimes made out of grain. From whatever source made, the product is not a high-class drink.

The self-satisfied remarks of the German shoemaker on the other side of the lake may be remembered, to the effect that the Germans were now the masters and the Chileans were the servants, and it was now rather instructive to hear the other side of the question from a Chilean who became eloquent on the wrong done to his countrymen by such a state of things. "The Government," he said, "encourages the Germans more than us, but wait until a war comes on, and you will see that one German has a sore hand and another a sore foot."

I asked the German landlady if it were true that her countrymen



would not fight, and this was evidently not her opinion, for she said, "Of course they would fight for their adopted country."

So the remark of the Chilean may be put down to a natural jealousy at the Germans getting on better than the Spanish-speaking people.

But this will be smoothed over in a short time. The sons of the Germans and of other foreigners born here are Chileans by the law of the land, and, quite apart from the obligations thereby entailed, are as a rule sufficiently patriotic towards the land of their birth, whose Spanish language is the medium of instruction in the schools, and thus becomes in the truest sense their mother-tongue.

A little nephew of the German landlady was present while I was talking to his aunt, and I asked her whether she thought the boy would prefer to be German or Chilean.

"Ask him," she replied, with a smile.

On putting the question to the child, he looked rather troubled, as if he feared that his answer might get him into trouble with his elders, but, after a short pause, he whispered the word, "*Chileno*."

The country about here is undulating and fertile, but the only picturesque view is that looking across the lake towards the mountainous side.

While rambling about, some two or three miles from the little settlement, in search of this view, which is the same as that seen on the steamer just before entering the port, a man rode up, and began to speak to me in German, but I was obliged to ask him to continue the conversation in Spanish.

Before I had been a day in Puerto Octai, I tried to hire a horse to carry me to the town of Osorno, which was then the terminus of the railway from Valdivia.

As in Puerto Montt, there appeared to be only one person who hired out horses. This man, with the rapacity of his class, first asked me twenty dollars for the journey, then eighteen dollars, and finally said, "My last word is fifteen dollars."

But even fifteen dollars seemed an exorbitant price for a day's ride of forty miles in a fertile part of the country, where horses are cheap, and I had not forgotten that the good little horse which I rode at "La Miseria" had only cost forty dollars, so I did not close with the bargain.

I nearly made an arrangement with a man at the small post-office for a horse at the reduced price of eight dollars.

The owner was satisfied with the price, but there was some hitch either in having the animal ready in time, or as to how it should be sent back.

Finally, some one brought me the good news that a cart was going to Cancura, which is half-way on the road to Osorno, and I asked the driver how much he would charge for taking me.

He was quite willing to carry me, but said that I would have to settle the price with the owner of the cart at the end of the journey.

This was too good an opportunity to lose, and we started late on the following morning.

The country through which we passed was level, and thickly timbered in places, the road being sometimes cut through large forests several miles in length.



The trees here resembled those near Temuco, some of them being of great height, but without room for their boughs to extend to a corresponding distance, so closely did the trunks grow together.

The road, although dry now, was evidently much more boggy in wet weather than the ground between the coast and the lake, for it was "corduroyed" in many places with large logs placed transversely across the track.

This uneven foundation caused such excessive jolting that I had frequently to lift up the camera, and hold it in my hands, so that it might not be broken.

But this two-wheeled cart was probably a much rougher mode of conveyance than the four-wheeled wagon on the other side of the lake.

These long cuttings through the forest were singularly destitute of animal life, the only sounds of living creatures being the discordant cries of parrots as they flew over the tree tops.

At long intervals were the houses of settlers, and in these places the axe had been busy, and the timber had been more or less cleared.

Just before reaching the house at Cancura, we had to cross a good-sized river of considerable depth. This was done by means of a large ferry boat. The two oxen, together with the cart, were driven into it; and we were drawn across the water by pulling on a wire, which was attached to the banks on both sides.

The owner of the cart and of the comfortable house on the other side was the Señora de Olivares, an Englishwoman who had married a Chilean.

On arriving there, I explained to this lady how I had used her cart as a means of transit, offering to pay her for the journey, and asked if she could provide me with a horse for the rest of the distance to Osorno.

She replied that the cart had to be sent in any case, and that she wanted no payment for my having travelled in it, but that the hire of a horse from Puerto Octai to Osorno was estimated at fifteen dollars (the "last word" of the horse-owner at the lake), and that as I had already come about half-way, she would charge me eight dollars for the remainder of the distance.

No objection could be made to these terms, especially as no charge had been made for the journey in the cart, and during the interval while the horse was being got ready a meal was prepared for me.

The lady now bantered me about my drive in the cart, saying that on its approach she thought I must have been "a very poor German." And as far as poverty was concerned this was truer perhaps than she imagined.

Evidently there are still some Germans in these parts who have not yet attained substantial positions, for Mr. Anderson Smith, in his book called "Temperate Chile," relates how he had a similar experience at this very place, the servant remarking "*Alemanes no más*" (only Germans) when he arrived there with a German companion.

Travelling in a cart is necessarily slow, and it was late in the morning before we had left the lake, so by the time the horse was ready it was not far from sundown. But the Señora de Olivares remarked that I need not be apprehensive about arriving after closing hours at Osorno, for the horse was a good pacer and could do the twenty miles in four hours.



The animal verified his praises, and an average of five miles in the hour on rough country roads at night time is first-class work, reminding me of my journey with the priest in Mexico.

The *huaso* who accompanied me on horseback, to bring back the horse I was riding, informed me that two hundred dollars (somewhat less than fifteen pounds at the then value of the Chilean dollar) had been refused for this animal.

But the same price would probably have been charged for hiring a mount of much less value, and it is easy to see that the ratio of horse hire in Chile is very high in comparison to the value of a horse.

The large discrepancy between the prices ruling here and in Mexico, where a horse, together with a man to fetch the animal back, can be had for the small sum of one dollar and a half for the day, may be partially accounted for thus. In Mexico, the *peón* who accompanies you on foot is an Indian, whose time is of less value than that of the horse. But in Chile the *huaso* is a white man and requires to be mounted, so that the traveller has to pay for two horses instead of one.

Night closed in on us before we had done many miles of our journey, but I arrived at the hotel in Osorno in time to have some supper.

The most interesting part of my journey was now over, for rail communication was complete between Osorno and Valdivia. I started next morning for the latter place and arrived there in the afternoon of the same day.

This town may be said to be the principal German centre in Chile, and its progress points to the desirable qualities of colonists of this nationality.

The names of the principal enterprises and shops were nearly all German, although the entire population was by no means so. For, on looking at the newspaper, I came across what might be called a list of the police cases, and amongst these there was hardly a German name.

From a commercial point of view Valdivia would be a very interesting place, but not from the standpoint of a traveller on the look-out for something uncommon.

Everything seemed business-like and prosaic. There were a few Indians in the town, but not nearly as many as in Temuco.

The next day I left in the steam launch, which goes down the Valdivia River, a distance of some twelve miles to the coast, to meet the steamers which go north and south. From the river several factories in the vicinity of the town are seen to advantage, but the country is otherwise flat and uninteresting.

The return deck passage from the mouth of the Valdivia River to Lota was not long enough to cause much discomfort, for only one night was spent on the sea.

On arriving at Lota, the hotel-keeper, according to his promise, kindly accompanied me to where the statue of Caupolicán is situated on private ground, in front of the house of the Cousiño family, a short distance outside the town.

The enormous wealth of this family arises primarily from their ownership of the coal mines here, which are turned to further account by the use of the coal for smelting works and other industries.



Leave was easily obtained to take the desired photograph, but it was hard to determine from what point of view it would show to best advantage.

The German photographers before mentioned seem always to make a front attack on this statue, so by way of a change I took it in the flank, and by so doing obtained a partial view of Cousiño house, which from its palatial appearance must be almost unique in a country like Chile.

The story of Caupolicán, sufficiently pathetic in itself, has been given prominence by the poet Ercilla, a Spanish captain who was in Chile in those times of barbarous warfare which ensued after the first occupation of the country by the Spaniards.

In his poem called "*La Araucana*" it is related how the unfortunate Indian chief had been taken prisoner, and was condemned to torture before being put to death.

While he is bound and is awaiting his doom, his wife comes up with her baby in her arms, and after upbraiding the captive with allowing himself to be taken alive, she dashes down the baby at his feet, saying—

"I do not wish for the name of mother  
Of the infamous son of the infamous father."

The humane Ercilla declares that if he had been present he would never have allowed the Indian to be tortured.

This tragic event has undoubtedly helped to immortalize the Indian chief, and although the modern Chileans have continued the war against the Araucanians until the surrender of the latter in recent years, they still look on Caupolicán as a kind of national hero, and his name is perpetuated in places called after him, in the same manner as the little town of Lautaro is called after another Indian chief, who was more fortunate in being able to die on the field of battle.

The governor, Valdivia himself, after whom the thriving German settlement is called, is another of the great dead of these times, who came to an untimely end.

This was the captain mentioned in Prescott's "*Conquest of Peru*," in connection with the following episode.

The two opposing Spanish armies were drawn up in civil war. Before the conflict began the veteran captain of Pizarro's host, on viewing the admirable arrangement of the enemy's ranks, exclaimed, "Either the devil is there or Valdivia." The latter had in fact only arrived a few hours before.

When subsequently in Chile, all Valdivia's science could avail nothing against the hordes of Indians by whom his small force was overwhelmed, and the unfortunate governor was taken alive, and put to torture.

The poet Ercilla has likewise left his name on the map of Chile, but, more fortunate than many of the others, he returned to Spain in safety.

At the time of taking the photograph, I felt curious to know something about the origin of the statue of Caupolicán, and whether the features were supposed to be modelled after the type of an Araucanian Indian.

I asked an English employee in the place if he could give me any



information on the subject. He told me that the metal statue was cast in Paris, and used to be called that of a North-American Indian, and that it was only of late years that it had become known as the statue of Caupolicán. If this were generally known, it would detract a good deal of interest from a picture which figures in most collections of views of Chile.

I had now practically finished my expedition in "the beautiful south," and returned by train from Lota to Concepción, feeling fairly satisfied that I had seen as much as possible for so little money.

The trip had lasted about twelve days in all. It had cost a little more than the five pounds I had expected to spend, perhaps from six to seven; but it will be seen on the map that the distance covered was considerable, and I had, at any rate, got a view of "the promised land" near the Lake Llanquihue.

It was now imperative that I should return to Valparaiso as soon as possible, and take the cheapest means of transit from there to Mexico before all my money was spent.

A deck passage by sea from Concepción to Valparaiso costs almost exactly the same price as a third-class railway ticket, so I decided to go by land, as the squalor associated with becoming a "decker" is very repugnant.

The railway journey necessitated stopping one night in Santiago, but this only incurred the extra expense of two dollars for a lodging and a trifle more for food.

It was with regret that I left the little house of Mr. and Mrs. Davies, where I had been kindly treated, and, as the return to Valparaiso was travelling over old ground, the narrative will be resumed on my arrival there.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## TWO WEEKS IN PERU.

**I**T had been early in September when I left Valparaiso, and, as I did not return until towards the beginning of February in the following year, I must have been absent nearly five months.

My first visit was naturally to the house of Doña Ignacia in Cochrane Street, where I had left my large trunk. This had been safely stored, but the former lodgers had all gone, and the house was full of new people, so that there was no room for me.

I obtained another lodging in the same street, and Doña Ignacia told me where the young Peruvian was now living, for I wanted to get some information and advice about Peru.

My next visit was to the office of my former employers, to try if I could not get a temporary appointment as far as some northern port, so that the expenses of the long journey might be lessened.

They gave me some hopes, but after waiting about two weeks without getting any nearer my object, I lost confidence in their goodwill, and began to balance the advantages of the several lines of steamers.

For cheapness and comfort combined, it would be hard to beat the second class in the Kosmos line, which had carried me to Chile.

But this line had only a monthly service, and I should have had to wait too long, so I had to turn my attention to the other companies which carried no second class, even though this would mean the horrors of a long deck passage.

I wanted to see a little of Peru on my way north, and now consulted my Peruvian friend as to what port offered most facilities for seeing something of the interior of the country at a small expense.

He advised me to try Mollendo, telling me that, by taking the train from that port, I could arrive in a few hours' time at Arequipa, an inland town, where Indians and their beasts of burden, the llamas, might be seen.

It was a relief to get away from Valparaiso with its gloomy memories, and to be on my way back to a country where a living seemed assured.

As the steamer went northward along the coast I again passed those miserable-looking settlements in the arid sand, and saw Antofagasta with its graveyard in the desert.

It took just a week to arrive at Mollendo in southern Peru, and I had suffered so much from the squalor of the passage that a longer journey under such conditions would have been almost unendurable.

This port had remained impressed on my memory since the time of my first arrival in the steamer of the Kosmos line, partly



because I had nearly been induced to cut short my journey, and to try my fortune here, and partly because the situation had a less miserable aspect, as the town stood on a high rocky coast, and the eye was therefore not offended by the long waste of desert sand.

Although all these coast towns have a strong family resemblance, owing to the number of wooden shanties in each, there was a something in the people rather than in the place that made me feel that I was no longer in Chile.

For many of the inhabitants, by their darker complexion and peculiar type of features, gave evidence of alien blood being mixed with that of their European ancestry.

Such people are called *cholos* in Peru, this term being used to designate those of mixed white and Indian descent.

The next northern-bound steamer would not call at Mollendo before two weeks' time, so after remaining here for one day, to recover from the journey, and to procure information, I started by the morning train for Arequipa, where I should be much more likely to see the true nature of the country than in these cosmopolitan ports.

I have always some diffidence in making statements about distances, for it is not easy to find out whether they are measured in a straight line or as the road goes, and the roads in these remote countries are often very winding. The distance from Mollendo to Arequipa has been stated as about one hundred miles, but, according to the employee in charge of the luggage van, the railway line represented nearly double the distance in a straight line.

An approximate idea may be ascertained by saying that the journey lasted about seven or eight hours, and the train climbed the mountains by circuitous ascents for the greater part of the way.

I was travelling in a second-class carriage, there being no third, and the luggage guard, seeing that I was on the look-out for information, invited me into the van, where we could talk without interruption.

The train went for a short distance along the sea-coast, and there were some places where agriculture was attempted, for pieces of sugar-cane were sold at a railway station to the inmates of the second class, who were soon intent on chewing the sweet food, the refuse of which soon made an untidy litter on the floor.

We then left the coast and began the ascent of the barren mountain ranges. It was a scene of desolation on a gigantic scale. There was no grass, nor were there trees, but some dry-looking weeds or small bushes appeared at intervals.

My informant told me that at a certain season of the year, after the rain, there was some verdure, but now all was barren mountain side.

After winding through this desolate ascent we came to the desert of Islay. Here was a typical desert, a Sahara in fact on a small scale. The train ran over some thirty to forty miles of flat sand before it again ascended the mountains.

Here for the first time I saw on the level surface of the desert those mounds of sands which are called *médanos*.

They are said to be deposits of sea sand, blown from the coast and left on the desert. It is hard to understand why these deposits should rear themselves up at intervals in masses of some six to twelve feet in height, instead of being equally distributed over the whole surface.



The sand of the *médano* is distinctly of another shade of colour to that of the sand of the desert, and the mounds are all crescentic in form, with the convex side towards the coast.

They would make a splendid shelter for troops opposing the advance of an enemy, for no projectile could pierce these huge masses of sand, and, even if those thus sheltering were dislodged by a flank movement, another refuge of the same kind could be had not many hundred yards away.

I was told that no rain ever fell on this desert, and this is evidently the reason of the absence of any kind of vegetation on its surface, for at one of the railway stations here the use of a little water had caused several plants to grow.

A great scheme for the irrigation of this district had been entertained, but the enormous expense of bringing water from a distant river has prevented the enterprise from being carried out.

In the old time before the introduction of the railway, such an impracticable region, without vegetation or water, must have offered great difficulties for travelling.

After crossing the desert of Islay, the train winds again through the barren mountains, but some patches of vegetation are seen before arriving at the valley on which Arequipa is situated, for a river runs along the side of the railway line at several places.

The train emerges from the inhospitable ranges near the small town of Tingo on the coast side of the valley, and runs over some two or three miles of level country to Arequipa, which lies under the mountains on the inland side.

This valley may be described as an oasis in the desert, and presents a fertile appearance with its growth of maize and other crops, being well watered by a large river.

Arequipa is thus rather picturesquely situated, for although the inland mountains under which it stands are just as barren as the coast range, the height of its elevations, among which is El Misti and other snow-capped peaks, gives an aspect of grandeur to what would otherwise appear mere desolation.

For El Misti is about eighteen thousand feet in height, and is one of the highest summits of the Andes in Peru.

Here was the end of my railway journey, and an Indian porter carried my small trunk to a *casa de huéspedes* in a central part of the town. The railway goes far inland, beyond the huge lake Titicaca, which lies partly in Peruvian and partly in Bolivian territory. This lake lies at the unusual altitude of some twelve thousand feet, and is also interesting from being the classic region where the divine ancestors of the Incas are said to have first appeared.

But I had already strained my resources by breaking the journey in Peru, and it was better to travel a shorter distance and to supplement the sights of the country by personal contact with its people.

A short acquaintance with this district strengthened my first impressions that life in Peru bore in many ways a greater resemblance to Mexican customs than to those of Chile, in spite of its vicinity to the latter country.

Both in Peru and Mexico the backbone of the lower classes in the country parts are Indians or cross-breeds, while the *huaso* of Chile is of



fairly Spanish descent, retrograde if you like, but in the main a white man, and the comparatively few Indians there hardly enter into the commercial life of the country.

The better-class people in both Peru and Mexico, being of purer Spanish descent than the cosmopolitan Chilean, adhere much more closely to Spanish customs, and as a rule it may be said that everything in the two former countries is a mixture of old Spanish and Indian, in proportions that vary according to social status, while in the latter country the north European is freely mixed with the southern, except perhaps in the *huaso* class.

On arriving at any new place there is a tendency to bring the unwary traveller to an expensive hotel, so I was well pleased to be in a *casa de huéspedes* (house of guests), for this truly Spanish term signifies a less pretentious mode of life than in an hotel.

The place where I was brought consisted of a large courtyard which communicated with the main street by means of a narrow passage, in which was situated the caretaker's office.

Around the courtyard was a square of whitewashed one-storeyed buildings. Each tenement consisted of one solidly-built room with a brick floor, no window, and a ponderous door like that of a dungeon, which opened with an equally ponderous key.

Rooms of this kind, although somewhat dismal to live in, are very good for photographic purposes, for there is no window to admit light, practically no furniture to spoil, for everything is summed up in a bed, chair, and washing-stand of the simplest description, and if solutions should be upset the liquid runs harmlessly over the brick floor.

There is also always a tap of water somewhere in the courtyard, so that after nightfall there is less difficulty in developing the day's work in a humble lodging of this kind than there would be in a more expensive place.

The daily cost of a room of this kind was fifty cents (half a dollar) in Peruvian money, which is equivalent to one shilling in English.

No food was supplied by the owner or occupier of the building, so after trying two or three *fondas*, I regularly frequented one where the average cost of a substantial meal was about forty cents, and less of course if only bread and coffee were required.

But although the total expenses of the day, being under two dollars, appeared to be less than in Chile, they were not so in reality, owing to the greater value of the Peruvian dollar.

Arequipa is rather a fine-looking town, without pretensions to much adornment, but built in the old solid Spanish-American style, and quite different to the mushroom wooden townships in southern Chile.

Unfortunately, on the afternoon that I took this photograph, with the river and bridge in the foreground, the snow-capped mountains on the inland side were covered with clouds and do not appear.

One of my chief inducements to visit this place had been to see those curious beasts of burden, the llamas, and their Indian drivers, but I roamed about the town for a day without being able to see any.

Occasionally an Indian might be seen, for a good many of the porters or carriers belonged to this race, but Indians who inhabit a large town are generally of a somewhat degraded type.



I mentioned my surprise at not being able to see any llamas to a lad employed at the *fonda* where I took my meals, whereupon he said he would show me some.

As the lad made rather a mystery about finding these animals, and put me off for one or two days, evidently with the intention of making himself an indispensable person, I mentioned my difficulty to the owner of the *casa de huéspedes*.

He smiled, and informed me that it was quite easy to see the llamas, but that they were never brought into the central parts of the town, and were only driven as far as the first outlying houses.

Here they were generally kept in large yards for a few days, while the Indian drivers sold their produce and bought their supplies, after which the llamas were again packed and began the homeward journey, perhaps hundreds of miles across the inland ranges.

I was thankful to accept the offer to send a boy with me to show me the locality where the Indians and llamas lodged, and told the disappointed lad at the *fonda* that his services were no longer required.

It was only a walk of about a mile to where the rows of houses with their paved streets ran out into the sand of the desert, just under the first slopes of the inland range.

The last house, which was a mere hovel in the sandy waste, was a kind of refreshment place for travellers. Its owner civilly told me that, if I would come early on the following morning, I should be very likely to see what I wanted.

And he was quite right, for after waiting a short time at this place on the next day, a small number of llamas came up, driven by two Indian women, who had come some forty-five miles over the mountains.

They readily allowed themselves and their animals to be photographed for a small consideration, and appeared to be good-humoured healthy women, not bad looking in spite of their somewhat large, aquiline noses.

The language of these people is *quechua* (or *quichua*), the same as that spoken in Peru in the times of the Incas.

This language is still used over an enormous extent of country, for, according to the reports of explorers, it reaches some of the waters of the Amazon, where it becomes mixed with other languages.

I was curious to know what the strange-looking thing was that one of the women carried in her hand, and was told it was a sling, to discharge small stones at the llamas when they loitered on the way.

The peculiar head coverings of these women appear to be made of a kind of cloth, and are called *monteras*.

But this is a Spanish word, and, as in other parts, most of the Indians have some knowledge of this language.

Just as I had got the women and llamas in a well-arranged position for a photograph, a young man who was passing got off his horse and put himself in front of the group.

At the time I was rather annoyed, for Indians and llamas were of more photographic interest than the white residents, and the llamas being of somewhat a wild nature, resented the intrusion of a stranger by turning their heads away.



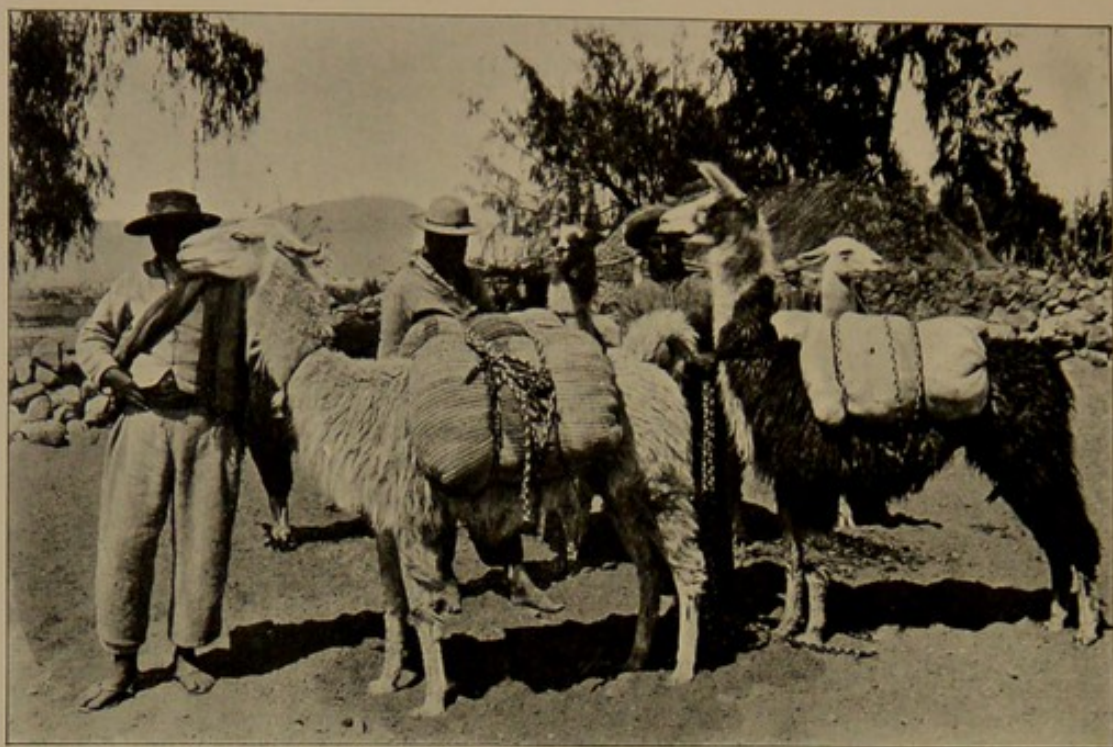


Arequipa—(p. 259).



View at Tingo, near Arequipa—(p. 266).





Peruvian Indians and Llamas—(p. 262)



Bolivian Indians and Llamas—(p. 262).

With snow-capped mountains in the distance.



My annoyance, however, soon passed away, for when the picture was taken the man told me that there were generally plenty of llamas and Indians at his uncle's place quite near, and that I was welcome to come to the house. I accepted the invitation and could not have come to a more suitable place, for Don Francisco Jimenez appeared to make his living by dealing with these Indian *arrieros*.

Near his house there were several yards, with walls built of loose stones, to receive the llamas on their arrival from the mountain ranges.

The loads of these animals generally consist of the wool of the alpaca, which is a kind of llama whose fleece is of more value than his services as a beast of burden.

Don Francisco used to buy this wool, or rather hair, from the Indians, and it was interesting to note how these men, presumed destitute of any education, were well able to understand the weights on the steelyard where their wool was weighed, and used to write down symbols which conveyed to their minds an account of the transaction.

The llama, as is well known, will not carry a load much over a hundred pounds in weight, and resents an excess of burden by lying down and refusing to travel.

But, notwithstanding this, he is invaluable for these desert ranges, for he will live on what another animal could not. They travel hundreds of miles from the interior in large droves, after the manner of a flock of sheep, running on ahead of the Indians who follow on foot, and then stopping to browse on whatever scrubby plants grow at intervals, until their drivers come up, when they have to move on again to avoid having stones slung at them.

Although they must be considered domestic animals, they seem rarely to become as tame as horses or donkeys, for a llama will not generally stand in the open to be caught. He must be wedged in among a lot of other llamas, when the Indian will walk in among them and seize the one he requires, just as a shepherd catches a sheep. When once securely caught they generally submit to be packed or unpacked.

They are not so strongly built as a donkey for carrying loads, although they stand higher than that animal, and their long necks, when lifted, will reach over a man's head.

Their price is cheap, being only about four or five Peruvian dollars (eight or ten shillings).

It is hard to say what other creature the llama resembles most. He is popularly said to be like a small camel, although his mountain-climbing propensities require hooves, and in certain positions he bears out this resemblance. At other times he appears more like a large sheep, goat or deer, and the author of the "Conquest of Peru" insists on calling these animals "Peruvian sheep."

On my return to Mexico I showed one of these photographs to a little uneducated girl, more or less Indian, and she was very puzzled in her attempts to give a name to the animal.

She was at first inclined to think that it might be a kind of goat, but finally deciding that she had never seen anything like it, she exclaimed decidedly "*Burro extranjero*" (foreign donkey).

To Don Francisco I am indebted for the facilities he afforded me



for taking the two following groups of Indians and llamas. He induced the Indians to take these beasts out of the yard and to put them in places suitable for photography.

In the first group the Indians are Peruvians, and the direction of the view is looking over the valley towards the coast or Tingo side. The trees with drooping foliage are here called *molle*, but are of the same kind as the tree in Mexico which is called "*arbol del Perú*" (Peru tree).

In the second group the Indians are Bolivians, and the view is in the opposite direction, towards the snow-capped mountains of the interior which are just visible in the distance.

The Indians of both countries can hardly be distinguished from each other except by a slight difference in costume, which chiefly consists in the trousers of the Bolivians having a slit posteriorly from the knee downwards.

In both pictures the piled-up stones will be noticed, for in this arid place at the edge of the mountain desert, as on the range itself, stones and sand are the chief products.

Don Francisco told me that a man with a capital of three thousand pounds could do good business here, in buying alpaca wool, but, at this time I did not possess three thousand pence, so I was unable to profit by the information.

As far as climate is concerned Arequipa would not be a bad place to live in. Although well within the tropics, its elevation of about seven thousand feet and its dry atmosphere enable people of European race to take exercise without feeling that exhaustion which generally ensues on doing so in hot and moist climates.

I now turned my attention to procuring a photograph of Indians, for, when taking the llamas in the glare of the sun, it was impossible to do justice to the faces of the people.

The news seemed to have got about in this quarter that I was taking likenesses of Indians and llamas, for a man who kept a large tavern informed me that there were always plenty of both at his place.

I did not require any more llamas, but I picked out from five to seven good types of Bolivian Indians. Through an unfortunate piece of carelessness the photograph turned out a failure, for I took two pictures on the same plate.

On returning to the place to take the Indians a second time, I found that nearly all the Bolivians were gone, and I was obliged to make up the required number with Peruvian Indians.

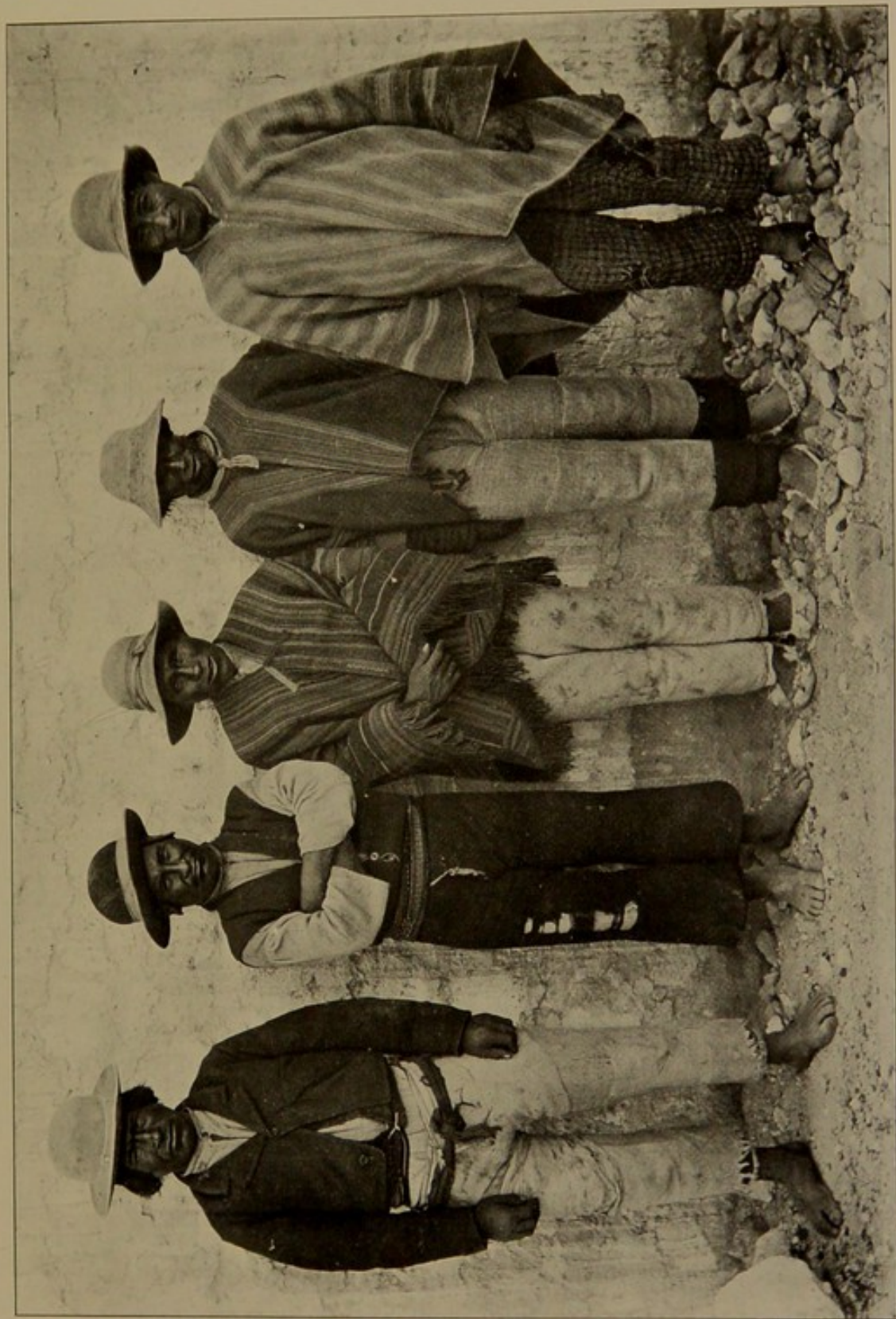
Under equal conditions there was no reason why a Peruvian should not have been as good a type as a Bolivian, but here the conditions were not equal.

For the Bolivians were hardy countrymen, who were accustomed to travel the mountains in their journeys to and from Peru, while some of the Peruvians were degraded town Indians who showed a fondness for alcohol on their faces.

The Bolivians are placed at one end of the group, and the Peruvians at the other end, and it will be seen that the two Bolivians to the left have better faces than the three men to the right, all of whom were said to be Peruvians.

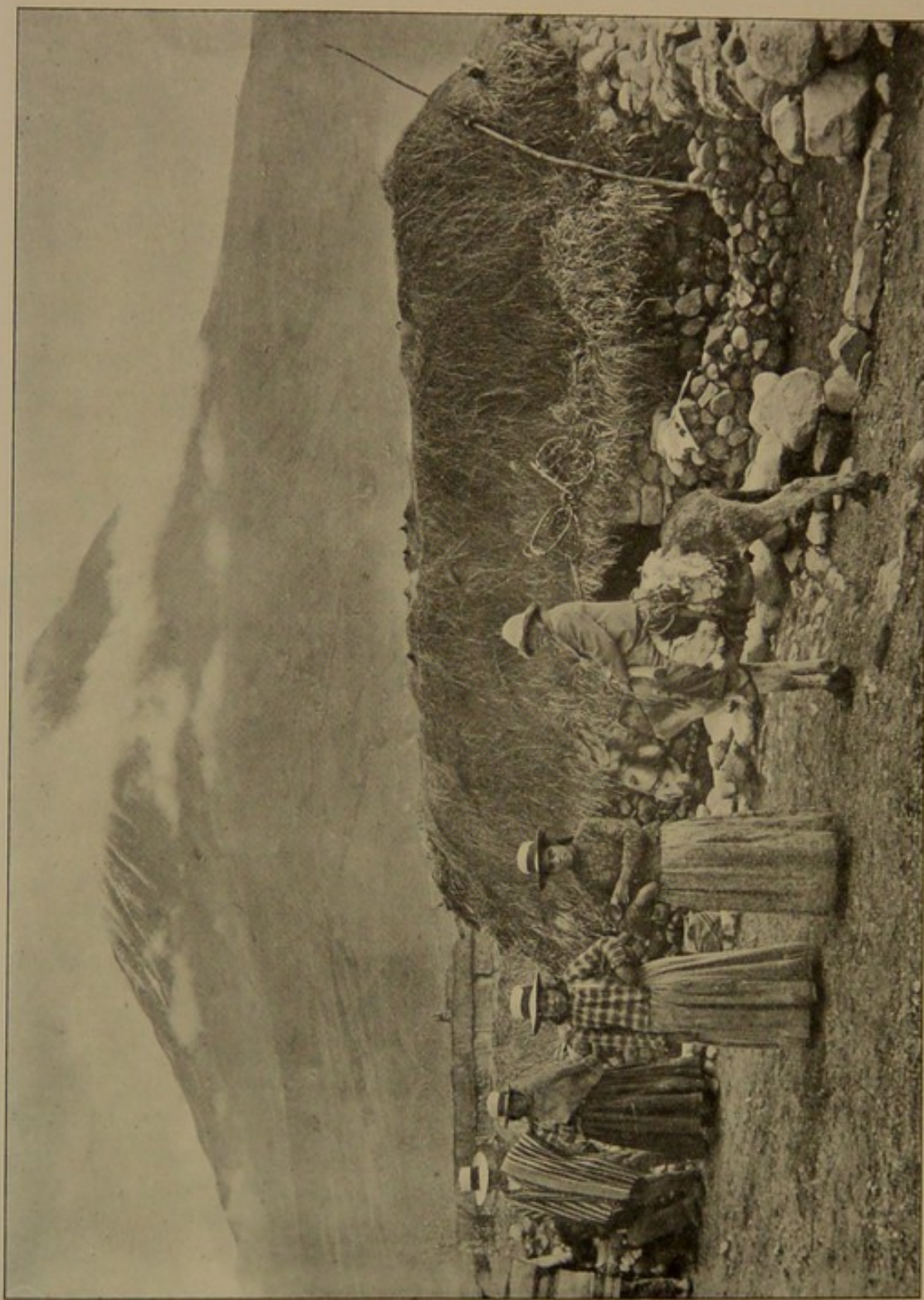
When the Indians received a small remuneration for their trouble,





Two Bolivian and three Peruvian Indians—(p. 262).





Cachamarca and Desert Slopes of the Volcano El Misti—(p. 264).



it was rather ominous to hear the tavern keeper tell them that the money was given to spend in drink.

Up to the present I had never been far outside the town, and I now wished to spend a night in some mountain village, in order to make a closer acquaintance with the desert ranges and the country people.

I asked Don Francisco Jimenez to advise me about a suitable place, and it was decided that I should go to a village of *cholos* called Cachamarca, about fifteen miles inland from Arequipa, under the spurs of El Misti.

I would have preferred a village of Indians, but none lived near enough, so I had to be content with cross-breds.

The journey necessitated hiring a horse, for few except the natives would care to walk over the mountain desert, where the foot sinks continually in the loose sand, and occasionally strikes a projecting rock.

A man who hired out horses asked eight dollars for the journey, but, as I was leaving his premises, he called out that five dollars was his "last word."

Even this was more than I could well afford, so I returned rather disconsolately to the house of Don Francisco and said that the horse master required too much.

"Would you pay two dollars for a horse?" my friend asked.

"Certainly," I replied, and he kindly promised to get me one at this price.

So next morning the horse was brought to the house of Don Francisco shortly after my arrival there. He was not a very grand mount, but was good enough for a ride of only fifteen miles.

I was in rather heavy travelling order, for I had the camera over my shoulders, the tripod in my hands, and a few necessities in front of the saddle, amongst which was some bread to eat, for I was assured there would be no civilized food in the village, and was advised to carry a bottle of ready-made coffee with me. But this would have increased my encumbrances to a great extent, so I did not take it, being prepared to put up with bread and water until my return on the following day.

Fortunately another man was riding in the same direction for the greater part of the distance, else I might very easily have taken a wrong track.

There was a small amount of fairly level desert just outside the town, but the ascent to the mountains began soon.

The road merely consisted of the path worn by animals, chiefly llamas, in the desert, and the slopes over which we travelled consisted of sand and rocks in varying proportions.

At intervals were small dry bushes, about one or two feet high, which seemed to be the principal food of the travelling llamas.

There was always a likelihood of a fall, for every now and then a large stone projected above the level of the sand, and a careless or tired horse had every facility for stumbling.

Everywhere was a scene of desolation, but the vastness of the scale and the snow-peaked mountains imparted sublimity to it.

When we had travelled the greater part of the journey, my



companion turned to the right, and enjoined me to follow the track, which would bring me to Cachamarca.

In places it was none too easy to keep the path, for the sand on either side was just as bare, only not so much kicked up by the hoofs of beasts of burden.

Not a drop of water was to be seen anywhere, except a little moisture in one or two hollow stones after a recent rainfall, for the desert sand could absorb more water than is ever likely to fall here.

After travelling the last few miles by myself I became rather anxious, having been now five hours on the road, and, even making allowances for a desert path and an indifferent horse, a journey of fifteen miles ought to have been finished.

Just then the track ran into a small river, and, on looking up on the opposite side, I saw some huts on a small hill, and guessed that this must be Cachamarca.

On crossing the river and ascending the pathway up the hill, I arrived at the hamlet, which, in the combined misery of its dwellings and desolation of its surroundings, could hardly be beaten by the civilized squalor of the slum of a large city.

There were a few outlying huts, but the only street, if street it could be called, was a stony gangway so narrow that, with outstretched arms, one could almost span the distance between the miserable hovels on either side.

The picture will tell its tale more eloquently than words, and it will be enough to describe these buildings as walls of loose stones with earthen floors and coarse thatch roofs.

As it was not very late in the afternoon most of the men were presumedly working at some out-of-door employment, for I rode slowly through the narrow pathway between the huts without seeing anybody except children and one or two women.

In these semi-civilized places it is generally more prudent to speak to a man in the first instance, in case the women or children should become alarmed at being addressed by a stranger, so I rode right on until I reached one of the last buildings. Here I found a man whom I asked if I could obtain shelter for the night.

I was agreeably surprised by his civility. He made me welcome in his hut, which was rather better than the average, and, leading my horse into one of the universal stone-walled yards in these parts, fetched an armful of green fodder which had been cultivated on the stony hillside near the settlement.

A meal was got ready for me by his wife and daughter. This repast consisted of a kind of soup, here called *chupe* (from the Spanish word *chupar*, to suck), which I supplemented with my bread. Some coffee was also got for me, but my host had some difficulty in procuring sugar, which eventually came from a neighbouring house.

I explained that I wanted to take a photograph of the vicinity, but as the afternoon was now advanced and the weather unpropitious, it was decided to leave this until the morning.

The man himself appeared to be of white descent, but his wife showed unmistakable signs of native blood, although she may not have been a pure-bred Indian.

When nightfall came on, the most uncomfortable part of the proceedings began.



All the inmates of the hut came inside before the door was shut. In a corner of the only room was a raised platform on which my host and his wife slept.

There were some bags of provisions at one end of the hut, and it is probable that the daughter slept among these, for she disappeared from view.

One or two men, besides myself, slept on the earthen floor in the middle of the building, and a clean sheepskin was spread for each.

It could hardly have been seven in the evening when my host lit a small candle and exclaimed, "*Ave Maria purissima*," extinguishing the light immediately afterwards. This was the evening orison, and we had from ten to eleven hours on the ground before the welcome daylight released us from our hard couches.

The morning broke fair and there was not a cloud upon the peak of El Misti, which was fortunate, for the view would have been incomplete without so prominent a feature in the landscape.

No one seemed to want to wash, so I did not ask for any water, for it had all to be carried up the hillside from the river.

After breakfast I began to look out for a suitable place for taking a photograph.

I would have liked to have included the hut where I had slept, but this was impossible without sacrificing the distant view. For the lane was so narrow that in most places it was impossible to get back far enough.

Eventually a place was found that offered a little more room for taking a typical hut and the mountain in the distance.

At sunrise there was not a cloud on El Misti. When I took the view towards eight in the morning, there were a few small clouds near the summit, and some three hours later, when I was half-way back to Arequipa, the whole of the upper part of the mountain was hidden.

From this direction there appears to be only a small quantity of snow on El Misti, but from Arequipa a much larger amount is seen.

The picture could hardly be surpassed as a type of desolation.

By rights my host and his wife ought to have been in a more conspicuous place, but the donkey took up a good deal of room, and I could not help placing the good-looking *cholo* girl in the centre.

The girl next to her is the daughter of my entertainer, and outside her are the father and mother.

It will be noticed that the females of the lower classes in Peru wear the same kind of hat as the men. It is low crowned, but of a much finer material than the kind worn in Chile, being in fact what we generally term a Panama hat.

There was now nothing more to detain me. I asked the friendly Peruvian how much I owed him. He only wanted forty cents, but I gave him a dollar, for he had done his best with the few things at his disposal.

As in most other parts of Spanish-America, the language spoken was fairly pure, and was much easier to understand than some of the dialects in Spain.

The return to Arequipa offered no novelties, and on arrival there the luxuries of a wash and a good meal awaited me, together with the feeling of satisfaction that I had not been lost in the desert.



There were still two or three days left before it was time to return to Mollendo, so I took a walk of some two or three miles across the valley to Tingo.

This little settlement, situated just outside the coast mountains, presents a neat and rather prepossessing appearance. It seems to be used as a bathing and pleasure resort.

The ground here also is rocky and poor, but there is plenty of water, and art has done a good deal to assist nature.

The view taken here is intended to depict the peculiar kind of roof that is frequently seen in this part. It is in fact a sloping wall on the top of the house.

Among the people on the other side of the small river will be noticed a group of three ladies.

The two younger ones are very correctly dressed after the manner of stylish people in central Europe, but the elder one wears the *manto*, which is used here in the same manner as in Chile.

Even in this southern part of Peru the Spanish *toca* (generally known to foreigners as the *mantilla*) is occasionally seen, while these graceful head-dresses of lace are quite common further north in Lima, thus making the capital appear one of the most Spanish places in Spanish-America.

On my last day in Arequipa, while I was strolling through the central part of the town which I had not much frequented, some one called me by name from the balcony of an hotel. It was the young Englishman who had been in the Kosmos steamer with me, and whom I had envied in having a commercial education which allows its possessor to make a living in any country, without the legal restrictions which are imposed on foreigners who wish to follow their professions.

It was a most unusual thing to see a fellow-passenger again after an interval of nine months, and I was glad to hear that he had been doing well.

On the next morning the train took me back to Mollendo.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

MOLLENDO TO PANAMA, COLON, JAMAICA AND  
VERACRUZ.

THE steamer in which I took my passage from Mollendo was bound for Panama, and, like most of those on this coast, only carried first-class and deck passengers.

The greater part of the sea journey still lay before me, and I only took my ticket as far as Guayaquil, in the hope of being able to see something of this part of Ecuador, which had been described as an interesting place.

The idea of having to put up with the unmentionable discomforts of a deck passage for so long a period troubled me so much that I determined to try if it were not possible to arrange with some petty officer or employee for a sleeping-place in some cabin.

Before nightfall I mentioned my requirement to some one who looked like a steward, and he told me that he could settle the matter for me.

Accordingly we descended into the lower depths of the steamer, where he showed me a large sleeping-place, with rows of coarse mattresses. But this would have been almost as public as the deck, besides having the disadvantage of that repugnant atmosphere which is generally found in ill-ventilated places near the bottom of the ship, so I told my guide that it would not suit, and returned to the upper regions where the air at least was pure.

Towards dusk I was standing somewhat disconsolately on the deck when an old man made some commonplace remark in Spanish about the weather.

He was not dressed like a sailor or a steward, but still appeared to belong to the steamer in some capacity, and he looked so like an English-speaking person that I replied in that language and found that I had not been mistaken.

After a few more words I told him of my difficulty and asked if he knew of any one who would share his cabin with me for the rest of the voyage.

"You have just come to the right mark," he replied; "come and see mine."

I accompanied him to where it was situated, and found that it was a most desirable place, if only I could arrange for moderate terms. The little cabin had only one berth and a sofa, and was situated on a good part of the deck, close to the officers' quarters.

The luxury of having a comparatively comfortable sleeping-place only cost me one pound, and never was money laid out to better advantage.



My companion, Charley the watchman, was on duty every night, and had the daytime for rest. His work had nothing to do with the navigation of the vessel, but he was employed to keep a look-out on the people during the night time, so that thefts of the kind mentioned in my journey to southern Chile might not be committed.

When Charley gave me the choice whether I would sleep in the berth or on the sofa, I decided to take the latter, for he had earned a good rest when he came off duty at daylight, and I would not have liked either to occupy his usual bed, or to get up so early to make room for him. But by keeping to the sofa I was independent of his hours.

One of Charley's night watch stories remains impressed on my memory. A man had followed another from Chile for the purpose of relieving him of a considerable sum of money which he carried on his person.

The man with the money made known his suspicions in time, and the other one was handed over to the Peruvian authorities.

Although no robbery had as yet been committed, the suspected man was known to be a bad character, and, when the Peruvians found that he was a Chilean into the bargain, they combined prevention of crime with revenge on a national enemy by giving him several months in prison.

I was now travelling in comparative comfort, for I had a couch at night, a place for resting when I was tired of the deck, and the luxury of a daily wash.

Charley also procured me some bread and soup every evening and morning before and after his night watch, and I had the use of a cup and plate in his cabin, so that I could take these on deck when food was handed round to the passengers, and thus eat in comfort.

In a few days' time we arrived at Callao, the port of Lima. It may be remembered that when I reached this port on my way to Chile, I dared not spend the small amount that it required to take me by train to the capital.

I had little enough to spare now, but as the distance between these places is only seven miles, I treated myself to a view of Lima during the few hours that we remained in port.

The train ascends by an almost imperceptible grade over open country of a poor description.

Lima presents rather a pleasing appearance, and is built after the old-fashioned Spanish-American style, but is rather small for a capital.

Not far beyond, on the inland side, is a forbidding-looking range, and I have been told that the desert here extends a long way into the interior.

A deck passenger's pastime is necessarily inexpensive. I treated myself to a good meal at a restaurant, walked about the rectangular streets, and admired the pretty lace head-coverings of the better dressed females, who here adopt this Spanish costume to a greater extent than is usual in Spanish-America.

Most travellers unite in paying a tribute to the type of beauty here, and I am inclined to think that it is well deserved, although my time was too short to form an opinion.



While I was in the *plaza*, the stall of a stamp dealer attracted my attention, and I stopped to make a little purchase.

A young man, not so badly dressed, remained just behind me, and could hardly be induced to move on, in spite of the urgent but polite requests of the stamp dealer.

"What did he want to do?" I asked.

"To rob," replied the stamp dealer. But I never asked which of us was the intended victim. Perhaps it was a double objective.

As we neared the northern frontier of Peru, near the confines of Ecuador, the long desert line which had continued almost from Valparaiso began to break. Not that the low-lying coast was picturesque, but it was pleasant to see verdure again.

Our next port of call was to have been Guayaquil, but at the last Peruvian port we were informed that Guayaquil was infected with yellow fever, and that the steamer was not going to stop there, but would go on to Panama without touching at any intermediate port.

This was most unwelcome news for several of the deck passengers, including myself, who had wished to land at the infected place.

Most of these got out at the last Peruvian port, intending to make their way on from there as best they could, although it was currently stated that troops were stationed along the frontier to prevent people from passing.

These reports made the expedition appear too difficult for one who was barely able to manage it even under favourable circumstances, and I told Charley that I should have to give up the project and would go on to Panama.

He looked at me steadily and simply said, "I think you are a wise man."

For Charley had an idea that most of the poorer passengers were making useless voyages, and one day, pointing to the crowds of "deckers," he said to me, "Look at all those people, travelling to find a place where they can get money without working for it." And there was some truth in the remark.

We arrived at Panama about twelve days after leaving Mollendo, and, thanks to the friendly shelter of the little cabin, I was still in good condition, instead of being in a miserable and unkempt state.

These were stirring times in the isthmus, although everything was kept quiet by the overwhelming display of American force.

The independence of the new Republic had been declared only a few months previously, and shortly afterwards the United States acquired the transfer of all rights belonging to the French Canal Company.

As we stood out at sea awaiting the tender that was to bring us to shore, six American warships were anchored within sight, and three more were subsequently seen on the Atlantic side, off Colon.

In historical events right and wrong can be transposed with more facility than in private affairs, and in the present instance the situation might be summed up with apparent truth from the following opposed points of view:—

"We congratulate the Republic of Panama at having achieved her independence. The power of the United States will ever be exercised on the side of freedom, and under her fostering protection



our young sister will have the desired opportunity for working out her destiny under the hand of Providence."

"The revolution in Panama, fomented by the United States, will probably result in the loss of a most valuable part of our territory. The number of traitors to their fatherland is small, and could easily be overcome by our troops, but we cannot oppose the powerful foreigner, who intends to profit by our loss."

This would be the approximate epitome of recent events in American and Colombian newspapers respectively, and the reader can choose the one he likes best.

If some of the Great Powers had approached the Colombian Government with a project for making an international canal, a revolution might have been avoided, for a joint control would have excited less jealousy, to say nothing of the advantage to the world at large that an all-important waterway between two oceans should not pass into the exclusive power of one nation.

It is probable that there are other routes available for making a second canal, and even now such a scheme might repay the Powers in question, by preventing abuses which are likely to ensue from private ownership of the only waterway.

But while European Powers are disputing with each other about trivial matters, they allow the predominant Power in America to gain enormous advantages over them all.

For many years the United States had been making overtures for a canal concession, and as the Colombians would not agree to the terms offered, and their refusal could not well be made a cause for war, the revolution was a most timely agent in shifting the ownership of the desired territory.

This was now the second time that I had made my appearance in a country just after its occupation by the Americans, for the republics of Cuba and Panama may be taken at their true value, only on the former occasion, more than four years previously, the Army had been in evidence, and now it was the Navy.

At the time of landing I made the acquaintance of two young fellows who had been fellow-passengers in the steamer. They had been employed on a surveying expedition in the interior of South America, and were on their way back from Peru to the United States.

One was an Englishman and the other was a German, and, like myself, they appeared short of money, for one of them at least had been a deck passenger.

It was amusing to see how the smarter German patronized his companion, whom he occasionally called "fat-head," and translated for his benefit from Spanish into English whatever information about the journey it was desirable that he should know.

Our luggage was put on a cart, and had to be conveyed some distance to the railway station, which lay on the inland extremity of the town, for we were all going to Colon.

The town of Panama is probably changing its former aspect, to keep pace with the vast enterprise connected with it, but only a few years ago it presented the appearance of an old-fashioned town. Spanish was still the principal language of the place, and some of the people showed traces of Indian descent.



We arrived at the railway station some time before the departure of the train, and spent part of the interval in having a meal, which, however simple, was welcome, as a change from the fare of a decker.

When we went to take our tickets, we had a slight argument about the class in which we were going to travel, for there was both a first and a second class.

My companions, imbued with American ideas, had heard that it was not the correct thing here to travel in the second class, which was largely used by coloured people and by Spanish-speaking natives.

I replied that it was preposterous that people whose limited means had obliged them to take a deck passage by sea should not be able to travel in the second class on land. Finally my arguments prevailed and we all went in the second class.

On buying our tickets we were introduced to an ingenious device for making a harvest out of the unfortunate travellers.

A ticket cost about fourteen shillings in English money. On presenting an English sovereign, the ticket-seller replied that he did not give change, and referred the traveller to a money-changer in the building.

On receiving the change in Colombian money, which appeared to be still the currency of the country, it was found that somewhat less than ten dollars were given as an equivalent for twenty shillings.

This was rating the tin-looking Colombian dollar, which contains much base alloy, at a higher value than the good silver of Peru and Mexico. What its true value was will be related in due time.

We now went to have our luggage weighed, a proceeding which made me anxious, for my medical books weighed heavily.

When the weight of my effects was recorded, the American official briefly said, "Fifteen gold."

I was so taken aback that I did not know what to say or to do. Fifteen pounds for luggage when the passenger's ticket only cost fourteen shillings!

I had nothing approaching that amount, and the only thing feasible seemed to be to throw away everything heavy and to go on with a few light necessities.

Presently it struck me that perhaps the gold did not mean sovereigns. "Yes," said the German, who was more accustomed to American ways than myself; "it means dollars, not pounds."

This was a relief, for it reduced the charge to a little over three pounds, but even so it made a great inroad upon my slender funds.

We now took our seats in the second-class carriage. The company was certainly very mixed, with coloured people, Spanish-speaking natives and a few Asiatics. Most, but not all, of the coloured people were English-speaking, for one or two of the women, by the jaunty arrangement of the kerchief on their heads, showed that they came from West Indian islands where French is spoken.

Presently an official came round with a large book in which every passenger was expected to write his name.

I remarked to the official that it was sufficient to have paid our passage and that our names were no affair of the company. "It is the custom of the country," he replied.

The ready-witted German suggested that I might assume a Chinese



name for the occasion, but I was in no mood for a pleasantry that might have got me into trouble.

The distance between Panama and Colon is some forty miles, and the route lay over country that could hardly be called pretty.

In places the line ran between small hills, and there was tropical vegetation of a kind, but it was nearly all of a stunted description.

Most of the stations were mere shanties, and at some of these places the khaki uniform of an American might be seen.

At length the slow moving train arrived at Colon, which is unlike Panama in consisting almost entirely of wooden houses, although many of these could not be called shanties, being large buildings of several storeys in height.

Even at this period, before the Americans had resumed the work of the canal, there were many more coloured West Indian people here than on the other side of the isthmus.

One of these men offered to take me to an hotel.

"How much is the cost by the day?" I inquired.

"Three dollars," was the answer.

This seemed very dear, and I told the man that I should have to look for a place that only required two dollars.

"They will take you at two dollars," he replied, and his words proved true. For on arriving at the large wooden building I told the hotel-keeper that, if they could not receive me for a daily payment of two dollars, I should have to go elsewhere, and was told that I might remain.

The term "dollar" in a Spanish-American place that is under the influence of the United States is a rather vague term unless there is some further specification. For the dollar of the country is frequently worth less than half of the American dollar.

So to save misunderstanding the word "gold" is frequently added, and this means that the full value of the American dollar is to be charged.

Colon has improved wonderfully during the last few years. Lying on flat country in a climate which has a heavy rainfall, its conditions were so insanitary that the United States Government has been obliged to spend much money in draining off the stagnant water, and this has greatly reduced the mortality.

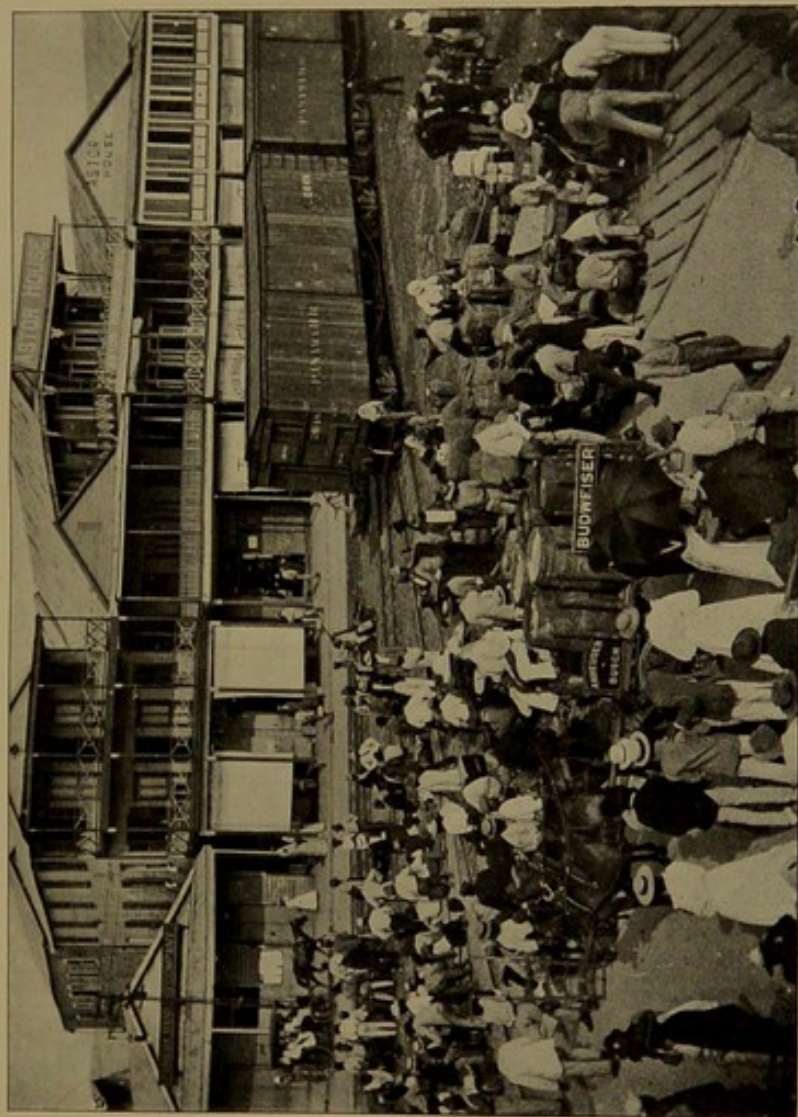
At this period the improvements had hardly been begun, and as it was in the month of April, when the tropical rain was continually falling, it required a good deal of dexterity to walk about the town without getting one's feet wet.

The main street, which had the unfenced railway running through it, was only very muddy, but in the side lanes the frogs croaked in their primitive swamps, and the sluggishly flowing water of a large uncovered drain boded ill for health or comfort.

The Spanish and English languages ran side by side all along the isthmus; but, if the former was in the ascendant at Panama, English was paramount in Colon, from the large number of West Indians there.

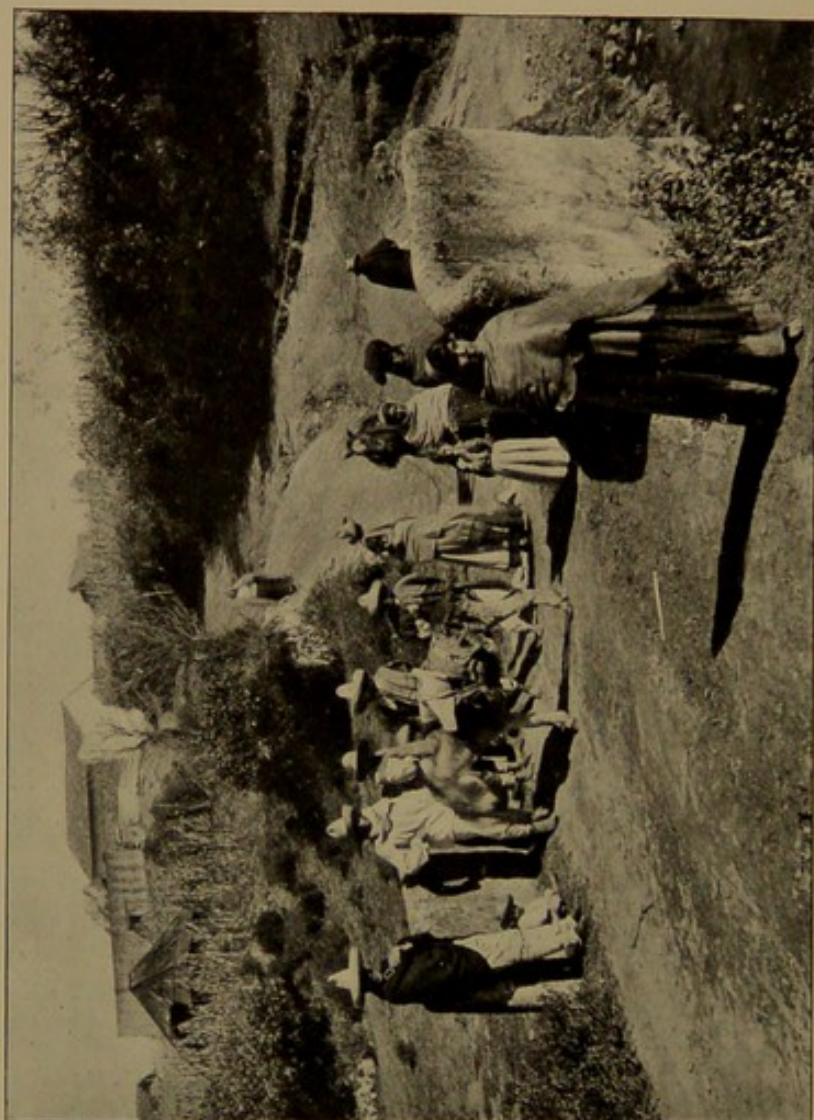
Still, as it was supposed to be a Spanish-American republic, the names of the streets were written in Spanish, although one of them, "*Calle Bottle Alley*," was certainly very mixed.





Main Street in Colon—(p. 273).





In the Suburbs of Altotonga—(p. 283).  
(The hut of Concha Garcia is partly concealed by the long stalks.)



Colon appeared then, and probably is now, a good place to live out of, unless you are paid at a very high rate for remaining there, for the bare necessities of life are at famine prices, and, unless your income is proportionately large, your capital soon becomes exhausted.

The accompanying photograph of the main street was taken some three years subsequently, when the Canal work had been begun and the place was already flooded with West Indians.

Many of these people pass to and fro between their several islands and the isthmus of Panama, earning on the Canal works far more than they could obtain at home, and returning at intervals to their native countries.

In the picture a large number of them are awaiting the steamer which is going to take them home.

The coloured labourers live comparatively inexpensively in workmen's dwellings outside the town, but a man well acquainted with Colon told me that in a middle-class hotel like "Astor House," which appears in the background of the view, the daily cost of living would be three dollars (gold) and that some hotels charged up to five dollars.

On the morning after my arrival in Colon I went to a shipping office and was fortunate in finding that a steamer of the Leyland line would be leaving for Veracruz in about two days' time.

My journey and my money were both coming to an end. I had one of Coutts and Company's circular notes for five pounds left. These notes are invaluable for an unknown stranger, for this house has correspondents in most places of importance all over the world, and the money can be cashed at sight.

But Colon had only lately become an important place, and there was no corresponding firm to receive the note. The price of a deck passage to Veracruz was some four or five pounds, and I had not enough gold to pay for the ticket.

The employee at the shipping office quite understood the difficulty of cashing bills in the undeveloped state of Colon, and took what gold I had to spare, giving me the ticket in return, and writing on it that the balance of the money (about one pound) was to be paid at the end of the voyage.

I was thankful to have been saved from what might have been a disastrous impediment to finishing my journey, and awaited the arrival of the steamer in a more tranquil frame of mind.

In my voyage from Mollendo to Panama I had become so impressed with the desirability of making some arrangement about sharing a cabin that, when the steamer came in port, I made a tentative visit on board for this purpose.

It need hardly be said that in an errand of this kind one does not apply to a superior officer.

I made my inquiry among the more humble officials of the steamer, and presently the boatswain came to interview me. We came to terms without much difficulty, and with the promise of a berth in his cabin the last difficulty about my voyage was ended.

At the time of buying my ticket I heard with surprise that the steamer was going to call at Kingston in Jamaica, on the way to Veracruz, and I did not particularly relish the idea, for although it



would give me an opportunity for seeing something new, it would also mean a delay, and a delay meant an expense.

I had tried to keep one golden sovereign for emergencies that required ready money, but through thoughtlessly making one or two little purchases just before leaving Colon my change ran short and I was obliged to part with my last piece of gold, and had now in its place some seventeen or eighteen Colombian half-dollars in a bag.

So, as I went on board, my only monetary assets were a five-pound circular note of Coutts and Company's, which only represented a balance of some three pounds, as the rest was owed on the ticket and the berth, and a bag of tin-looking Colombian money, which might truly be represented by the letter X, for it was an unknown quantity.

It is only about two days steam from Colon to Jamaica, and for the first day the wet season of the port of departure pursued us.

The steamer had an iron-plated deck, which was most objectionable for those unfortunate "deckers" who carried no chairs with them, for the rusty metal damages your clothes, making it almost impossible to sit down.

A journey of this kind would have been unendurable for a white man a few years later, when swarms of coloured Jamaicans frequented the steamers of this line, but as the Canal work had not yet begun there were not many deck passengers.

The cabin of the boatswain was situated in the forecabin and contained two berths, the second one being that of the carpenter. The boatswain had evidently come to an arrangement with his companion, for the latter vacated his berth in my favour and slept in a hammock which was slung just outside the cabin.

I was really better off now than in the watchman's cabin on the other side of the Continent, for when meals were brought to the others I shared their food, which was decently served on plates, instead of having to pick up something out of a bucket, as on the Pacific side.

The boatswain seemed rather impressed with my arrangement for the berth and the facility for making myself at home, for he remarked, "I suppose you are always travelling?"

Among the few deck passengers there were two of a better class with whom I frequently spoke.

One was an American builder from San Francisco. He was taking a holiday in this extraordinary manner in order to see as much as possible for his money. Most people would prefer to see less and to travel in comfort.

The other man was an interesting type of a Peruvian, who showed marked signs of Indian blood.

Perhaps the more docile nature of the Peruvian renders him more susceptible to civilization than the Aztec, at any rate this was the first time that I had been thrown into close contact with an educated man whose features showed such signs of native ancestry.

He was probably of mixed descent, but his swarthy complexion, piercing black eyes and prominent nose reminded me of the Indians in Arequipa.

At any rate, there was no doubt about his education. He had studied for the priesthood, but, feeling that he was not suited for the



profession, he had then become a student of medicine, and finally, giving up the idea of becoming a doctor, he was now about to become a schoolmaster.

Although now on his way to Mexico, he was eventually going to the United States to perfect himself in the English language, in which he was already fairly proficient.

Kingston Harbour hardly merits any pronounced comment of praise. It is certainly large, being formed by a projecting strip of low-lying land which stretches into the sea and runs almost parallel with the coast.

The high land at the back increases the panoramic effect, and perhaps some tourists might go into raptures over the view, until they have seen the harbours of some other West Indian islands, which are far more pretty.

Only a few general remarks will be made about the town itself, for Jamaica will be more thoroughly described in a subsequent volume ; and, as Kingston was more or less destroyed by earthquake within three years of this my first visit, the new town might not altogether correspond to its former landmarks.

When we came alongside of the wharf we heard that the steamer was going to remain in port for at least a whole day, so the Peruvian and myself went on shore together.

There was of course a mercantile house where a note of Coutts and Company's could be cashed, but we landed late in the afternoon, and all banking places were already closed.

Thus I could not obtain any English money, which is of course the currency of these islands, until the next day.

This was most unfortunate, for a deck passenger has always a craving for a meal on shore, and the food must be very bad if it is not superior to what he has been given at sea.

I took a few of my "tin" Colombian half-dollars with me in the hope of getting food with them, but knew it would be a doubtful matter.

The Peruvian, like myself, had no English money, but he had provided himself with some Mexican dollars.

So before we rendered ourselves liable for any debt, we entered a store to find out if our money would be accepted as payment.

The owner or manager was an intelligent coloured man.

He scrutinized my "tin" money and shook his head, declaring that he would not like to negotiate it. But he was quite prepared to take my companion's Mexican dollars, although naturally a little under their full value of two shillings each.

The Peruvian disposed of a few of these, receiving English silver in their place, and suggested that we should now have some food, but I told him that he might eat if he liked, but that I should have to wait until next day, as my Colombian money had been refused. My companion, however, insisted that we should have a meal together, saying that he had enough change for both of us ; and, as I should be able to repay him next day, I willingly consented.

Afterwards we strolled about until ten at night, when we returned to our inexpensive lodging, the steamer.

On the next day we resumed our acquaintance with the land.



One could not be accused of giving Kingston excessive praise by saying that it seemed very nice compared with Colon, which latter place would be hard to beat as an undesirable resort.

For, although Kingston was not a town of imposing buildings, it had a comfortable and old-established appearance, and the prices for food and other necessities were moderate.

West Indian people, of all shades of colour, are, taking them all round, cheery and good humoured in their manner; and, compared with most places on the American continent, these islands have a somewhat joyous aspect, in spite of the poverty of the lower-class people.

Many reasons contribute to this—the beauty of the scenery in many places, the mildness of the climate where there is no real winter, the abundance of tropical fruit in all seasons, but above all the light-hearted disposition of the negro, who exceeds the white population in such large proportions that he imparts his own atmosphere to the surroundings, and even the stiffest English manners have to unbend somewhat.

This numerical superiority does not produce the same effect at Colon, because the black man is here under abnormal conditions. He is doing stress work for high wages, and when he earns enough he leaves and enjoys himself elsewhere.

My first business on shore was to change my circular note, so as to be in possession of some sterling coinage.

I now made a more formal attempt to change my Colombian half-dollars, for now that the money changers' offices were open, there was a better likelihood of being able to do so than in a store.

One of these houses offered to take the money at the rate of one shilling for each dollar, a little less than half the supposed value in Panama.

This was such a disastrous rate of change that I only parted with a few, determining to try if I could not dispose of the rest to better advantage in Mexico, where, as a country whose monetary system was on the same basis, silver might perhaps be changed on better terms than in a place where the standard was gold.

The streets and houses in old Kingston were very unequal, the more central parts being solidly built, but outside the business area wooden houses prevailed.

Fine buildings, however, are only a small factor in the desirability of a place to live in, and the genial character of the surroundings impressed me so much that the thought entered my mind for the first time that I might improve my condition by remaining in an island where there were no morose Indians to attack me, and no vexatious foreign restrictions.

The idea grew on me so much that I found my way to the Medical Council Office in East Street, and, presenting myself as a duly qualified medical man, asked if there were any parts of the island where there was an opening.

The official received me courteously, and, without expressing any very decided opinion, pointed out one or two places on the map where there might possibly be room for a new man.

With reluctance, however, I gave up the project, for my capital of



three pounds was little enough to start in practice in a place where my return would be welcomed, and the risk would have been too great where I was unknown.

The young Peruvian accompanied me throughout the day, for although he knew something of the English language, he did not like to trust to his powers of speaking to the Jamaicans.

He had noticed that on one or two occasions I had a difficulty in understanding some of the coloured people, and naturally thought that, if this were the case with me, his own chances would have been much less.

The English spoken in Jamaica and in other British islands is generally good, and easier to understand than in some country parts in England. But occasionally one comes across an uneducated negro from the inland, and some of these people have a peculiar accent which makes it almost impossible to understand them the first time they speak, although by frequent repetitions their meaning can at length be ascertained.

This is perhaps more frequently the case in Jamaica than in the other islands, for, being larger, there are a considerable number of negroes who live in the back country and do not mix with white people, and they thus develop a rather extraordinary pronunciation.

Of course, some of the English islands are French-speaking, although their *patois* is so peculiar that a Frenchman would often have difficulty in understanding the dialect, but many of these people know some English as well, which they often talk with a not ungraceful foreign accent.

When Kingston was subsequently destroyed by the earthquake and the fire which immediately followed it, the line of devastation was roughly marked by the park at the upper end of King Street.

Below the park, stretching down to the sea front for about half a mile, was the business area. Here the houses were largely built of brick, and were in close proximity to each other, so that the destruction of the one involved the others.

But on the inland side of the park there were far more wooden houses, with large intervals between them, and this part was only damaged in places, for wood stood the shock better than brick or stone.

This park is very nicely kept, and the foliage of its graceful palm trees is sure to attract the visitor.

We were near here when the tram came up, and went in it to the end of the line at Constant Spring, some six or seven miles inland.

The road is beautifully level, the slight ascent being almost imperceptible to the eye, and the greater part of this distance is interspersed with suburban villas, generally made of wood, but appearing to great advantage in their own grounds, with tropical foliage around them.

Constant Spring itself is a fashionable hotel and a favourite resort of the richer people. Standing at the foot of the hills, at an elevation of only some six hundred feet, the air is distinctly cooler here than in the hot and dusty town.

Our American fellow-passenger who made this same journey, although not with us, was loud in praise of this excellent electric tram



service, and of the goodness of the road, saying that they had nothing like it in San Francisco.

On the following morning our steamer left for Veracruz, and thanks to having changed my last note in Jamaica, I was able to settle at once for the balance of the ticket money, and for the use of the cabin.

The voyage lasted three days, and on arriving at Veracruz I went to the same hotel where I had put up before, for although this place was anything but clean and tidy, the daily charge of two dollars (Mexican) is considered cheap in this hot and expensive seaport.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## THE RETURN TO ALTOTONGA.

THE return to Mexico had taken place under anything but happy circumstances. There were no bright hopes to cheer the disillusioned traveller who was now thankful to return to a dreary life which he had before rejected.

A self-respecting man has a right to fear destitution, not so much from the hardships it involves, but because of the degrading position which ensues when there is no money to buy the bare necessities of life. For it is no longer possible to show a resolute front to the world when the last effort to maintain the privacy of misery has been swept away and its revealed nakedness becomes a theme for public talk.

Although my circumstances had not become so desperate as this, a balance of about three pounds after a journey of so many thousand miles approached the situation sufficiently to give rise to reflections of this kind, and it was indeed fortunate that I had given up the expedition to Guayaquil, which would probably have resulted in a complete breakdown.

Before leaving Veracruz I managed to dispose of my "tin" Colombian money, receiving in Mexican coinage the equivalent of one shilling and threepence for each dollar. This was threepence a piece more than I had been offered in Jamaica and would have made a serious difference if the sum had been larger.

On mentioning the history of these dollars subsequently to an employee in a Mexican bank, and saying that their selling value was hardly worth three-fifths of the price at which they had been bought, the official shook his head and remarked, "*No es negocio, es robo.*" (It is not business, it is robbery).

I now took my ticket in the Interoceanic railway, and without any very cordial feeling towards Mexicans in general, there was a sense of satisfaction at seeing the national costumes, the tall hats of the men and the *rebozos* of the women, for I had earned a living among them before and meant to do so again.

The train soon got clear of the *tierra caliente* and began to climb the zigzag ascent to the tableland, but it was afternoon before we arrived at Perote, which was the nearest station to Altotonga.

Here I made several attempts to hire a horse, and walked for this purpose as far as the outskirts of the little town of Perote, about a mile from the station. No mount, however, was available unless I were willing to wait until next day, and I was anxious to leave at once.

It was out of the question to think of reaching Altotonga that



night, but if I walked as far as Magueyitos, some five miles in that direction, I should be able to procure a horse on the following morning to take me the remaining fifteen miles. For I was well known there, having often visited the house of Don Bartolo Sanchez and a few of the other principal residents.

So leaving my effects at the railway station, to be taken subsequently by bullock team, I started on foot for Magueyitos with nothing but a light stick in my hand, and my indispensable companion, the camera, slung in its canvas bag over my shoulder. In trying to procure a horse, so much time had been lost that the afternoon was now far advanced, and there would be barely time to reach my destination before nightfall.

Now I did not know this part of the country well. My professional visits in this direction had hardly ever taken me beyond Magueyitos, and, on the very few occasions when I had gone as far as Perote, I had either been driven or had been on horseback and accompanied by a guide.

On getting clear of the few houses that lie between the station and the town, I chose what seemed to be the main road among so many tracks, and walked in what I knew must be the right direction.

The way was a difficult one for a stranger. The whole distance lies over the plains of Perote, for Magueyitos only just lies on the edge of the timbered country. These plains also extend far on either side, and there were no striking landmarks ahead of me.

To make matters worse there were soon several tracks of equal size, and it was impossible to know which was the right one.

Presently it appeared that most of these tracks were merely used by the cultivators of the soil, for they were merely impressions of cart wheels that did not go in a straight line.

I was so annoyed by the loss of time in following these winding paths in which I had no confidence, that I disregarded them all, and struck out in a straight line over the open plain.

All this land is cultivated, but want of water prevents houses from being built here, and the greater part of the ground had been ploughed, although no crops were visible above the surface. The nature of the ground therefore made walking a very slow process, for the feet sank at every footstep up to the ankles in the ploughed land.

Not a person was to be seen so late in the afternoon on the dreary waste, and I began to wonder what I should do if I got lost on the plains at night.

For, although I had been lost before in my colonial days, the conditions were then more favourable. The companionship of only a horse is something, and the instinct of the animal will sometimes save its rider from difficulties, not the least of which is the misfortune of camping in a place where there is neither wood nor water.

The cold in this part is considerable at night, partly from the elevation of the ground and its vicinity to the mountain known as the *Cofre de Perote*, which attains the altitude of over fourteen thousand feet, and partly perhaps from the absence of timber as shelter from the wind.

The only thing to do was to travel while there was light, and to be guided afterwards by circumstances.



I knew my direction lay northerly and kept the setting sun towards my left shoulder. Presently the sun set while I was tramping over the ploughed ground, and the darkening plain seemed even more dreary than before, but, as long as there was a glow in the west, there was no fear of turning round.

The light was now so faint as to be hardly trustworthy, and I was considering whether it would be better to guide myself by the stars or to sit down on the plain, when I thought I heard a dog bark. I stopped to listen and, after waiting some time, the welcome sound was repeated, for whenever dogs bark human beings are not as a rule far off.

The sound was right ahead of me, probably in the very place I was seeking.

It was now quite dark, but being occasionally guided by my sense of hearing, I went on for another half-mile, when the monotony of the plain began to break.

Crossing over one or two dry ditches on whose banks had been planted some of those *maguey* plants which have probably given the settlement its name, I came to an outlying hut.

Sad experience had taught me that one is not always sure of a civilized reception in such places in Mexico, but this was a case of necessity, and seeing by the light inside that the inmates had not yet gone to bed, I called out "*Buenas noches*."

Presently a man came to the door to see what the unusual apparition was, for lower-class Mexicans, whether whites or Indians, seldom go about much after dark.

I inquired whether this place was Magueyitos, determining that in any case I would go no further that night.

The man replied in the affirmative, and I then asked whether the track, which now appeared near the hut, would bring me to the house of Don Bartolo Sanchez.

On being told that it would do so, I pressed on in better spirits, and was soon at the door of that personage.

For Don Bartolo was a leading man in the small settlement. He owned a considerable amount of land which he farmed, and kept the principal store.

Although it might have been after eight, the store was not yet closed, and, as I stepped in from the night into the dimly-lit interior, no one recognized me.

I soon made myself known, and Don Bartolo, with whom I had always been on good terms, gave me kind hospitality.

While relating the adventures of the last few hours, I remarked to him that a night on the cold plains would have been very unpleasant. He looked at me earnestly and replied, "Worse than that, the *coyotes* (native wolves) come out of the mountains about ten at night, and roam over the plains."

Although all danger was now over, the news gave me a creeping kind of sensation, and it was well for me that I had not thought of this horror while I was travelling in the darkness. For an encounter with these savage animals under such unfavourable conditions would have been worse than meeting a tiger; the result would be the same, only more protracted.



Among the events that had happened during my absence, there was one that was most unfortunate for me.

At the time of receiving the letter from my friend, Don Desiderio Alvarez, towards the close of the preceding year, the people of Altotonga were still in need of a doctor.

But this was no longer the case. Some of the leading people, feeling the necessity of having a medical man in such an out-of-the-way place, had made overtures to some one from a distance, pledging their support, and advancing a substantial sum towards providing a drug store for him, so that the newcomer might have the combined profits of medical advice and the sale of medicines. It was in fact an arrangement of much the same description as had been previously offered to me, and too lightly refused. So that I should now have firmly established opposition in a place which I did not think worth while living in when I had the whole practice to myself.

This was a terrible disappointment, but there was no help but to try what seemed little better than a forlorn hope, for I had no money to travel further.

In the morning Don Bartolo kindly provided me with a mount. It was the same big yellow horse which had often been sent to Altotonga for me when I was wanted in Magueyitos, and the same saddle with the silver handled sword fastened to it.

That ride remains impressed on my memory: The first two or three miles through the pine forest on the edge of the plain, then the descent through partially open country, becoming gradually steeper as the increased signs of moisture spoke of the change of climate from the high tableland to the coast range, the heather at the side of the road at Ahueyahualco, where the pine trees were getting scarce, some three miles from town, and the last broken descent, only just practicable for wheeled traffic, a mile from the end of the journey, where the springs and fine water supply of Altotonga make their appearance, and where the stalks of the maize tower above a man's head, instead of barely reaching the chest, as on the dry land above.

The outlying houses began here, but, as I went along the now comparatively level stony road, only one person, a boy perched on the wall at its side, seemed to recognize me.

It may be remembered that the house of my old friend, Don Juan García, lay on the roadside at the entry to the town, and I turned in through the ponderous doorway which led to the courtyard at the back of his house, partly for the purpose of presenting myself to him and his family, and partly to ask if I could not again hire the same rooms which I had on my first arrival here.

They were all quite surprised to see me again, but I received a kind welcome. Don Juan was more feeble than before, but this was to be expected, considering his great age, between eighty and ninety years.

On asking if he could let me have the same rooms as before, there was another disappointment, for they were temporarily occupied by some of the family of his son who lived at Zapotitlan.

It was necessary to try elsewhere, so leaving my horse in the friendly courtyard, I went down the stony road to the *plaza*, a few hundred yards beyond.



Here I was cordially received by Don Desiderio and by his wife, Doña Concha, and when I told him of my disappointment in not being able to get my old rooms, he insisted that I should remain in his house.

Finally I consented, for I knew that it would be a very difficult thing to find a suitable lodging, and in my straitened circumstances it was necessary to live as cheaply as possible. So I arranged to board and lodge with him at very moderate terms. We were now drawn together even more than before by the force of circumstances.

For the recent state of things, in which the new doctor had his own *botica*, was quite opposed to the interests of my friend, who had hitherto had the monopoly of the only place in the town where medicines could be bought or prescriptions dispensed, and he knew that if I succeeded in getting back any part of my old practice all my prescriptions would pass through his hands.

This was the third phase of my existence in Altotonga. On my first arrival I had rented two rooms and had taken my meals at the *fonda*. When I became more independent I rented a house and took my meals at home. And now I was living with a family.

Needless to say the last change was not for the better, for it is natural to prefer being in your own house, and above all things it is desirable that the doctor should not live with the chemist, thereby giving an excuse for the supposition that the former has an interest in the sale of the medicines, and this pretext was sometimes advanced as a reason for reducing my fee. But under the present circumstances it was a case of necessity.

The news soon spread that I had returned, and it was cheering to find that, although some of the leading people were pledged to support my opponent, whom we will call Dr. Fulano, many of the poorer ones were disposed to return to me.

This, however, was not altogether from preference, for it soon became evident that Dr. Fulano's charges were excessive, and even the richer people did not altogether relish them.

One of my old patients came back to me on the first day, and as this was an encouraging sign I refused to take the proffered fee.

It was April, one of the few fine months of the year, and as I strolled through the crowded market-place on the first Sunday after my return I saw a little girl called Concha García, towards whose memory I shall always have an affectionate remembrance. For when I was leaving Altotonga nearly a year and a half previously, one of the many reasons for my departure was the uncomfortable state into which my house had fallen, and Concha had wished to look after it for me.

She recognized me at once, and coming up said, "*No pensaba que volvería usted nunca*" (I thought that you would never return).

And this was perhaps the last time the poor girl was ever in the market. For there was an epidemic of small-pox in Altotonga at this period.

As most of the children had never been vaccinated, the ravages it made were fearful, and the scenes in the huts of the poorer people, largely of Indian blood in the outskirts of the town, were never to be forgotten.



The family of Concha were people of this class, and were no relations of my friend Don Juan, for García is a very frequent surname.

Within a week of my return, word was sent to the *botica* that some one wanted to see me, and from the description it appeared to be in the hut of this family.

On going there Concha was stretched on the ground in high fever, and within a short time all the children, some four or five, were covered with spots and pustules.

The poor people in Mexico live so miserably that there is no margin to keep life together when any serious illness occurs.

Imagine the present case of four or five children, in different stages of fever, lying on the damp ground in a small hut destitute of furniture, and their mother apparently without any resources except a little of the usual food, such as beans and maize.

There was no Government or municipal organization, and a small charity superintended by a few local people was utterly unable to meet the emergency.

The children all survived the ordinary course of the fever, but when apparently getting well, Concha developed an inflammation in the knee-joint. This protracted the illness so much that she became very weak, and it was not possible to supply her with necessities in a place where her brothers and sisters also needed attention.

Finally, I arranged with the private charity organization to take her, but it was too late, and she died before leaving the hut.

Her next sister became almost, if not totally blind, but the younger children suffered no permanent injury except more or less deeply marked faces.

Although the house of Don Desiderio was very large, consisting of three storeys, which is very unusual in Mexican country parts, I was obliged to occupy the only available room on the ground floor, next to the *botica*, so as to be able to hear people knock at my door in case I was wanted late at night. This place was also used as a kind of lumber deposit, chiefly for storing drugs, besides being my sleeping and consulting room. There was therefore no privacy, and it is always objectionable to live in the room where you see your patients.

We had our meals in the following manner—bread and coffee when we got up, and at one in the afternoon the doors of the *botica* were closed while the family and myself had our *almuerzo* or late breakfast in one of the upper rooms.

This custom of shutting the doors at breakfast time is not unusual in Mexico, its reason being to give the members of the house an opportunity to have their meals in peace.

After breakfast there was no more food until closing time at eight in the evening, when the doors were again shut and supper was got ready.

The rest of the family used to take their meat flavoured with the burning *piquantes* so loved by Mexicans, but as this food would have tortured me there was always a piece of plain meat for my own use.

Only people brought up to this way of living can be satisfied with



two meals and a half in the day, and I always found the long interval of about seven hours between breakfast and supper so intolerable, especially in the cold, wet weather, that I used to go to the *fonda* of my old friend Doña Gumersinda.

In this unpretentious little eating-house I took my afternoon coffee, and if the weather were very bleak, or if there were rough people in the only accommodation room, I sat beside the raised fireplace in the recess behind, where the cooking was done.

Here I had a change from the atmosphere of drugs and diseases and was cheered by a little light-hearted talk.

For Eloísa, the eldest child of Doña Gumersinda, had grown up during my absence and was now engaged.

As a friend of the family I was privileged to hear some of her love troubles. Her sweetheart Enrique had been twice engaged to other girls of the same name in that town, and, as there were said to be no more Eloísas of a suitable age and condition in the place, it was to be hoped that the third and last possessor of the indispensable name had made a lasting impression on his heart.

But a *nubecilla* (little cloud) had arisen between them. Eloísa number three, as we called her, had become jealous because Enrique had danced with his former sweetheart Eloísa number two. He was said to have been enticed, but still he ought not to have allowed himself to be led astray, and there was trouble in store for him.

Enrique was in despair at having offended his last Eloísa, and I was shown the letter in which he had made known his unhappy frame of mind.

If he were not forgiven he threatened to go to Chiapas, one of the most remote States in the south of the republic.

This was rather instructive, as showing the stay-at-home nature of Mexicans, few of whom seem to have any inclination to travel outside their own country.

Love-stricken men in other lands have generally some foreign part in their thoughts as a refuge under such circumstances, and even the costermonger, whose ideas outside his little sphere are somewhat of a blank, is supposed to talk vaguely about roaming over the seas, but the Mexican pulls up at the border of his own country.

I advised Eloísa to make it up, and suggested that she might send him these endearing lines,

"No te vayas á Chiapas,  
Donde hay indias guapas."

which may be interpreted as, "Go not to Chiapas where there are fierce Indian women," for the word *guapo* is generally used in a bad sense in Mexico, whereas in Spain it would be a complimentary term and might almost be rendered by "fine looking."

Eventually the *nubecilla* disappeared and all went smoothly as before.

Some of these letters showed signs of "The Complete Letter Writer," which contains samples of correspondence on every subject. A proposal of marriage was said to have been sent to a girl in these parts by means of one of these ready-made letters. Unfortunately she knew the book herself and replied, "You will find the answer on such a page."



As the months rolled on, there seemed to be every sign of a prolonged conflict between Dr. Fulano and myself.

The people of the town espoused one cause or the other to such an extent that the side to which Don Desiderio and myself belonged were called the Russians, while the adherents of Dr. Fulano were known as the Japanese, for this was the time of the Russo-Japanese war.

There is no opposition so disagreeable as that between two medical men in a small town where there is no room for both. One of them is being continually confronted by the other, or by his work, for a dissatisfied patient sends immediately for the other doctor, to whom he discloses all that his former medical adviser has said and done, and it is difficult to behave with the courtesy of the profession if your opponent does not treat you in the same way.

For Dr. Fulano was quite a young man and treated me in a very supercilious manner, affecting to consider me little better than a charlatan because I did not possess the Mexican qualification.

He certainly had many advantages, the use of his own language and the more direct recognition of the law as a professional man, the pledged support of some of the leading people, and the use of horses lent him by a friend in town, while I visited on foot up to a distance of three miles.

Don Desiderio suffered to some extent by the opposition, but only slightly as compared with myself, for his *bótica* was so superior to that of our opponent that some of Dr. Fulano's own prescriptions were sent to our house by the patients, who knew where the best supply of drugs was kept.

He also had the invaluable assistance of his wife, Doña Concha, who by dint of practice was a competent dispenser, while Dr. Fulano was dependent on hired assistance.

On slack days Don Desiderio was thus enabled to absent himself and to pay attention to those crops of maize which almost every Mexican of means aspires to have in this part of the country, while Doña Concha sat behind the counter of the *botica*, and did all the work, leaving the household affairs to the servants.

Although she had never studied books on the subject, practical experience had made her so much at home among medicines that she never seemed to make a mistake, and her patience and sympathetic manner made her popular with every one. In fact Indians and other impecunious people, who wanted "*remedios*" but were determined to avoid paying a doctor, were often guided by her in buying those drugs which were thought likely to cure their ailments.

And on Sundays, when the market was full of country people, both Don Desiderio and his wife were fully occupied.

As the local contest between the "Russians and Japanese" grew more acute, my position became by no means pleasant.

Many of my former friends were "Japanese." Among them was the family of Don Juan García, and their action troubled me far more from a social than from a pecuniary aspect.

For they tried to keep me as a friend while they sought the medical advice of my opponent.

When, however, it is a struggle for existence, one cannot feel as



one would like towards old friends who are acting thus, and I gradually left off calling at their house.

I believe Doña Adelina was sorry, but her husband Don Juan was now very feeble, and was largely under the influence of his son Don Pepe, who had become a partisan of the other side.

During my former stay in Altotonga it had always been a consolation that, no matter what treatment I might have received in other parts, the people here had always behaved civilly to me, but now I was occasionally insulted by one or two low-class people, who shouted back abuse, after passing me on a country road.

This generally took place on Sundays, or on Mondays, if the drinking of the previous day had been prolonged.

I do not think this was any part of duly organized opposition, still these savages may have thought that they were doing a patriotic act in making it uncomfortable for the foreigner who was no longer necessary.

Once, however, something of a more serious nature occurred. One Sunday afternoon I was taking a walk in the outskirts of the town. It was on a track where I had never been before, and just at the commencement of that wild broken country below Altotonga, where the steep descent to the *tierra caliente* begins.

In such places the mixed blood of the lower-class town people gives way to that of the Indian race.

A few heavy drops of rain began to fall, and I took shelter under a thatch roof supported by four posts near the side of the road, as I did not care to ask for hospitality at any of the few huts that were dotted about through this mountain pass.

I had not been there many minutes when an Indian made his appearance at some twenty or thirty yards distance, and called out angrily that I was to get on the road and go back to the town at once.

I replied that I did not want his shelter if he grudged it to me, but that I would not go back to the town at once, and would walk where I liked along the track. This enraged him more, and he began to insult me.

Seeing that there was trouble coming, I walked a few yards towards a cluster of huts, so that there might be witnesses, and stood on the track awaiting him.

The Indian came towards me, continuing his abuse, and when about ten yards distant, lifted up his arms as if to tear off the upper garment which does duty for shirt and coat, making at the same time the gesture of crouching for a rush or spring.

On seeing that I was awaiting the onset, he resumed a peaceful attitude, and exclaimed in the pathetic tone of a person who has been injured, "*Han llevado muchos guajalotes*" (They have lifted many turkeys), evidently pretending that he had taken me for a turkey robber.

He then allowed himself to be led to his hut by two women, one of whom remarked, as a full excuse, "Do you not see that the man is drunk?"

He was probably under the influence of drink, but there was too much method for complete drunkenness, and at this stage the latent animosity towards foreigners breaks out.



I got a friendly Indian, the same man who had accompanied me to Juan Marcos, to ask at the neighbouring huts if any one would bear witness on my behalf, but, as they all denied any knowledge of the scene, it was impossible to obtain justice for the outrage.

My messenger also said that it would be worse than useless for us to return to the spot with the idea of obtaining any kind of satisfaction, as we should be maltreated, and, in the somewhat unlikely event of returning in safety, we should get into trouble for disturbing the peace. In support of his views he told me how a man had been invited to a dance here, when he had been set upon with sticks and killed.

Before leaving Altotonga, however, my enemy seemed to have heard that I was trying to get at him by some means or other, for one Sunday afternoon a rather drunken Indian came up while I was talking to some one in the town, and made an attempt at an apology for insulting me on a previous occasion.

It may seem strange that I was not sure whether it was the same man, but those who have lived among people who are not of European blood will understand the difficulty of recognition.

These Indians all dress alike, with their tall, palm-leaf hats, white washing clothes, sandals, and some blanket-like covering over their shoulders. They have but little hair on the face, so there is none of that artificial distinction caused by shaving, which imparts an individuality to white people, and their features, although varying between the types mentioned in a former chapter, generally show a kindred Americo-Asiatic resemblance.

As the winter drew on the town resumed its most desolate aspect, with a sky the colour of lead, and the roofs of the houses dripping for more than a week in succession with the continual *chipi-chipi*.

When business was slack, and the solitude of my room became insupportable, I often went through the folding door into the *botica*, where my friend or his wife were awaiting customers, and occasionally, when the air was damp with moisture, Don Desiderio carried two small doses of spirits and syrup upstairs for our own especial benefit at breakfast time.

For I did not bear this inclement season as well as formerly, my illness in Chile having left a delicacy in the chest, and on one occasion when caught by the wet while returning from a distant visit I developed a bad bronchitis which lasted for weeks.

At this time I dreaded the sight of a countryman on horseback in front of the *botica*, especially if he had a led horse with him, thinking it might be some one who wanted to take me far away in the wet.

The war of the rival doctors continued, and the result was somewhat on the lines of the Russians and Japanese, after whom we were called, for, without being vanquished, I was getting decidedly the worst of it.

I could not dislodge Dr. Fulano, and he could not dislodge me, but he was generally employed by the richer people, while most of my patients were among the poorer classes.

Thus I had more patients, while he was receiving more money, a position which, however honourable to myself, is not generally looked upon with favour among medical men.



The battles fought were for other people's benefit rather than for my own. It was decidedly to the advantage of Don Desiderio that I should be there, to bring custom to his *botica*, and to reduce the sale of the enemy's medicine.

It may have been fortunate that the people, especially the poorer ones, should have two doctors to choose from, but my own advantage lay chiefly in living quietly and saving what little I could with the idea of leaving the place again.

About this time a nice little house at a moderate rental was offered me by Doña Lucrecia García. For my old friend Don Juan had died lately. I saw but little of him in his last illness, as Dr. Fulano was attending him, but no medical aid could do much for what was really a breakdown from old age.

His daughter, Doña Lucrecia, who was now married, came into her share of the property, and, remembering a former promise, she kindly put this house at my disposal. But under the circumstances it was more prudent to refuse the offer, in order to live as cheaply as possible.

The ordinary pleasures of life were never very plentiful in Altotonga, and when the ground became so sodden with rain that country walks were impossible, my almost only pastime was that of attending a class which was held by the *profesora* about three times in the week.

Mexicans use the terms *profesor* and *profesora* in a more limited sense than we use the word professor, and with them as a rule it means merely teacher, such as schoolmaster or schoolmistress.

Doña Juana Mejía was married to a local storekeeper, but continued to teach in the public school, receiving a very fair salary.

Her official classes consisted entirely of girls, for the boys were taught in another building by a duly qualified *profesor*. But, after the official classes were over at four in the afternoon, she held a private class which any one was allowed to attend for the modest fee of one dollar for the month.

The greater part of this class consisted of the elder and more forward pupils in the school, but there were a few outsiders, amongst whom I was conspicuous, as being one of the very few males and the only foreigner.

Her teaching was very good and gave me the impression that, if you want to learn a foreign language thoroughly, there is nothing like attending a school in which it is made the medium of instruction. Some of the subjects taught may be elementary or immaterial, but an adult, who has only learnt the language by means of books, private teaching or colloquially, will come across many new and thoroughly idiomatic expressions in the course of school teaching.

The subjects taught in this private class were Arithmetic, Spanish, and strange as it may appear, English.

The pupils were lamentably backward in arithmetic, even elder girls and young women being hardly able to do a sum in simple proportion.

The one branch of this subject in which they excelled was mental arithmetic. It was wonderful how they were able to follow the additions, divisions and other manipulations of large numbers, and finally to give the correct answer.



This exercise may be valuable as a means of improving the memory, but in itself does not seem to be very useful.

For few people in ordinary occupations, mercantile or otherwise, would trust to a series of mental calculations, and most would prefer to write down the figures, so that the material eye might aid the mental.

The principal subject, and of course the one of most interest to me, was Spanish.

It was taught in several manners. There was a class book in which one of the pupils might be asked to read. The accent of the reader was then criticized if necessary, the meaning of a difficult word asked, and grammatical questions put, as of the conjugation of some irregular verb.

Or some one might be called to write from dictation on the blackboard. After the dictation was finished, another pupil was called up to criticize the spelling, and very few of the pupils were good spellers.

This may seem strange to those who have not lived among Spanish-speaking people, and who merely know that this language is very easy to spell as compared with ours.

But it must be remembered that, in many places in Spain, and in most places in Spanish-America, the language is not pronounced according to grammatical rules, and thus artificial difficulties are created.

For when a soft *c* is pronounced like *s* instead of like *th*, as it should be, the people will write *sena* for *cena*—when *ll* is pronounced like *y*, *lleno* is often transformed into *yeno*.

And as in most Spanish-speaking places the letters *b* and *v* are pronounced in almost the same manner, the result being a compromise between both sounds, there is an endless confusion, and these letters are continually transposed, as in the phrase, *se bende carvón*, for *se vende carbón*.

The Spanish spoken, however, in Mexico and in most parts of Spanish-America will compare favourably with that spoken in the provinces in Spain, and is much easier for a foreigner to understand.

Of course there are occasionally Indian words incorporated into the language, but the Spanish basis remains fairly pure.

That excellent work, the "Grammar of the Spanish Royal Academy," which is taught in the schools, contributes much to prevent divergencies between the language of Spain and that of her former Colonies, and the standard reading books generally consist of selections from both leading Spanish and Spanish-American authors, making as it were a blend in which all Spanish-speaking people can take a joint interest.

The last part of the *profesora's* lesson, English, was a surprise to me, and both teacher and pupils thought it strange that a person should care to listen to elementary teaching in his own language, but it was worth the while for various reasons.

The medium of teaching being Spanish, there was always a chance of learning something new in that language, but my chief reason was that I wanted to know what difficulties were considered the greatest, for a foreigner's difficulty is often different to what the native teacher is inclined to think it is.



My interest in this matter was intensified by the fact that, when I returned to Altotonga, several persons were thinking of employing me to teach them English in a class, and, although the affair had fallen through, it might come about in the future.

It was significant that English should have been considered the most important foreign language to learn, this being of course due to the proximity of the United States, and to that peaceful commercial conquest which often precedes a more violent one.

By the time that the winter was over, nearly a year had passed since my return, and I was perhaps slightly gaining ground, for even his own supporters were beginning to resent the heavy charges of my opponent, and Don Desiderio declared that, if I only had patience, I should eventually win.

But I had become despondent after the long contest, in which I had generally been at a disadvantage, and hoped to have the means to migrate to Jamaica before my health suffered again from exposure in the wet season.

With the return of the spring came the short spell of fine weather when everything was comparatively joyous, the season of the baths, when it was the fashion for the ladies to go about with their wet hair hanging down to dry.

There was now some pleasure in strolling through the crowded market on Sunday morning, speaking to one's friends, and noticing good types of Indians.

The *tivoli* (merry-go-round) was again pitched and patronized by some of these people, whose melancholy features now relaxed into a kind of saturnine smile.

The fashion of Altotonga displayed itself on fine Sunday afternoons, when the band played in the *plaza*, and the young ladies walked around with *mantones* on their shoulders and flowers in their hair, almost as if it had been in some more favoured climate.

And while taking in the environment, I was sometimes aroused from my reverie by the bland voice of an Indian, for Indians are somewhat obsequious when on their good behaviour, calling me *doctorcito*; and wanting to know if *su buena persona* (your good personage) had leisure to attend to them or to their friends.

It is most unfortunate that these people are generally disposed at first sight to look upon every foreigner as an enemy, and thus act in a hostile manner before there is time to undeceive them, for when once they have got to look upon you as a friendly person you may go with them in safety anywhere.

In Mexico City, and in several of the larger towns, some of the better-class houses are built after the picturesque style so often seen in Spain, with a handsome courtyard in the centre, containing plants of a tropical nature, towards which the rooms face by means of the balcony, which runs round the upper storeys of the building.

This style is seldom seen in the smaller towns, partly perhaps on account of expense, and in Altotonga, at any rate, the moisture of a constantly wet courtyard would be a doubtful advantage.

Most of the buildings here were one storey high, and although the better-class houses made some attempt at a courtyard, as that of Don Juan García, the rooms generally opened into it on only one or



two sides, being in fact a compromise between a Spanish *patio* and a British back-yard.

Don Fernando Lopez, an intelligent merchant, whose store, El Progreso, is seen in the distance in one of the pictures, appeared to be making a successful experiment in building a house in the Spanish style, but slightly modified to suit the dampness of the climate.

The courtyard in the centre of his two-storeyed building was made rather narrower than usual, so as to have a glass roof overhead, after the manner of a conservatory, and thus the inconvenience of the heavy rainfall was avoided.

It would be wearisome to give further accounts of expeditions to Magueyitos, Zapotitlan, or other places even more distant, for none of them came up to my journey to Cuauzapotitan in point of interest or danger, but two or three shorter visits had their peculiarities, and may be worth mentioning, as giving an insight into this strange land, in which Spanish customs are often modified to suit colonial and Indian requirements.

One afternoon a countryman was very anxious that I should visit his sick son. They lived about three miles from town, just the limit of the distance of my journeys on foot.

The direction could hardly be called up the range or down, being a succession of hills and dales, with most of the ground cultivated, except in the few impracticable places, such as rocky ravines, where the timber of the country still grew.

The hut seemed of the ordinary Indian type, and maize was growing around it.

The man opened the door of a diminutive outhouse, where the patient was stretched on some bags on the earthen floor, his head being pillowed on some coarse clothes, which in their turn rested upon faggots of wood.

The boy was in rather a bad state with a fever which had probably been the cause of excessive bleeding from the nose, and my visit was rather protracted.

The father accompanied me on the way back, to get some further remedies which were required. When we left the hut I was surprised to see him shoulder an axe, not being able to understand why he should want to carry such an implement to the town.

After we had walked a small part of the return journey, the man informed me that he was going to give me the axe for my fee, as he had no money to pay me.

Needless to say we were not on very sociable terms for the rest of the way, for he had promised to pay me before leaving town, and, to do the Indians justice, they generally keep their word in this respect.

When we arrived at the *botica*, I again reprimanded the fellow for his bad faith, telling him that the axe was of no use to me, and that, not being a pawnbroker, I should have no right to sell it as an unredeemed pledge.

The man, however, had gained his object in getting me to see his son, and informed me again that he had nothing else to give me, as his corn was not yet ripe.

There was money to buy the medicine from the chemist, but the doctor never got anything.



The office of *médico municipal*, which I had accepted on my previous stay in Altotonga, was so badly paid that, even in my present circumstances, it was not worth having.

Dr. Fulano did not want it for the same reason, and the necessary work of attending to the wounds inflicted in police cases was done by the same unqualified practitioner as before, for a remuneration so small as to cause surprise that even he should undertake the office, unless, as is quite possible, some compulsion had been brought to bear on him.

But although I had no more business with the prison in Altotonga, I had a very peculiar case in that of Atzalan.

Two young men were lodged there under the following circumstances.

Each had developed a mysterious wound in the same house and at the same time, and there was no witness to testify as to the cause of either.

One of them had a bullet wound in the forearm, just below the elbow, the ball having passed out without doing much damage. This man said he had shot himself by accident while handling his revolver.

The other man had a knife wound in the upper arm, and this injury was also said to have been a self-inflicted accident.

Both statements might have been correct, but the *jefe político* suspected that this was a subterfuge, and that in reality a fight had taken place, the combatants agreeing afterwards to represent the wounds as accidental, in order to avoid punishment.

The father of the young man with the bullet wound was a person of means in Altotonga, and, not having confidence in the treatment of the unqualified person who attended to such cases in Atzalan, he asked me to attend his son and the other man as well. So that for some time I had three dollars every day for this visit alone.

The suspects were kept in a glorified confinement, not behind the bars of the miserable dungeon where the common prisoners were kept, but in a kind of guard-room, between the dungeon and the outer door.

Here I brought my little bag of necessities and dressed the bullet wound, which was more serious than that of the other man.

The case nearly brought me into collision with the newly-appointed prefect, of whom I stood rather in awe. For this great man, who lived in Jalacingo, only six miles from Altotonga, was known to be favourably disposed towards Dr. Fulano, and might find some excuse for preventing my practising.

I was informed that the prefect considered that the bullet wound could not have been self-inflicted, and that he would not believe my statement that such might have been the case.

There was probably good cause for suspicions, but, when the mobility of the elbow and wrist joints are considered, it would be hard to say that the wound could not have been self-inflicted, and I was bound to give my patient every benefit of the doubt.

If there had been a conflict, the secret was well kept, and as nothing had leaked out by the time that the wounds were healed, both suspects were discharged.

One more journey, also to Atzalan, will be related, which is worthy of a chapter to itself, for, although the incidents took place in a brief space of time, they were fully on a par with my night ride to Cuauzapotitan.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## A MEXICAN DOCTOR'S NIGHT WALK.

THE little town of Atzalan, two miles down the abrupt descent from the tableland, had always been a rather faithful adherent, partly perhaps from not being connected with the importation of the new doctor and partly from a dread of heavy expenses.

As before mentioned, I only charged mileage to the person on whose account I was first sent for, all subsequent patients during that visit only paying one dollar each.

When several were ill it was a trial of endurance who could hold out longest, but when one person had sent for me the others availed themselves of the opportunity for a cheap visit, and, as the most serious case frequently held out until the afternoon was advanced, it was often long after dark before I returned home.

The road between Altotonga and Atzalan was said to have been used at one time for wheeled traffic.

If so, it must have been at a distant period, for the rainfall had washed the earth away from the rocky bed to such an extent that boulders as large as a man's head now stood up in places. For Atzalan had even more rain and mist than Altotonga, being more under the climatic influence of the range.

A wall of loose stones separated the road on either side from fields of arable land, generally sown with maize.

This locality had been entirely denuded of trees as far as the hills in order to utilize every inch of available ground, for at Atzalan all agriculture on a large scale ceases until the foot of the range is attained, small pockets only being cultivated here and there on the mountainous descent by Indians, who seem to look upon this rugged locality as a last stronghold that has not fallen into the power of the white man.

But the fertile country between Altotonga and Atzalan is all held by large landowners, and there is not a single roadside hut between the two towns.

On this afternoon I had been sent for late, and by the time the first patient had been visited it was not far from nightfall. Two or three others wished to see me afterwards, and by the time I had finished with the last it must have been after eight at night.

No moon was shining, and it would have been easy to trip on so rough an ascent, so I accepted the offer of one of my patients to lend me a lantern, which I carried in one hand, while in the other was my little bag of indispensables, such as a stethoscope, thermometer, and other necessities.



I had hardly gone half a mile before I heard voices ahead of me on the road. This, in itself, was unusual, for Mexicans seldom travel by night. And stranger still the voices seemed to be stationary, as of people waiting on the road.

In the old times robberies used to be committed on this lonely stretch, and I began to wonder if the men in front had any bad intent.

I considered for a moment whether it would be worth while to get over the stone wall, and to follow the cultivated ground until I had passed these mysterious people, but I abandoned the idea because of the time and trouble it would have taken.

For the walking, which was bad enough on the road, would have been worse over ploughed ground and, as there were no trees, I should have to make a considerable deviation in order to escape notice.

This road had become so familiar to me, by day and night, that it seemed rather childish to be afraid to pass people, who were probably peaceful travellers like myself.

So I walked on, and presently saw two men standing on the dark road.

When I came alongside, one of them at least recognized me, for he said, "Here is the doctor with a lantern, he will be able to light us on the way."

This seemed a reasonable request, which I could not refuse, but I did not like their company, for the circumstances were suspicious, and a kind of instinct, sharpened by past dangers, warned me that there was something wrong.

So I took the lead with the lantern, and most unwillingly acted as guide to my companions, one of whom showed signs of drink, although by no means altogether drunk.

Before we had gone many hundred yards the man who had recognized me, and who seemed the more peaceful and sober of the two, asked me to go more slowly, but although I slacked off for a little I soon put on the pace again, for I was tired with the evening's work and wanted to get home, besides feeling that my company was dangerous.

When my companions found that the pace was getting fast again, the more violent one, who up to now had kept in the rear, rushed forward and using most insulting expressions as he caught hold of me, demanded that I should go more slowly.

I now saw that great care would be necessary to avoid a tragedy, so, keeping my temper, I shook off his grasp, remarking that my clothes were old and would not stand such rough usage, and continued walking fast as before.

But in a short time the same man rushed up again, and, closing with me, called out to his companion for the cartridges so that he might shoot me.

It was hard to know what to do. He was not tall, but was thick set and strong, and, unless I were able to stretch him senseless, it would be a death struggle. The other man might be disposed to help him against me, and there was the chance of being shot besides.

I was now holding the lantern, which had gone out during the



attack, together with the bag in my right hand, so as to have one arm free, as we swayed about on the road without either of us falling. At last I brought my left arm heavily down on his grasp and broke loose again, continuing to walk as fast as possible.

While this running fight was going on, we were of course nearing Altotonga, and if I could only arrive there, I should be in safety.

I now kept close to the right hand wall, so as not to be attacked on the side of the hand that was carrying my belongings, and, each time that the man rushed up to seize me, I slacked off speed, and doubled my left arm for a blow, in case he should come within striking distance.

He saw that I was now at a less disadvantage than before and that I meant business, so each time, when almost within reach, he fell back.

Immediately he did so, I put on full speed again.

Presently, about a quarter of a mile from town, I lost sight of him, for he no longer followed me so closely, and, now that the ground was more level I was walking almost at a racing pace.

Soon after entering the now dark and silent town, there was a short side street to the left, which led into the *plaza* where I lived.

As I doubled round the corner, I saw a dim light from the open door of a little drinking shop, and, hearing the sound of voices, it flashed on me that, if I could get assistance, it might be possible to have my unknown assailant identified.

So, walking smartly into the room where four or five stone masons were drinking, I said, "Will you kindly come and see who wants to put a bullet into me?"

They all turned out, and in a few seconds we were back at the corner, where an oil lamp threw a little yellow gleam over the road.

"No one is there," said a mason.

"Wait a minute," I replied, feeling anxious lest my man should escape.

We soon heard heavy footsteps, and presently the faint lamp light displayed the thick set form and morose features of my assailant sufficiently for identification.

"That is he," I remarked.

The masons surrounded him in a moment, feeling curious to know who it could be.

One of them soon exclaimed in a surprised voice, "*Es el alcaide.*"

The word *alcaide* must not be confounded with *alcalde*.

The latter means the chief magistrate of the town, whom we call the mayor.

The former refers to a less exalted personage, but still some one in authority, for it means the jailer.

The *alcaide*, although somewhat the worse for drink, had quite enough sense left to know that he was in a false position, and that he must now behave with some semblance of legality, so, drawing himself up, he pointed at me and exclaimed in a tone of authority, "Apprehend me that man for being drunk."

No one obeyed him, and in the mean time one of the Indian-like masons quietly got behind him, and deprived him of his revolver.

The *alcaide* now turned his anger against this man, but it was not of much avail, for the other masons were on their comrade's side.



A wordy warfare now ensued, in the midst of which a respectable elderly storekeeper came up, and seemed to take an interest in the proceedings.

The reason for this person's appearance on the scene became afterwards apparent. He was the father of the *alcaide's* companion, and was anxious lest his son might be implicated in this disgraceful affair.

This young man was prudent enough not to follow the *alcaide* by the direct road into town, but took a round-about path so as to escape observation, and perhaps had already arrived home.

The row continued, but I was no longer a principal character in it, being only too thankful that the masons had ably taken my place.

We all moved a few yards further on, into the *plaza*, at the side of which was the still unfinished *palacio municipal*, with the jail behind, and the *botica* a little further on.

When close to the jail, the altercation between the *alcaide* and the mason became more acute, and the former, feeling more confident so close to his sphere of authority, hit the mason a violent blow on the face.

The mason, foaming with rage, would probably have tried to kill any ordinary person for such an offence, but so great is the fear of the lower classes in Mexico of coming into collision with any representative of their own law, which they have good reason to dread, that the man merely replied with violent language.

There was no reason why I should witness the scene any longer, for it was between nine and ten at night, and, now that the excitement was over, I felt very tired.

I offered the friendly masons a *peseta* (quarter dollar) apiece, which they gladly accepted, with the exception of the man who had been struck, who was too angry to receive money.

But the row continued after my departure, and was audible in the *botica*, for, while I was having a late supper, Doña Concha heard one of the masons say, "We are on the side of the doctor."

It was impossible that an affair in which so many people were implicated should be kept secret, and next day such extraordinary rumours were going about that one of the leading men in the town came to the *botica* to ask me for a statement of the case.

On hearing the facts, he declared that they should have to dismiss the *alcaide*, for his conduct did not appear decent.

I begged him not to do so on my account, remarking that I was often obliged to be out alone at night, and that the man might shoot me in revenge.

So another reason was found for getting rid of him—he had allowed a prisoner to escape, and this was made the ostensible cause for his removal from office.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## FROM ALTOTONGA TO CUBA.

THE second summer after my return to Altotonga was now passing, and the thought of distant rides in the winter, with their consequent wettings, was already giving me cause for anxiety, when an unexpected event happened.

I came into possession of the sum of twenty-five pounds, an amount which, although small in itself, was of the utmost value in helping me to carry out my long-cherished plan of going to Jamaica. For my savings had been so small that it would have been impossible to leave without some addition to my resources.

Before making any definite plans, I wrote to a well-known chemist in Kingston, asking him to kindly advise me as to whether there was an opening in any part of the island.

About this time I had a protracted visit to a neighbouring *hacienda*, about two miles distant from Altotonga, under the following circumstances.

The owner, a very old lady, had suddenly developed an illness, which soon gave signs of becoming serious, owing to her advanced years.

The manager of this property, fearing that a crisis might take place suddenly, wanted me to remain at the *hacienda*, so as to be close beside the patient.

This I was unable to do, as it would be giving an unopposed field to my opponent in the town.

Eventually a compromise was made, by which I spent the nights and mornings at the *hacienda*, returning to the *botica* about midday to see my patients, and riding back to the country house before nightfall.

These visits were by no means uncomfortable, for the journey was a very short one, and the *hacienda*, although small in extent, had a rather comfortable house, which was built on the simple and convenient plan of a one-storeyed building with a long passage through the centre into which the rooms on both sides opened.

There was also a nice little library, which was most unusual in these parts where even the better-class people are somewhat illiterate, for the owner's son, who was now dead, had been a lawyer, and had evidently taken an interest in subjects outside the scope of his profession.

It is here that I found the interesting reprint of the Aztec grammar before described, and, in the intervals of attendance on my patient, there was plenty of time to look at the books.



The manager paid my moderate fee for the first four days, and suggested a day or two afterwards that Dr. Fulano should be called to consult with me about the illness, which was becoming worse.

I considered this as equivalent to a dismissal, for the other doctor had refused to consult with me on a previous occasion, although requested by the family of his own patient.

The manager, however, entreated me not to leave, on the plea of humanity, when all personal motives should be disregarded; and as this was undeniably true I awaited the other doctor's arrival.

After he had examined the patient he condescended to speak to me about the case, but adopted a line of treatment without consulting me.

This was the first time we had been together in a house of sickness, and I now had an opportunity of seeing one of his ingenious ways of impressing people.

He had decided that a trifling operation was necessary. Presently several basins were put in the room, and, presumed, spirits of wine were poured into them, for flames began to issue.

It gave a most weird effect to see the basins on fire, and one of the attendant women exclaimed in a frightened voice, "*Que hace él ?*" (what is he doing?)

The reason for these fires could only be to make the basins aseptic, but, while readily allowing that the desired effect might be thus obtained, a cheaper and at least equally effectual way would have been to use boiling water and some antiseptic fluid.

This, however, would not have affected the imaginations of ignorant people to the same extent as appearing in the midst of flames, like a kind of fire-king.

Eventually, after about a week and a half's attendance, the patient died, and I returned immediately to town, for, until definite arrangements were made for leaving, I did not venture to relax my efforts to maintain my practice.

At last the long-expected letter from Jamaica came. My correspondent gave me a somewhat guarded answer, rather after the style of that given me in the Medical Council Office at Kingston, to the effect that I might hope to find a locality where a living could be made.

Even this reassurance was sufficient for one who was so anxious to leave, and I told Don Desiderio that I should have to abandon the long contest, even although it offered some hope of an ultimate victory.

For my friend's prediction, that the people would get tired of Dr. Fulano, proved correct.

Some time after my departure, my former opponent went to another town to better himself, and, when he returned to Altotonga owing to his expectations not being realized, he found that some one else had taken his place, and that the people would no longer employ him.

The most important debt to collect before my departure was the fee for the last week's attendance at the *hacienda*, and I now sent in my account to the manager who had asked me to attend the deceased owner.



The manager, however, denied all responsibility, saying that he was only a servant, and that I must make my claim to the executors.

This was a weary prospect, and I rode to Jalacingo, the *cabecera* (head town) of the district, to ask the advice of the principal *juez* on the matter, as it seemed that I had been unfairly treated.

The *juez* considered my statement reasonable, and gave me a letter to some one connected with the *juzgado* in Altotonga, to the effect that my claim was to be tried in that town, so as to avoid the loss of time and money consequent on transacting legal business so far from where I lived.

My case was duly represented to the local *juez*, but it was deferred so long that I left before it had been tried, and, as a few years have elapsed since, it may be said to be adjourned *sine die*.

It is no wonder that Mexicans have a dread of the law of their own country.

The journey from Mexico to Jamaica seemed at first sight a very simple matter, for it was hardly a year and a half since the steamer of the Leyland line had brought me directly from Kingston to Veracruz in about three days, but, on writing to the latter port for information about the dates of departure, I was astonished to find that there was no return by that route, and that, in order to reach Jamaica, it would be necessary to go first either to New York or to Cuba.

Both these ways were very unwelcome, from somewhat similar reasons.

They were both roundabout journeys, especially the former, and my previous entries on both American and Cuban soils had been attended by misfortunes and discomforts.

No one wishes to be robbed, quarantined, made an immigrant, or to have any part of his personal luggage seized and retained in the customs-house, all of which had happened to me at one or other of these places.

Some of these events were of course accidental circumstances, but the general impression left on a traveller from the Old World would somewhat naturally be that (to use a simile from Dickens) "the air of freedom blew too strong."

Eventually I decided on going by Cuba, as being much the shorter way of the two.

But here again was another difficulty. The steamer from Veracruz lands passengers at Havana, on the north-western coast of Cuba; while the steamer from Cuba to Jamaica starts from Santiago, on the south-eastern coast. How was the distance between the extremities of this large island to be traversed? Was there a train right through the island, or had one to trust to coasting steamers or sailing vessels?

This information could not be obtained, and there was no help but to go first to Havana and to find out there.

The second departure from Altotonga was somewhat sad, for, although my sojourn there had been unhappy, the town had undeniably sheltered me for some time. Most of my enemies were merely the partisans of the rival faction, while my friends were my own, and I had a sincere regard for Don Desiderio and Doña Concha, with whom I had been living so long.



It was on this occasion that I returned to Calpulalpam to photograph the *pulque* industry.

The roundabout course of the Interoceanic railway takes the town of Puebla on its way, and I stopped there one or two days.

Puebla and Guadalajara are said to vie with each other for places as the second town of importance in the republic, each having a population of about one hundred thousand inhabitants.

Puebla is justly praised for its neat appearance. Of course it bears no comparison to the City of Mexico, which, besides being much larger, has that peculiar stir which is only felt in capital towns, or in places which are fed by a large floating population from several railways or lines of steamers.

But Puebla is almost entirely deficient in those unsavoury slums which exist in the poorer quarters of Mexico City, and is fairly neat and clean all over.

Its pretty *plaza* contains shops which appear to cater for the tourists who visit this place, for they sell typical country scenes painted on thin slabs of marble, such as pictures of Indians among the *maguey* plants, and *charros* on horseback.

These paintings are well done and are fairly true to nature, but they must be rather fragile, owing to the substance on which they are painted.

Not far from Puebla, and connected with it by a good train service, are the Aztec ruins of Cholula.

I do not know whether the population of Indians still living in Cholula is larger than in other places, but very good types of Indians are sometimes seen in the streets of Puebla.

And they are evidently country Indians, only in town for the day, and not the lower type of town Indians or cross-breds occasionally met in the slums of Mexico City.

On arriving at Calpulalpam, I was pleased to find that the Cisneros family were still there, and remained with them a few days while I was taking the necessary photographs.

Although barely four years had passed since I had been there, it seemed harder to get good types of Indian *tlachiqueros* than before. Many of the men had Indian faces, but they were abandoning the loose costume of the Indian for the tightly fitting trousers of the *charro*.

There were places not far off where this industry was carried on by purer types of Indians, but the expense in an unknown place would have been greater.

After a few days here, I returned towards the coast, stopping on the way at Jilotepec, to photograph this village and its Indian (Totonac) inhabitants.

As before described, I then awaited the arrival of the steamer at La Antigua, about twenty miles from Veracruz.

Shortly before the steamer was due, I returned to the port, and went to the office of the Ward line to take my ticket for Havana.

This being an American company there was a list of questions to be answered, similar to that of the unfortunate "immigrant" to the United States. But the necessary information is here furnished by the courteous shipping clerks in a manner which does not enrage the traveller.



Official consciences are proverbially light, and, on paying my passage money, I was somewhat surprised to see that the clerk was industriously filling in a long list of answers to these questions, giving me the benefit of the doubt on every point without consulting me, and stating that I had not been in jail, had not lived in almshouses, could read and write, was not a lunatic, &c.

As I was not going to the United States it was hard to understand why this farce should be necessary, unless on the assumption that Cuba is under American rule and not an independent republic.

But if it is an independent republic, it seems strange that a tenth-rate Power (if it be a Power) should ask these questions of British subjects, while Cubans may enter countries under British rule without a punitive reciprocity.

After leaving Veracruz we put in at Progreso, the port of Yucatan, before leaving the Mexican coast.

Yucatan is a very interesting State, and I was sorry to leave Mexico a second time without seeing it.

It is the place where the *henequen* (sisal hemp) is grown, the native country of the Mayas, those intractable Indians who have given so much trouble to the Mexican Republic and are so highly spoken of by Ober, and here are found some of those ancient ruins whose history was unknown to the Indians even at the time of the conquest of Mexico.

We left Progreso before daylight and were now well out at sea on our way to Havana, when, towards the latter part of the morning, a rumour went about that some one was seriously ill. Presently a purser's assistant found me on deck, and asked me to see the sick man, as the steamer carried no medical officer.

I was shown into a cabin where the patient was being attended by the barber.

It could easily be seen that the case was a most serious one. The man appeared to be in a state of high fever, and the thermometer shortly afterwards proved the fact.

He was suffering from violent abdominal pain, and occasionally vomited what appeared to be dark blood, unmixed with anything else—the so-called black vomit.

I had never before seen a case of yellow fever, but this certainly looked more than suspicious of the disease, for at this early stage there would have been no time for the yellow colour to have made its appearance.

It was also noteworthy that the barber, who had held some post in an American hospital, was giving treatment suitable for yellow fever.

We did what we could, but without avail, and in the afternoon of the same day the poor fellow died.

It is always depressing to witness a scene of this kind, especially when the end is so sudden that it partakes of the nature of a violent death, and I was in a somewhat melancholy frame of mind when an officer came up and told me that the captain wanted to see me.

From my previous experience on the Pacific coast, I took in the situation at once—the captain wanted some experienced practitioner



like Dr. Zutano, who was so skilful in diagnosing unusual forms of malaria, to certify as to the cause of death, and I resolved to keep out of the affair as much as possible, for I did not wish to certify anything against my opinion, neither did I wish to do anything that might cause a lengthened detention in quarantine.

When we were alone the captain looked at me keenly, and a conversation, such as the following, passed.

"Are you a medical man?"

"Yes."

"Can you give me a certificate of what that man died of?"

"Captain, if you will take my advice, you will ignore me in the matter. If I were to give you a certificate such as you want (and here I looked keenly at him) I might afterwards be put in a very awkward position if asked whether, in view of certain symptoms, this might not be a case of something that you do not want. The dead man had probably some acquaintance on board who will give you whatever history you want."

The captain readily understood what was meant, and acted on it, for he said, "I'll do just what you say," and our interview terminated.

It might have been another two days before we arrived at Havana, and in the meantime the prospects did not seem very reassuring.

Transshipment here had been my last resource against being obliged to re-enter the United States, and I had again failed to keep myself out of troubles which are not generally connected with short journeys.

I resigned myself to the inevitable quarantine, and a medical man of necessity takes any risk of infection as a matter of course.

But would the immigrant business be continued in Cuba, or the ticket-of-leave questions about height, weight and domicile?

Should I again be robbed?

Well, if I were, it would not make so much difference now, and the old trunks, now bound with ropes to keep them together, did not look like an alluring prey for thieves.

We arrived at Havana just before nightfall, and on landing on one side of the inlet that forms the harbour we were immediately conveyed in a ferry to the opposite side.

For the new quarantine station was in the suburbs of Havana itself, and not some twenty miles distant, as on the former occasion.

It was soon evident that American coinage had come into general use during the last six years, for on my first arrival all ordinary business was transacted in Spanish money, and, if American were offered, the first stage was to have it carried to a money changer, and to receive the equivalent value in Spanish coinage, through which medium the business was afterwards carried on.

Now, American and Spanish currencies were both used, but the former was in the ascendant, and it is perplexing to estimate the amount of change due when it is given in two currencies, neither of which are those of your own country.

By the time we reached the other side of the harbour, it was already dark, and we had to pass our effects through the customs-house before being taken to the quarantine.

The customs-house officers here were just as particular as on the



former occasion. Every trunk was opened, to be thoroughly searched, and passengers for this port would do well not to pack their trunks tightly, else they may be unable to replace the contents without spending more time than is convenient in a public place.

My old trunks, being all corded, gave much trouble to negotiate in time, for a kind of prison van was awaiting to carry us to the quarantine, and the *gendarmes* were impatient.

The little wooden box in which I kept my old negatives gave rise to suspicions, and I was made to open it hurriedly, prising up the nailed-down lid with some makeshift lever.

At length I was able to pull out the negatives, and to present them in their little cardboard boxes to the Cuban officer.

"How long have you had these negatives?" he inquired.

"How can I tell you?" I replied. "I may have had some of them only two months, and others for two years."

He remained silent for some moments, and I thought he was making a calculation on the average ages of the negatives, with the intention of charging a heavy duty, when he told me that I might shut the box again.

By this time all the others were seated in the van, and the *gendarme* was urging me to be quick.

I found a loose stone, and hammered down the nails in the lid of the box as well as I could by the dim lamplight, and was escorted to my seat.

The *gendarme* got up behind the van, which was a kind of compromise between a wagonette and a "Black Maria," and we drove up hill to our unwelcome abode—the same fate in the same island after an absence of six years. It seemed rather like the condition of the man who, when lost, travels in a circle.

A short drive took us to the quarantine, which was situated in its own grounds on a hill.

When we were being handed over to our guardians, there was some controversy as to where I should be placed. For I had travelled in the second class, and there was only first and third-class accommodation.

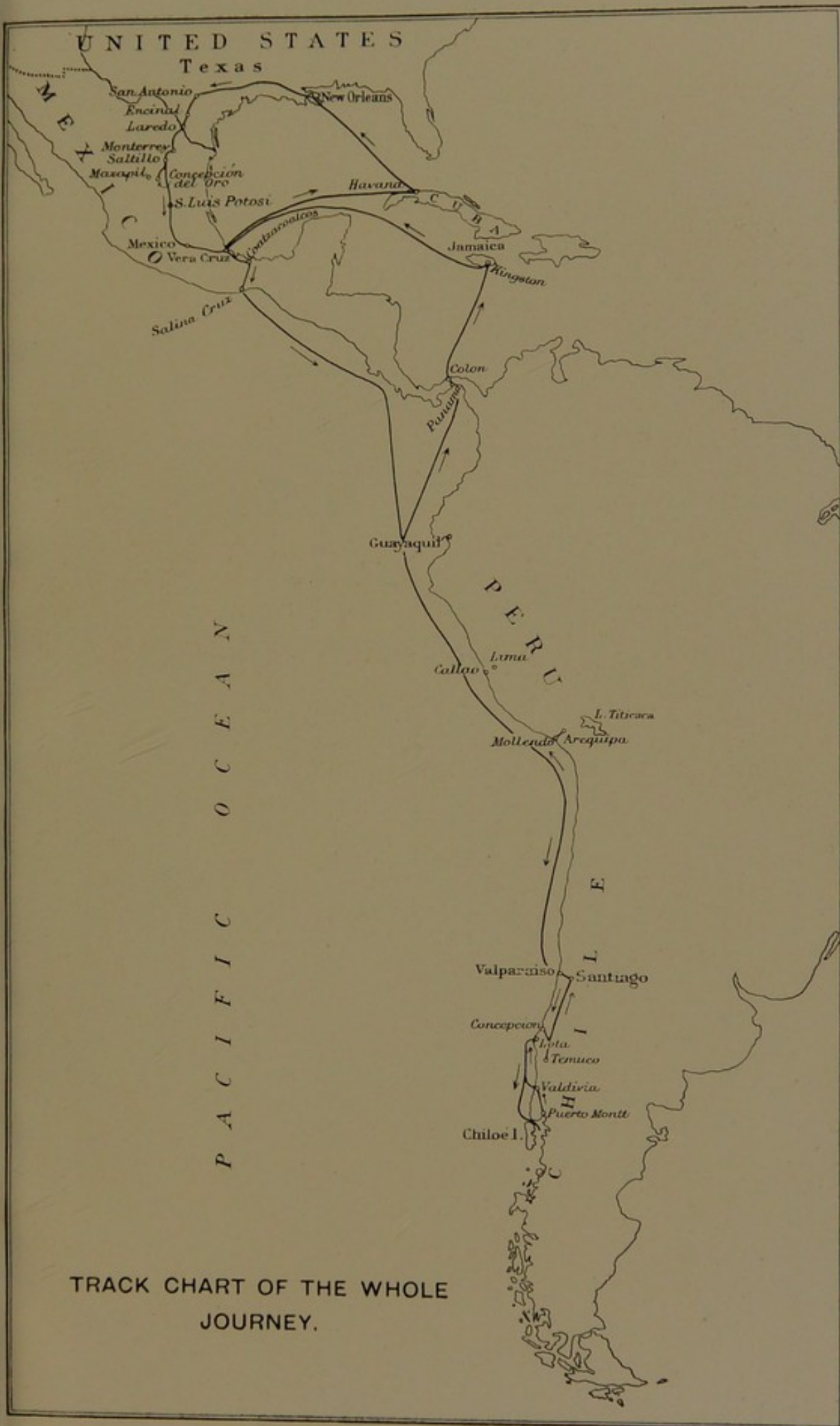
Finally it was settled that I was to be put with the first-class passengers, which was rather a relief, for I knew what the third class had been on a former occasion, and dreaded it.

Near the doorway an American wag had written a short but fervid ode to the quarantine-station, to the effect that its inmates may some day go down to certain subterranean regions,

"But ne'er return to you."

The señor Americano writes somewhat rashly. His remarks concerning the descent of man do not come within the scope of a book of mundane travels, but if he ever returns to Cuba he will have every facility for re-entering that lost paradise, the quarantine of Havana.

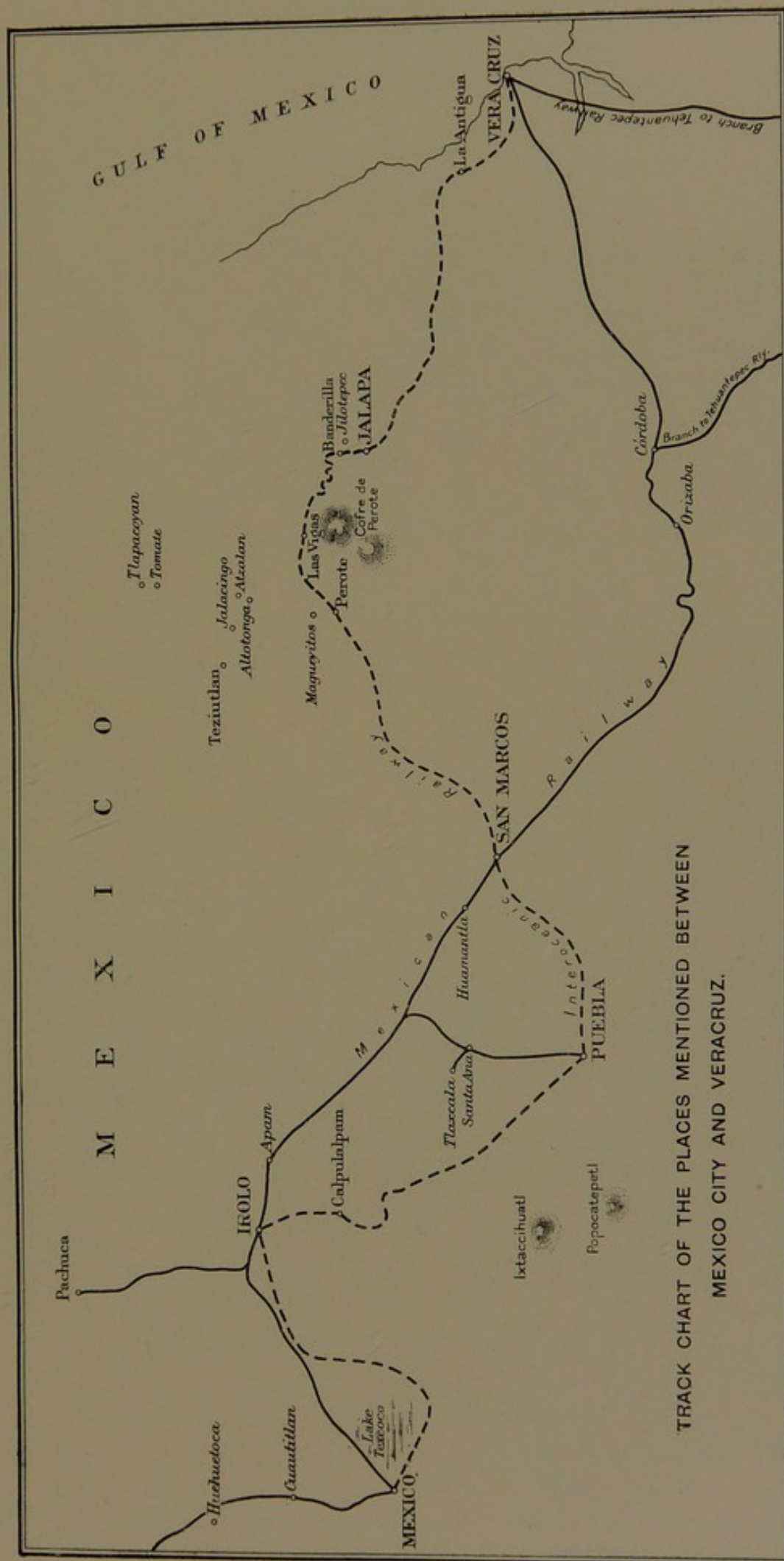










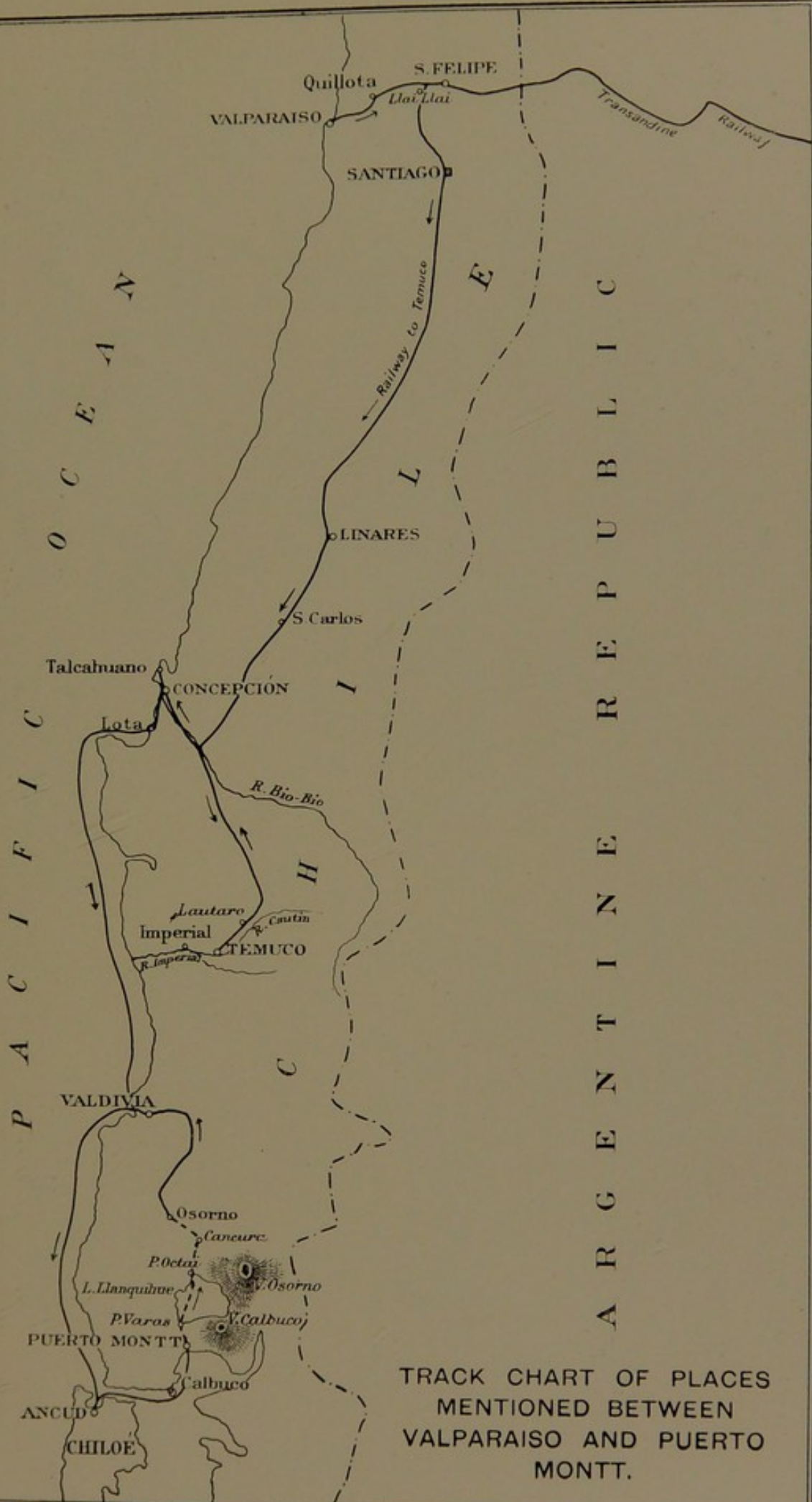


TRACK CHART OF THE PLACES MENTIONED BETWEEN  
MEXICO CITY AND VERACRUZ.









TRACK CHART OF PLACES  
MENTIONED BETWEEN  
VALPARAISO AND PUERTO  
MONTT.



