

# MEXICO TODAY

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COLONEL IRVING SPEED WALLACE

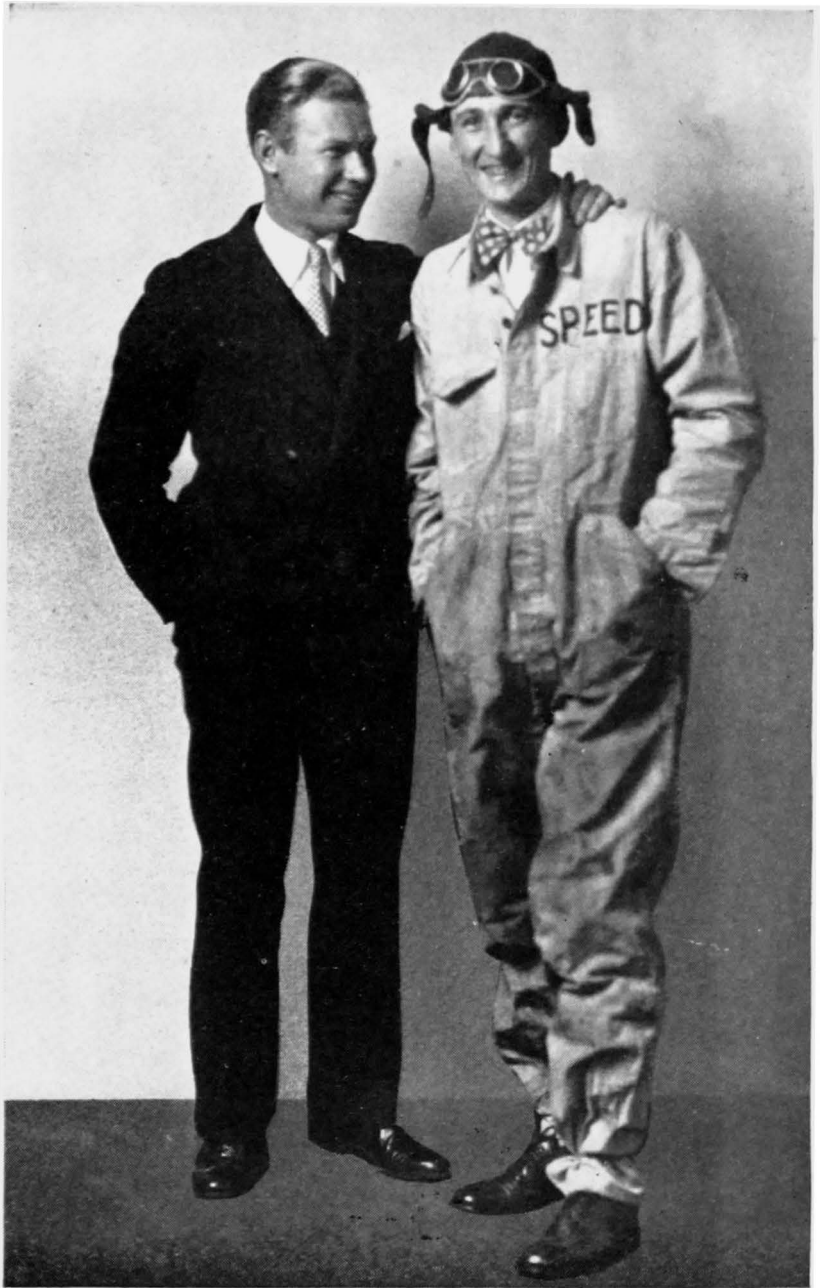
*Buenas Dias!*



*Michael*



**MEXICO TODAY**

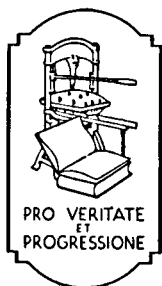


Charley Paddock (left) and Col. Irving Speed Wallace. Paddock, Now a Prominent Newspaper Publisher in California Earned the Name "The World's Fastest Human" During His College and Olympic Years.

# MEXICO TODAY

By

COLONEL IRVING SPEED WALLACE



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By

Irving Speed Wallace

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**To**  
THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN  
*To Whom White Man Has Been Most Unkind*

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## FOREWORD

“‘MEXICO TODAY’ splendidly pictures our neighbor nation. It delivers painlessly a most valuable lecture on a country of which the majority of us have little knowledge and it sustains our interest through each and every one of its colorful chapters.

Colonel Wallace has caught the spirit of both the old and the new Mexico and as soon as you have crossed the border with this colorful writer you find yourself living in each page just as though you were the actual companion of the beloved adventurer.”

CHARLES W. PADDOCK.

## APPRECIATION

"MEXICO TODAY, is by that adventurous traveler, sportsman, athlete and lecturer, Col. Irving Speed Wallace, who knows and appreciates the country of Mexico and its people as few outside that Republic know it. He has been a frequent visitor over a period of years. He has approached it from all sides. He has sailed around it and over it. He has played with the people of all classes, studied their culture and history and lived with them in their homes.

"The title might well have been, MEXICO YESTERDAY AND TODAY, because of his treatment of the remains of that country's earlier civilization. The allure and suggestiveness of Mexico's earlier day lie in the background of his work. Although he is a loyal citizen of the United States, Colonel Wallace finds himself in ardent sympathy with the people of Mexico as they are today in their progressive struggle to improve the conditions under which they live. His lectures from the platform and radio in the United States and Canada have extended his knowledge of and enthusiasm for the Mexican people to his numerous audiences.

"The readers of this book, by pictures and story, may participate in the author's adventures and get informative glimpses of the rich variety of customs, resources, geography and climate of this interesting and varied country, and of the hospitable and affectionate peoples who occupy it. Those readers who may be interested in the sociological aspects of Contemporary Mexico and the profound changes that are rapidly transforming that country, from the wooden rake and plow, the crude native handicrafts, to more modern industrialism will get a colorful and moving picture of a people emerging from a low economic state. Through his knowledge of these

movements and his acquaintance in the official circles of our Southern Republic, he is in possession of information that enables him to write a book which will hold the interest of the reader to the last vivid paragraph."

GEORGE A. MCFARLAND.

## PREFACE

No doubt many nations in the world have interest, beauty, and show great progress, yet they appeal only to the few. Such races might attract one individual and not interest another. It seems no two travelers have the same interests and it is no doubt true that what pleases age might not be appreciated by youth. By the same reasoning, a business man would not find interest where an agriculturist would stop to study. Even a college man might not be concerned with matters that would deeply interest a student of archæology. It is due to this vast difference, that individuals of varied temperaments find respite in widely separated places.

However, now and then, a tourist visits a country that holds appeal for him by its variety of attractions. Here he finds what interests him, and also knows that his friends, though their tastes be different, will find enjoyment too.

To me, it appears that Mexico is a country every traveler will enjoy. No matter how often you visit this interesting region, below the silvery Rio Grande, you will still find many fascinating problems waiting to be solved. Mexico is so interesting it will hold the attention of both the historian and the layman.

As you travel about this grand old country you will see earmarks that will carry you back into the days of the mystical Indian tribes, who lived there prior to recorded history.

Then, too, the visitor to Mexico will find traces of the days of Cortez and his fellow countrymen. From that period it is evident the country passed through three centuries of turmoil, until one never-to-be forgotten midnight. This historic hour is registered in Mexican history books as September 10, 1810. It was during that

night the words, "Mexico must have independence," spread from the National Capital to the most remote sections of New Spain, which was later to be an independent Mexican nation.

The trials and tribulations of the blood flowing yesteryears have taken no little part in building up of the Mexico of Today. After reading about the history making days of Mexico one can hardly conceive that this once riled group of natives could have molded so progressive, safe and tranquil a nation.

Bright colored birds, varieties of fruits, many flowers, and an ideal climate, makes Mexico interesting and healthful for both children and adults.

It seems that many tourists return from this historic and romantic land with the same question, "Why does the sky seem bluer and the moon bigger in Mexico?" Remembering the coat-of-tan I so often acquire I must also admit that in some places their sun seems mighty big—and closer, too.

The Mexico of Today is very cosmopolitan; and as you journey you will come into contact with visitors from many foreign countries. After traveling to all parts of Mexico, I feel somewhat qualified to say, that the tourist will find interest in all sections of the nation—regardless how extensively he may have wandered; as the lower part of the continent seems to have everything the traveler might wish for to make his trip complete.

In the following pages I shall attempt to bring to you the interesting points about the Mexico of Today as I have seen them. Long names, as well as tiresome figures and Spanish phrases have been omitted. It has been my wish to bring you a book upon Mexico in "Common every day language."

*IRVING SPEED WALLACE.*

Washington, D. C.

# MEXICO TODAY





Administration Building, Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas. San Antonio is Often Referred to as the "West Point" of the Air.

# MEXICO TODAY

## CHAPTER I

### THE LONE STAR STATE

Few people of the North American continent fully realize the close relationship history holds for the mammoth state of Texas and Old Mexico. It was one hundred years ago, when a small but valiant garrison hurled defiance at the mighty force of Santa Anna, and met death rather than surrender. This Alamo massacre crystallized the rebellion against the Mexican nation and in all probability if there had been no Alamo there now would be no state of Texas. The Alamo fell on March 6th, 1836, but the words "Remember the Alamo" rang out as the Texan battle cry, that carried them to victory at San Jacinto on April 21st, where the Republic of Texas was born.

The famous Alamo is still a word of reverence in all parts of Texas. With the passing of a century this state celebrated a Centennial in a style, that showed a background of Spanish atmosphere imprinted upon this territory as far back as the rule under Spain.

The mesquite covered lands of lower Texas, if they could speak, could relate far more gruesome and blood-curdling tales of bush fighting, than could be found in the modern hair-raising pulp magazines dealing in Western stories. If only a few of these tales are authentic regarding the early border days heard from the people along the Rio Grande river, it is evidently true historians conveniently overlooked many details, when recording historical events of the border country for readers of later generations. Such stories should have a basic truth. They have been handed down from one generation to another in the same families who still maintain

their homes in the once disputed territory between the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers.

One hundred years ago, the loss of the Texas land to Mexico was considered just so much mesquite covered range land. Today, the progress and wealth of the Lone Star State would startle Santa Anna and even make the gold-mad Cortez blush. A trip across Texas in any direction will make the traveler realize its great size. Los Angeles, California, is closer to El Paso, Texas, than Brownsville, which is located in the south Texas fruit territory. Many odd stories are in circulation regarding the State's size.

Some Texans delight in saying that their state is so large, a mammoth pair of Paul Bunyan's hinges could be placed on the northern Pan-handle, and by folding their land over towards the northern states the southern part of Texas would fall along the Canadian line.

Commercial traveling men prefer telling the story about a Chicago firm having some business which needed immediate attention in Texarkana, located in eastern Texas. The firm's salesman checked the location of their Texas representative and rushed a telegram to him in El Paso. Upon receipt of the wire the Texas salesman noticing the urgency of the business, returned a wire answer to his Chicago chief suggesting the latter send someone from the head office as, though he was in the same state, Chicago was much closer to Texarkana than El Paso.

The remark, "One part of the world does not know how the other part lives", also holds true within the large state of Texas. No doubt, because of its vast size and variation in climate zones, which creates a wide range in vocations, its citizens are most interested in the territory about them. A large per cent of the State's population is Mexican. They take very little interest in state politics and none whatsoever in national affairs. It appears the Texans have "trained" the Mexican population in this manner, but such did include the proper way to vote.

The land, General Santa Anna lost, now named Texas,



Most Famous of all Border Missions is the Alamo, Properly the Mission San Antonio de Valero, Best Known Because of its location in the heart of San Antonio (Texas) and for the great part it played in the history of Texas and Mexico.

felt the post-war depression less than any other state, for it has many resources as well as types of climate. Their leaders started early to carry out shrewd business tactics in the interests of progress. Naturally, one of the first things the new state needed was a splendid capitol building. The State had plenty of territory, in fact, was land poor. So they promoted a deal with Northern monied men to build them a fine Capitol building and accept in exchange, clear title to many acres of brush covered sections. Texas now has the beautiful capitol in Austin as well as adding a group of wealthy taxpayers to the list. Even the land they traded for their building now aids in paying for its upkeep.

The Pan-handle territory has converted most of its range acreage into spacious wheat fields, which have pushed the cattle herds from the once famous cow country. The destruction of bunch-grass by the plow, has created a natural dust bowl area which has given no little trouble in recent years. Old time ranchers, of the Pan-handle district shake their heads now, and admit they would like to see the "good old range lands" back, and forget all possibilities of ever receiving or raising two dollar wheat again. The Pan-handle has typical northern weather during the winter months; but the southern part of the state, the lower Rio Grande valley, claims a sub-tropical climate with millions of fruit trees under heavy production.

The western part of Texas is known as the cattle country with the city of El Paso recognized as the champion cow town. Fort Worth is renowned as being a city of retired cattlemen. East Texas has captured many honors in the production of cotton, but old King Oil seems to hold the lead. In recent years oil derricks have spread inward to make it apparent most of Texas is underlaid with black gold.

The history of Mexico and Texas is combined in the beautiful and spotless city of San Antonio. Old documents show a settlement existed on this site as early as 1692. Among the city's modern buildings one can still locate many ancient and interesting landmarks. San



Patio of the Spanish Governors' Palace, San Antonio, Texas. Built in 1734  
It Was the Official Residence of the Spanish Governors During Their Regime. It is Now  
Owned by the City and Open to the Public.

Antonio has lived under five other flags, besides that of the Stars and Stripes . . . French, Spanish, Mexican, the Republic of Texas, and the flag of the Confederacy.

San Antonio, or "Santone" as one hears most, has made great effort to draw its share of the tourist trade. It has many attractions for the visitor beside capitalizing upon the slogan, "Where sunshine spends the winter!" Her people, too, like California and Florida, have found use for the word "unusual" when explaining certain types of weather to the newcomer. With all the modern changes the city still holds the early Spanish charm, picturesque settings, and the ever present Southern hospitality. Visitors to the 244-year-old town mutually agree there is an indescribable "something" which continues to thrill them and cause them to plan a return trip.

The historic Alamo is located in the center of the city and open to the public daily. A visit to San Antonio would not be complete without seeing this battle-scarred sacred building. As you enter the famous old fort and mission, where 182 Texans gave up their lives rather than surrender, the very atmosphere grips you. Though you may be physically strong and brave your heart throbs above the normal as bareheaded you make your way about the building on tip toe and converse with a guide in low tones while you think of the men who so gallantly fought unto death so that a new nation might be born. . . . the Republic of Texas. After winning its freedom from Mexico the new Republic waited ten years before joining the United States.

Old Spanish missions can be located within a short distance of the city. Several of these missions date back to 1731 and their chapels are still in use. The missions were built by the early padres who used Indian labor. The King of Spain commissioned a number of expert stone carvers to go to New Spain to apply their art upon the Cathedrals and early Spanish colonial buildings. Many of these artists spent the rest of their lives upon special work, some on the same building. The splendid artistry of those days cannot be excelled in the present era.

During early Mexican times the city of San Antonio

held a strategic position in military affairs, as well as retaining that honor during the years that followed. It now is the nation's largest military post location. The addition of airplanes to modern defense equipment has made this city the "West Point of the air". For Randolph field alone, the government selected 2,300 acres and plans making it a model airport. Already ten million dollars have been spent, with plans under consideration for the expenditure of that much more. Randolph has a population of at least 4,000 men, including flyers, instructors, and cadets. From this field it is possible for several hundred ships to take the air within a very short time. Randolph field forms but a part of the air interests in and around San Antonio.

San Antonio's population is near the quarter million mark one-third of that number being Mexican. The city is located inland from the great Gulf of Mexico. Corpus Christi, one hundred and fifty miles away, is the nearest port. It is the same distance to the Mexican border. Laredo, being one of the main gateways of the entire United States-Mexican borderline, gives San Antonio a great shipping advantage.

The Rio Grande river forms a definite border line between Mexico and Texas. The greater portion of the population living along the Texas side of the river are Mexicans. So much interest is found along the Rio Grande, and among this group of people that an entire chapter will be devoted to them. This territory located north and east of the famous silvery Rio Grande river does not seem to be of the United States nor does it have the appeal, the customs, or the fine manners found in the interior of Mexico. Truly it is a most peculiar country—a land where the famous Texas Rangers seem to rule. As one Tex-Mex remarked to me, "'Tis along the Rio where the Ranger makes the laws, with his shootin' iron always ready to back 'er up." From the number of Mexicans killed during past years along the American side of the river, one cannot help but think this old gentleman meant just what he said.



## CHAPTER II

### ALONG THE RIO GRANDE

Just why the famous Rio Grande River is so often referred to as being the Silvery Rio Grande, I cannot understand. No doubt, it makes excellent copy for writers of fiction stories and rhymes well in romantic songs. To be true, the Rio Grande is very beautiful, as most large rivers are. But there is no more silvery reflection upon its waters, as it makes its way gulfward, than there is upon the murky Missouri river as it wends its way through the Bad Lands of North Dakota. Both are noted for shifting sand-bars as well as sudden and dangerous variations in river levels. Like most other rivers of this nature, the Rio Grande might change part of its course without warning, making somewhat flexible the border line between two great nations.

From the mid-continent city of El Paso, the river seeks an outlet to the Gulf of Mexico in a southeasterly direction. The territory along the river between El Paso and the Gulf makes up a very interesting portion of these United States. Probably nowhere will one find just the mixture in life as can be seen along this portion of the border. To our far North we have the Canadian boundary line: but with such a close relationship, as the natives hold on each side of this border, we fail to find any great contradistinctions. In western Canada and the United States, it is quite true that the promotion of agricultural lands has brought close family relations between residents on either side of the border. If it were not for the customary border routine, travelers would be able to pass from one country into the other and fail to notice any change in the people or their customs.

Along the Rio Grande river the population is mainly

Mexican. In fact, one comes upon this situation before reaching the border. Many of these Mexicans are United States citizens and their families have lived in Texas for many generations. Some, in fact, claim their family connection with the early blue-bloods or Spanish aristocrats who early came to the New World to gain both adventure and immense land grants. Certain of these grants are still held intact within the state of Texas. The great majority of the population along the river has taken its citizenship very lightly in past years. During later decades they have flocked across the border and invaded the beet fields of our northern states, as well as other agricultural districts. This is welcome labor; as they not only work more cheaply, but their services are needed during the rush of certain crops to market. After such labors are finished they return to the border and exchange their United States money for Mexican dollars and gain much in the exchange.

Life along the Rio is taken very easily. This attitude is typical of the Mexican. No doubt generations of life on the Rio Grande have left this imprint upon native character. Their worries are few, at least they never show them.

The land along the Rio Grande could not be classed American, Mexican, or even Texan. Conditions there are of their own creation. The customs do not come from Mexico, Spain, or the States. Life is unique and no doubt an interfusion of all.

Seldom do you hear English spoken. The language, with a Spanish base, would almost make a Spanish student seek an interpreter. Like all their customs they speak their own dialect which shows evidence of a mixture of Spanish and Indian. All posters and publications use the Spanish language. The leading newspapers in the border cities carry both English and Spanish pages. The post offices have their necessary guides printed for both English and Spanish customers. It is very usual to contact families who live on the north side of the river, and find that not one member of the household speaks English. In many such cases these families have resided



San Antonio, Texas, Often the Center of World Wide Attention in Years Past has Developed From a Mexican Shack Town to One of the Most Beautiful and Cleanest Cities in the United States. Picture Shows Municipal Auditorium.

within the United States for generations, at least ever since Texas came into the Union.

In the cities along the river there is a small percentage who are not of Mexican nationality. In visiting the hamlets up and down the river, seldom does one contact a person of fair complexion.

The state of Texas evidently depends upon its famous Texas Rangers to see that the law is carried out in the country along the Rio Grande, so the Mexican, does not think of the state of Texas, or the government of the United States as being the law makers. They look upon the gun-weighty, uniformed Ranger as being the Law. During past years the Rangers have been feared by the native Mexican along the border. The slogan that seems to dwell among the mesquite covered river banks is that "Dead Mexicans tell no tales."

The Rangers, no doubt, have had much responsibility thrust upon their shoulders in watching the boundary, as conditions were seemingly made ideal for smuggling. These border people prefer to settle their quarrels among themselves without intrusion from the law. United States Custom men, as well as the Rangers, patrol the border. The Rangers have built up quite a reputation. I recall talking to a Mexican, south of the river many years ago during the border trouble. He, like many of that period along the border, who held ill feelings toward the States, remarked he was confident that Mexico could lick the United States if it were not for those "Damn Rangers."

There is much ill feeling among the Mexicans in this district against the State and Federal men. They feel they have been trampled upon, and their men killed in many cases unnecessarily. They have had little recourse in trials at law, as fearing future results they have been afraid to testify against the officers. In 1935, I witnessed parts of a trial in which the federal government tried one of these men for acts leading to the death of a Mexican. It was claimed that this officer called at the home of the Mexican and demanded certain information from him that would lead to the arrest of another Mexican for smuggling a load of liquor. It was claimed

that the former man knew nothing regarding the case, but witnesses stated the officer beat him up in attempting to make him talk. The assault led to the Mexican's death. A jury brought in a verdict of guilty. The border city of Brownsville was filled with gun-toting men. The result was, indeed, a blow to them. The Mexican population was all smiles. For once they thought they had won over the officers of the law, who they claim have mistreated them since the inauguration of Texas as a state. It was something new for an officer to be found guilty and to have native Mexicans give testimony against him. In public, nothing was said but Mexicans had their private tête-a-têtes, and along with smiles of satisfaction, their conversation dwelt upon the conviction of a gun-man who was to serve time for killing one of their nationality. It was related among them how this Federal man had murdered and abused many other citizens. Their jubilation was short-lived however. No sooner had the ink dried upon the judicial records than word came that the Texas Governor had pardoned the offending officer and restored him to his former standing.

The Mexicans felt very badly over the Governor's adverse report, knowing, as they explained, that now conditions would continue as before; and the officers would feel there were no limits. That evening when the local newspaper carried the account regarding the Governor's pardon, I heard one of these law enforcers remark, "Well! That should show these dirty Greasers they can't monkey with us fellers!" He then tossed the paper down, adjusted his belt and large pearl handled revolver, threw back his shoulders, then strutted out the door. Never have I visited a section of the country that contained so many gun-toting men of the law as I found in South Texas.

With all the Law, the Mexicans have their enjoyments. Chief among their favorite pastimes is their famous Baile dance. They start these dances early in the evening and they last far into the morning. At times dances that start Saturday evening will last all night and



The Picturesque Watch Tower at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas.

into the morning, ending some time Sunday evening. At the ranches one often sees a square plot of bare ground. The mesquite bushes have been up-rooted and the ground sprinkled as it is levelled. With the sun's terrific rays upon it there is soon a hard surface. The dance floor is ready. Where Mexicans gather you always find music and never does one find a Baile held up for want of it. During the season when many are working in fields and on ranches, they prefer to have their chief dance on Saturday night. Regardless of what there is to be done they stop work Saturday noon and make preparations for their favorite recreation.

Baile music cannot be described, as seemingly each dance has different instruments. The tempo of the music is very rapid and the dancers have an extra quick step very much unlike that found in our modern halls. The functions held on the ranches hold local interest and most of them are peaceful. But in the hamlets public dances are often momentarily delayed while . . . to settle their differences. The misunderstanding may be slight, such as two men wanting the same lady partner. Regardless of difficulties, they retire to the sidelines and settle their argument like "gentlemen." As they depart the floor empties for the spectators wish to see the scrap.

As a rule such brawls start with fists. But this is not their usual mode of fighting. Soon one sees the glistening of knife blades as they reflect from the gas lanterns. When one of the knives finds its mark, the friends of the wounded young man rush him off to give him aid. If the injured one recovers he soon returns to the floor. You may be assured as soon as the fight is over they hasten to resume their dancing. As the crowd returns the musicians also rush back, and grasping their instruments begin another lively selection. Rarely do such misunderstandings bring about shooting affairs. It is more natural for them to use knives. During such a fight the principals are given room to decide who is the better man and rarely do their friends interfere.

The commercial Baile dances in the hamlets are no doubt the original taxi-dance. These dance places often

have a floor built several feet above the ground, with a railing and bench around the outside and no side walls but generally a thatched roof overhead. The dances may be located within the little town but more often they are held some distance from the dwellings. One can see all types of transportation in the vicinity; everything from the burro to a rusty old model-T Ford.

Their dancing apparel furnishes as great a contrast. Men don anything from a modern suit to cowboy regalia but always with the best hat they can afford. No Mexican feels dressed up in these parts unless he possesses an expensive hat. The men must have their jet black hair slicked down with the finest glistening hair oil they can purchase at the nearest dime store. If one attends the function in working cowboy clothes it is customary to dance with hat on and gloves tucked in the belt.

The girls all sit on one side of the dance hall. They come there for two reasons: one being to enjoy the Baile and secondly to make money. The boys must purchase a dance ticket from the manager. In turn the girl with whom he dances, receives her portion of the purchase price. Most floor managers do not sell tickets first but start the dance. The men rush across the floor, gather their favorite partner within their arms, and start in with a fast movement that looks as if it would wear them down within a few whirls of the dance floor. After the place has filled and all sailing fine, the manager signals the musicians to stop. The dancers remain in their respective positions while the manager goes about the crowd and gathers a dime from each man. In return he gives the girl a metal disc. These she retains and checks in when she wishes to return home. The manager allows her so much per dance. This I think was the origin of our modern city taxi dances.

Upon visiting one of these affairs my host remarked that seldom does much time pass before there is a fight. Towards late hours and after the drinks take effect, fights become more frequent. Our wait was short as soon one liquored chap made his way through the dancers and complained to one of them he did not like the manner



in which he was acting with his girl. All stopped. Even the musicians dropped their instruments. This was the signal there was soon to be some action. The disputants took to a nearby mesquite tree to settle their troubles. The affair did not last long for one of the young men slashed open his opponent, allowing his entrails to protrude. The sight was terrible, but was evidently routine to the dancers. They rushed back, music started, and soon the step was in full swing on a packed floor.

We motored up to the next little thatch roofed hamlet where another Baile was going full force. The orchestra consisted of three pieces,—a big drum, a violin and an accordion. What part the drummer played with the unit I could not tell, as no doubt the use of too many free drinks furnished by patrons made him very sleepy. When the music did arouse him, he would lift his head, reach over, give the big drum a series of rapid taps and slip back into another doze.

The evening air was a little cool. To keep the girls comfortable so they would not have to wear a cloak to cover their brightly colored cheap evening dress, the manager placed a smoldering fire in a wash tub. The latter was placed on the floor near the corner of the dance hall where the highly painted and perfumed girls assembled. The dancers had to dodge the temporary heating stove. All went fine until a young Mexican cowboy, "chaps" and all, came circling around the edge of the floor with a slender Mexican señorita tightly held in his buckskin covered arms. Their dancing attire was indeed a contrast. The girl wore a long black evening gown, decorated with yards of fluffy lace, a design evidently copied from some motion picture. As they circled the floor in rapid fashion these two neared the wash tub filled with burning coals. Evidently too much occupied with their dance they fell into the tub. The girl was underneath. Needless to say they lost no time in getting to their feet. But the red hot coals had found their mark . . . the fluffy lace in the rear of the girl's dress was afire. The gallant señor grabbed his large hat and with great rapidity extinguished most of the fire. They

had paid for the dance and were losing valuable time. So they swiftly resumed, smoke still streaming from the girl's dress. This was too much for the floor manager. He raced across the intervening space, grabbed a pail of water from the silent mechanical piano, then turning, rushed back and with one long heave threw it on the girl's smoldering dress. The couple thanked him but kept on dancing. Right there, I came to the conclusion that nothing could keep them from their Baile dancing.

One hears much about the traditions carried from Spain into Mexico in the early days. Among the teachings we learn that the moral instructions given by the Spanish padres carried great influence down through many generations and still hold sway to the present day. This may be true back in Mexico but as we have already mentioned the customs along the border are very different to those found in the interior of either country. In the river hamlets they do not care to mingle with the lighter complexioned people; although in some fortified border cities the town belles offer competition to the post's barracks as they will supply soldiers with home-like quarters for as low as two or three dollars weekly.

There is little wonder so many United States citizens form such wild opinions of Mexico and its people. With the many killings, the mode of life, and customs found along the border, most any individual would feel that it represented the typical life to be found in the interior. With such contrast in the two peoples no doubt there is much of the riff-raff of both nations, to whom a border becomes very convenient at times. When they view the sorry conduct of such persons who pass as United States citizens, it is little wonder that Mexicans often develop an ill feeling toward the people of the United States. They no doubt base their contentions on the many misdemeanors that a small percentage of our citizens commit along the international border.

Now that we are about to enter the great nation of Mexico I wish to state, if you have already formed any erroneous impressions of that country, or their kind people, that you withhold, your prejudices and opinions

until you visit the interior, meet real Mexican home folks and find at first hand the true conditions in that country.

Many tourists have visited the Mexican border, some even venturing across it, stopping long enough to send postcards back to their friends, stating they are visiting in Mexico. Naturally the traveler hears wild stories along the border and even sees strange sights. They return home and tell their friends how they "found" Mexico. So if you are a prospective tourist to this interesting country I suggest you pay no attention to border stories or friends who postcarded you from there, but make it a point to visit the interior and find out for yourself the Mexico of Today.

## CHAPTER III

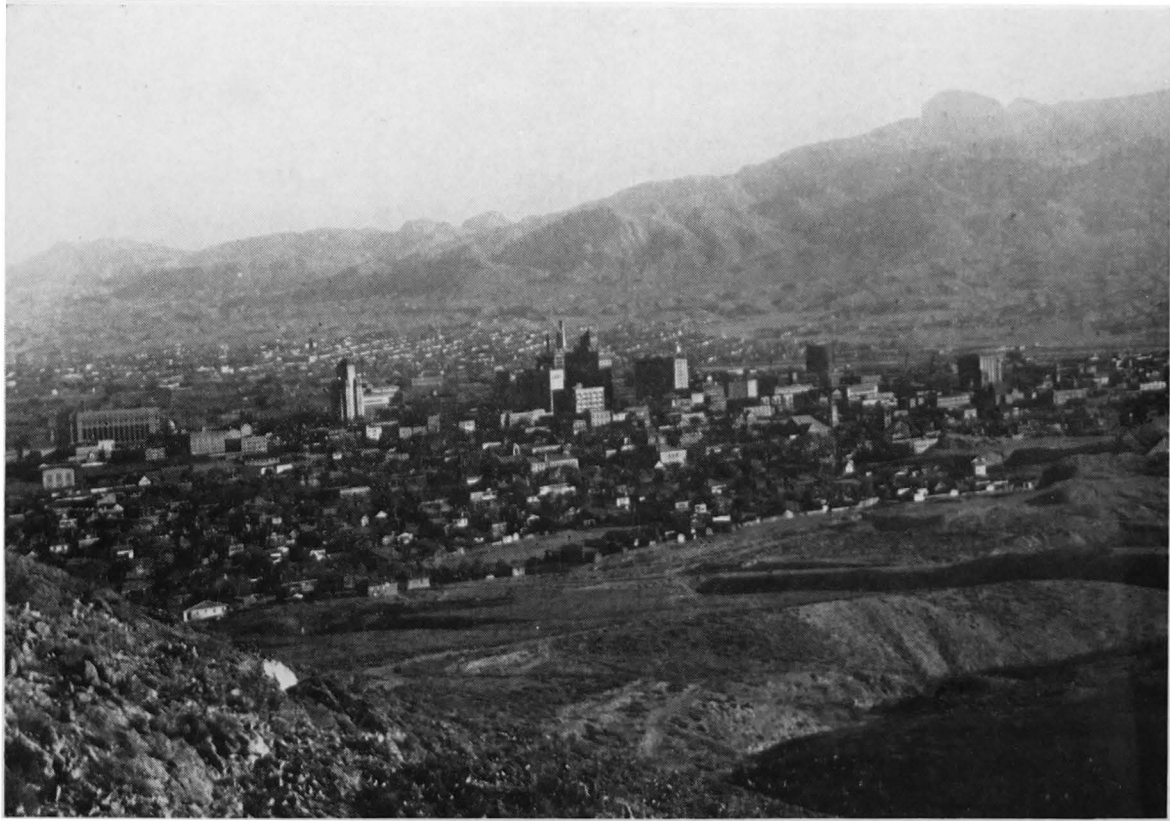
### CROSSING THE BORDER

There are many modes of travel one might use to enter Mexico. The world's largest steamships ply both coasts. Train travelers may enter at several points along the border by routes that will carry them over the main lines southward to the National Capital of Mexico City. Such train transportation is of the very best, and on a par with the service received upon our own railroads through the South. In fact, the same Pullman cars continue direct from points in the United States to Mexico City.

The roads of Mexico in past years have been very poor. The automobile traveler has found it was almost impossible to enter any great distance into the country. New thrills await the road tourist as Mexico now opens up new fields of travel through territory that will display more beautiful scenery per mile than any other place in the world. It is now possible to enter Mexico at Laredo, Texas, and continue inland to that beautiful, romantic and historic city of Monterrey, upon hard surfaced roads. From Monterrey many interesting roads lead the tourist to sights few knew existed upon this continent.

The Pan American highway from Laredo to Mexico City offers the automobile tourists a new avenue of adventure. The 767 miles of excellent highway carries one through territory unlike anything to be found anywhere else upon the continent. Auto travelers can thus tour through ranch country, waste lands, fertile valleys as well as visit beautiful mountains and tropical fruit territory. It is very common to see bananas growing along this new highway which is the first road to connect the Mexican Capital to the United States border.

The Mexican government has spent millions of dol-



El Paso, Texas, Formerly Known as the "Paso Del Norte" (Pass of the North) is located on Several Transcontinental Railway Lines, Four Large Airlines Operating Daily Schedule and Both International and National Highways. El Paso is a Very Important Port of Entry to Mexico.

lars to construct this new road but its opening has been delayed because of the difficulties encountered in the mountain area where it was necessary to hew a path through solid stone. The entire road is full width and constructed along modern lines so the driver will feel safe as he travels through the high mountains. Within a short time this new Pan American highway will be "history" and looked upon as "just another road" but the natives living along its borders will look upon speeding cars and trucks with curiosity for some time to come. For most sections of the country, the new road will bring the Mexican his first sight of auto transportation.

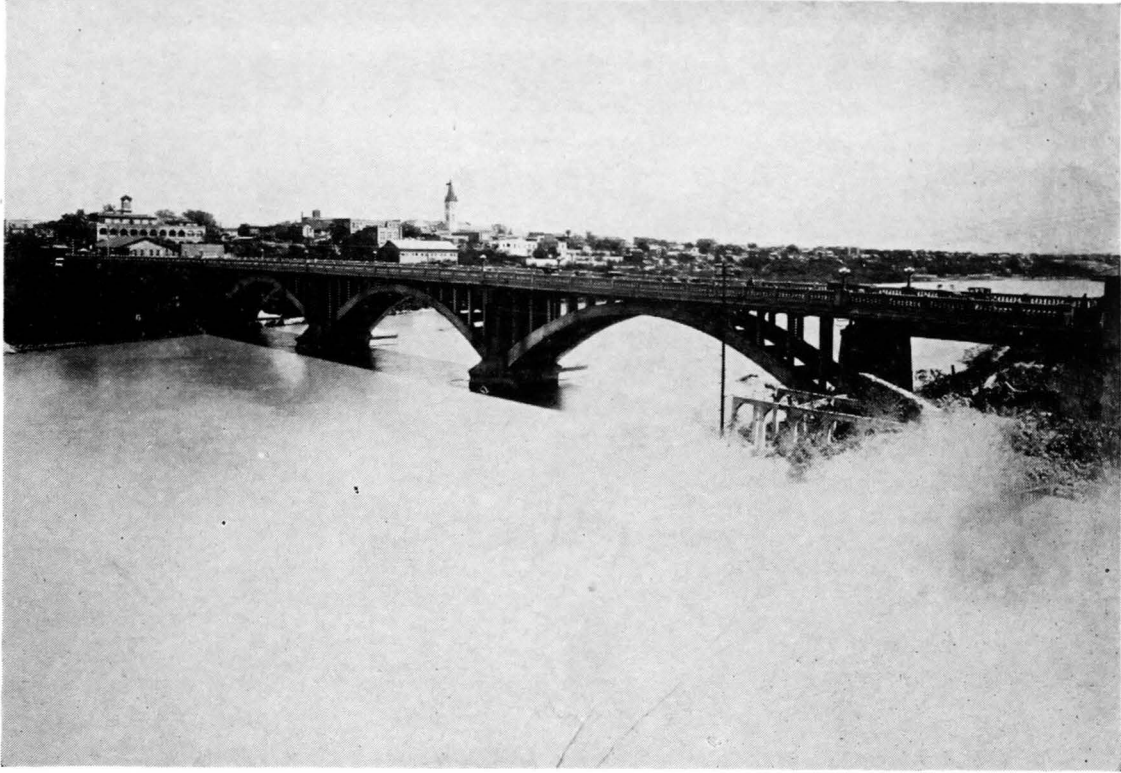
For years I have awaited the opening of the new highway so that I might have the opportunity of traveling its entire length on one trip. Before the dedication, word was sent me that the road had been completed so I started immediately for Mexico City. I found this grand highway to be of all-weather construction and in excellent condition.

Probably the majority of motorists will find it more convenient and enjoyable to make the short drive from the border to Monterrey the first day. The second day can be spent by driving to Tamazunchale which is at the foot of a high and long mountain range that must be traversed before reaching Mexico City. Tourists seem to find enjoyment in attempting the long Mexican names. But this little city, Tamazunchale, known for its tree frogs, gives little trouble when you think of "Thomas" and "Charley." The third day of travel will bring you into Mexico City early even if you drive slowly through the mountains and take time for sight-seeing.

Upon our departure we left Mexico City in the afternoon and spent the first evening in Tamazunchale. The next day we drove, with much ease and comfort, to Laredo on the border. You have nothing to worry about and if you plan such a trip I suggest you grab a map, start out, and pay no attention to the "advice" which they so freely delight in giving out especially in cities along the United States side of the border. The accommodations found at the opening of the new highway

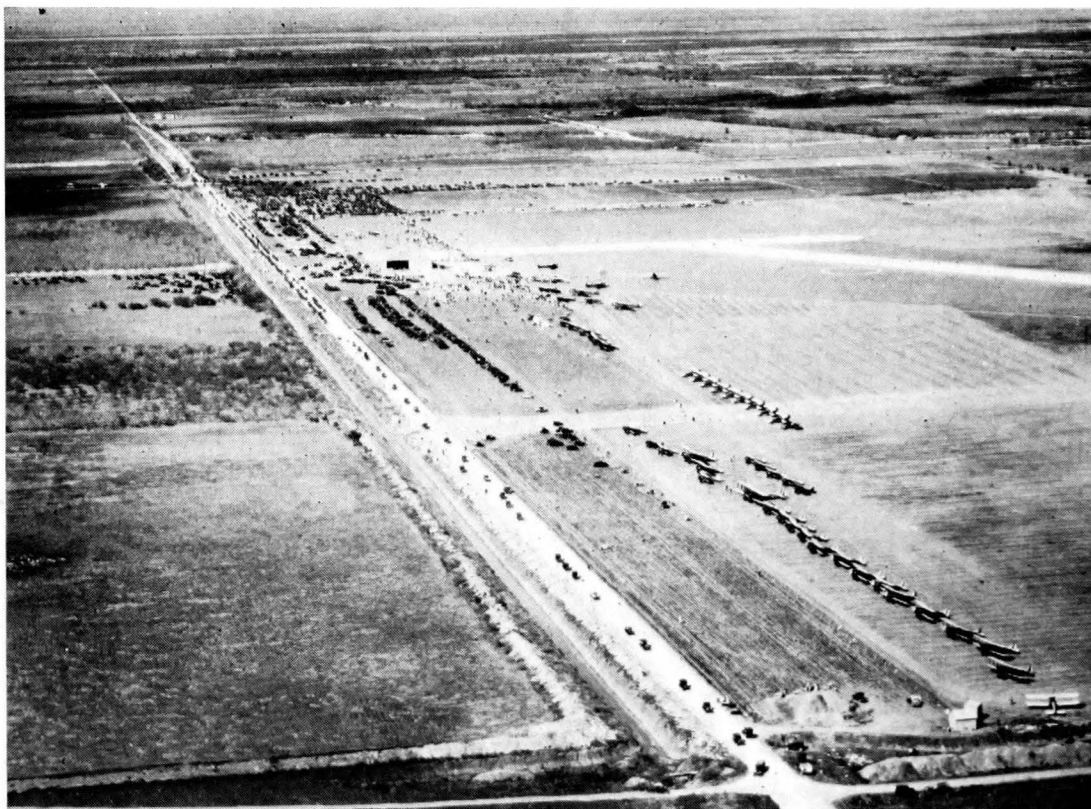


A Pose With Special "Petticoats" Taken From Two American Women Who Were Making Frequent Visits Across the Border to Mexico. During the "Dry Days" the Custom Inspectors Were Kept Very Busy Checking Possible Entry of Such Liquid.



Looking Down The Famous Silvery Rio Grande River Which Forms the Long Border Line Between the Lone Star State of Texas and Mexico.





The International Airport at Brownsville, Texas. The Great Pan-American Airline Has Large Shops Located at Brownsville and it is Claimed that More Planes and Air Passengers Clear This Port For Mexico Than All Other Airports Together.



A Street Pottery Market and a Group of Street Musicians.

were of course not as complete as they will be after the tourist travel increases. There were many filling stations and camps under construction. I made the notes found on the following page, for a number of friends who are planning a trip over the new "wonder" highway.

If the traveler wishes to be modern and craves fast transportation to the interior, his desires are realized when he steps aboard the mammoth planes of the Pan-American airlines that enter Mexico at Brownsville, Texas. One can depart from Brownsville, after a late breakfast, in one of the regular scheduled airliners and arrive in Mexico City for early evening dinner. This route travels down the Gulf Coast from Brownsville to Tampico, then over and up into the mountains to Mexico City at an elevation of over seven thousand feet. Brownsville to Mexico City, by rail, takes two days and one night. There is very little for the citizen of Canada or the United States to worry over in regards to details in crossing the border into Mexico. You must ask for a tourist permit which is issued by any Mexican Consul. This gives you permission to visit within the country as a tourist. If purchased from a Consul the charge will be one United States dollar and if arranged for at the border the charge is two pesos (about sixty cents).

It is best that the tourist exchange some of his money into Mexican coin as he will find that in all transactions south of the border, native money is used. In case they accept U. S. money (which they do gladly in most parts of the world) he will find that value received will be far less than if he used Mexican money. The hotels or banks in all parts of the country will gladly allow one the current exchange. Upon my most recent visit to Mexico City the exchange was \$3.60 for one of our dollars. The tourist will find his best investment at the banks.

It is possible to exchange standard traveler checks in all Mexican cities. But do not think they can be so conveniently used at every filling station and hot dog stand as they are in this country!

# PAN-AMERICAN HIGHWAY

## Laredo, Texas to Mexico City

Miles	Kilo- meters		Popu- lation	Eleva- tion feet	Gas and Oil	Garage Service	Meals	Hotel or Camp	Water
00	00	Laredo, Texas (border)		300	X	X	X	X	X
14	23	Revision Fiscal	Customs	300					
46	74	La Gloria		400	X		X		X
81	131	Sabinas Hidalgo	5,000	1000	X	X	X	X	X
102	164	Revision Fiscal	Customs	2000					X
114	183	Los Pozos			X				X
124	200	Cienega De Flores		1300	X				X
145	234	Monterrey	160,000	1750	X	X	X	X	X
160	258	Los Rodriguez			X				X
194	313	Montemorelos	5,000	1500	X	X	X	X	X
227	365	Linares	9,000	1300	X	X	X	X	X
324	521	Victoria	20,000	1400	X	X	X	X	X
400	645	El Limon	5,000	350	X		X		X
465	749	Valles	4,000	275	X	X	X	X	X
533	858	Tamazunchale	3,000	500	X	X	X	X	X
596	960	Jacala	2,000	4400	X		X	X	X
664	1069	Ixmiquilpan		5800	X		X	X	X
710	1144	Colonia		8000	X				X
759	1222	Guadalupe Hidalgo	Suburbs	7500	X		X		X
767	1240	Mexico, District Federal	1,250,000	7400	X	X	X	X	X



Statue of Juarez in the Federal District (D. F.).

The car owner must register and bond his car upon crossing the border. The cost is very small and little time is needed to go through the routine. To cross into Mexico, with the sole purpose of daily visits to the Mexican border towns, the traveler does not need a tourist card or trouble to bond his car. The regular routine of passing border inspection is the only necessary detail.

Mexico invites the tourist to bring his kodak or motion picture camera with him. They wish you to take many pictures so that you may re-live your Mexican adventures upon your return home, or show your friends what experiences you had during your trip below the Rio Grande. The officials ask you to have your pictures developed before you leave Mexico. This request is made so that persons might not carry back extreme or obscene photos, claiming them to represent regular conditions existing in Mexico.

Upon your return to the United States you will find the U. S. government will allow you to bring back many souvenirs from your journey. Custom officials allow articles not exceeding one hundred dollars in value per person. Smokers should not stock up on Mexican brands as upon arrival at the border they will be allowed to bring back only fifty cigars or 300 cigarettes.

The so called tailor-made cigarettes of Mexico are very cheap compared to the prices paid in the United States. The standard sized packages of twenties can be purchased in that country for less than an American nickel.

The tourist upon his first venture across the Mexican border will no doubt be surprised at the extremely kind treatment the various officials extend to their guests. Due to this courtesy, the new traveler feels an interest in the country, and at the very outset forms an impression that maybe the stories he has heard regarding Mexico are partly false. On his return to the border he receives brief courtesies from Mexican officials, who, as a goodbye gesture smilingly ask him to return again. From there one must pass the various inspectors who represent our own United States, and once again stand upon Uncle Sam's domain. Upon crossing the border many dozens

of times and at many points, I would say that our own officials could learn much regarding kind and courteous treatment from Mexicans who carry on similar routine work, with a much more pleasant demeanor. It appears our officials wish to characterize a type such as most motion pictures present in the form of a hard boiled army sergeant.

There are many imports and exports across this border and at many points. For instance, the 1934 value of shipments through the Port of Laredo alone carried a value of nearly twenty-one million dollars. Through this same city also the United States shipped over thirteen million dollars worth of commodities. One must take into consideration that these figures represent solely this one port of entry. Through Laredo the United States exported much of this thirteen million dollars in automobiles, sand, soda ash, lumber and paper. The imports consisted mostly of lead, corn, bananas and cantaloupes. The bulk of fruit shipments are carried to the eastern markets by water which furnishes the cheapest transportation. The boats can be loaded within a very short distance of the tropical fruit producing lands.

It may be due to a certain popular song, that a certain city holds the greatest appeal, for the tourist about to enter Mexico. Regardless of the many wonderful things heard about the city of Monterrey, the visitor will find untold interest in this romantic and beautiful Mexican city.

## CHAPTER IV

### MONTERREY

There is but one real Monterrey. To find this very interesting and romantic city you must travel to this historic country below the Rio Grande. Monterrey has a population of over 150,000 and is the capital city of Nuevo Leon, which is located in north-eastern Mexico along the border. Some hundred and fifty miles from the border you will strike the foothills of the famous Rockies. It was here way back in 1596, that Diego Montemayor selected the site of the famous city that bears his name.

The founder of this city could not have chosen a more beautiful location or a point where the climate could be more ideal. The elevation of Monterrey is 1,700 feet and the Santa Catarina river winds its way through the town in lazy fashion. Three sides of the city face the high Rockies that extend southward from the States. The fourth side also claims a mountain border-line but at a greater distance. These mountains extend skyward some eleven thousand feet and at all times are visible from all parts of the city.

Looking out over the city and up into the mountains, gives tourists a real thrill. Their eyes carry them upward along the mountain side, past the timber line, to where rugged peaks seem to hold supremacy over the entire country-side. Regardless of how clear the weather may be, one can always see white clouds plying slowly along below the highest peaks, as if attempting the game of hide-and-seek among the mountain passes. To the south one can view twin peaks, called Saddle Mountain by the natives because of the resemblance to a mammoth saddle. Upon their first visit, this large opening in the mountains appear to many as if a huge V-shaped slice





The Cathedral in Monterrey is Very Old Yet it is Outstanding For its Beauty. It Stands Very imposing in its Colonial Design and Mountain Background. The Workmanship of Bygone Days Was Remarkable. Notice the Many Bells and the Three Belfries. The Famous Saddle Mountain Can Be Seen in the Background.

had been carved out for the special purpose of allowing airplanes, to pass through enroute to the southland or to the National Capital City. It is the ambition of every newcomer to the romantic and historic city, to take an airplane trip skyward and inspect this Saddle Mountain.

Whenever you visit Monterrey—and there is little question but what you will some day—you will always find the weather very clear and the sky a deep blue. Surely they have rain you ask? Indeed they have and how fresh the air becomes after one of these mountain showers! I really believe that Monterrey territory is



This is the Way a Young Mexican Lad Upon the Streets of Monterrey Pictured the Author. The Boy Had Never Taken a Drawing Lesson and His Equipment Consisted of a Quill Pen, a Bottle of Ink and a Paper Pad.



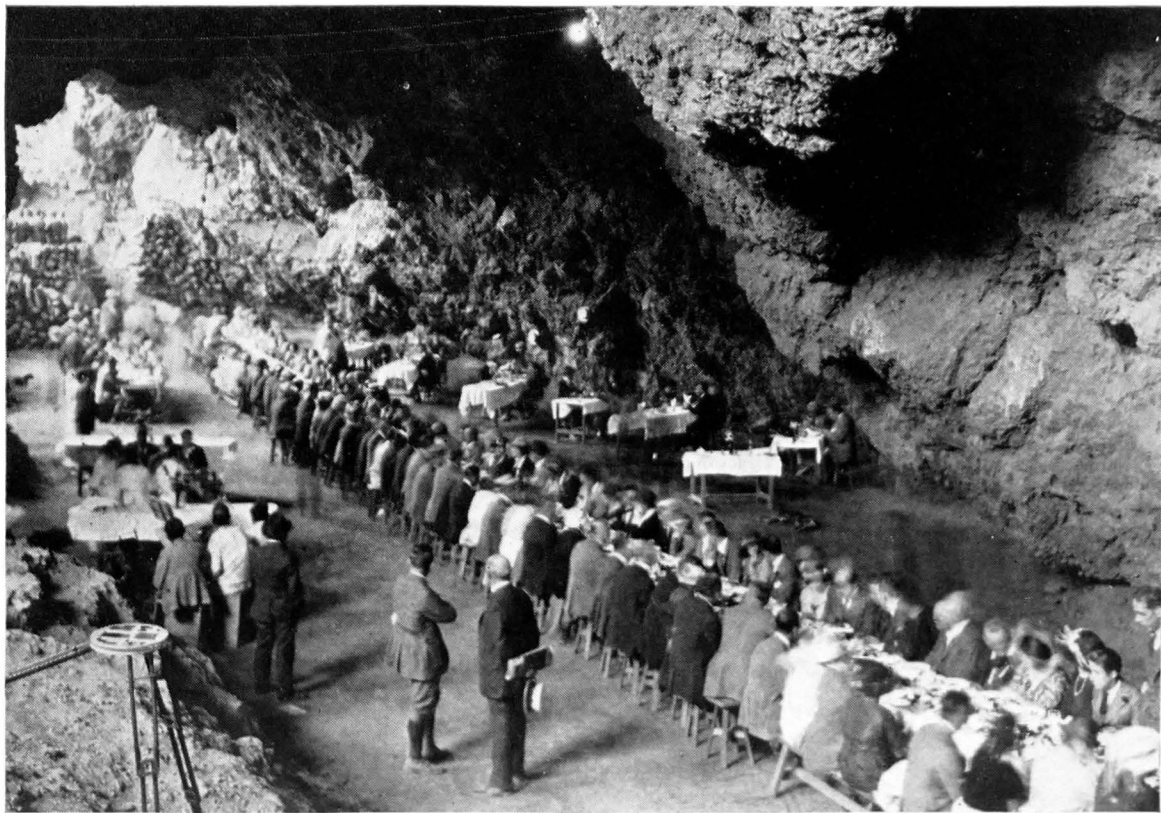
El Obispado, (Bishop's Palace) Was Once the Home of the Catholic Diocese During the Colonial Period. The Old Palace is Located Atop a Hill at the Edge of the Historic and Romantic City of Monterrey and Has Been the Scene of Many Battles Including Various Revolutions as well as Between the Armies of Mexico and the United States. General U. S. Grant, as a Young Lieutenant Fought at this Location.

one place that does not have to make any excuses for "unusual" weather.

To be sure, Monterrey like all other Mexican cities, has its parks within the city limits. Monterrey buildings are typically Mexican but very modern. Being of low design the city covers much territory and there are a number of very popular parks about the city. But the one that might be considered of greatest interest is the Plaza Zaragoza, located near the hotel section. This Plaza extends the entire block, and has a forty foot sidewalk with several rows of comfortable lawn benches. Such seats by the way are found throughout the park, in the centre of which stands a dome shaped bandstand where many fine orchestras can be heard including their own internationally famous police band. Almost every day will find some musical entertainment for the city's guests, and the benefit of the natives in the various parks. In the latter one finds many species of palm trees as well as tropical plants to shade one from the hot sun. Never have I seen so much fruit upon such small trees as I found in the Zaragoza Plaza. The orange trees that lined the sidewalks were so laden their limbs nearly touched the cement pavement. I could not help wondering how they could hold such a heavy and precious load without breaking. And just how a Mexican orange can contain so much juice is another unsolved problem to the writer, as it is possible to fill a glass from a single orange, and the juice is extremely sweet.

Across the street on one side of the plaza is the city hall, erected some eighty years ago. But it shows the effect of wear so little, it could have been built but recently. It is here that Monterrey's Mayor has his office.

On the opposite side of the plaza from the city hall is located the Cathedral which is over 140 years old, but still one of the finest buildings in Mexico. At all hours of the day a stream of people enter the Cathedral to worship. The old church has two towers. One of them contains a very large clock that chimes every quarter hour. The other tower is much higher and has three belfries with four large bells each. At various times



Enjoying a Banquet Down Deep in a Natural Cave at San Juan Teotihuacan.

during the day these bells are rung, and can be heard past the city limits far out into the country. During this time one can see busy bell boys at work high up in the tower.

Upon this same side of the plaza the Monterrey Casino Club was erected. This is an elite business man's club and it is possible for visitors to the city to gain admittance to view the beautiful club rooms.

We mentioned the wide sidewalks about the plaza. There is a purpose and very good reason. Each evening after supper beautiful señoritas come in from the residential sections and gather in the plaza. They are accompanied by their mothers or chaperons. The latter sit and visit while the girls gather and walk about the square. They always parade in one direction and as a rule four abreast. The young men gather and soon join the throng or occupy the park benches that border the walk. These youths walk in the same fashion as the girls, but in the opposite direction. It is necessary for the boys to circle the entire square before they can view their favorite dark-haired, sharp-eyed, beautiful señorita. The glance is very quick and they must smile or "make eyes" at each other very fast, as the pace maintained by the walkers is rapid. Truly this is the fashion parade of Young Mexico, as there is no city upon the continent that keeps pace with the latest styles with a greater degree of accuracy than Monterrey. The clock in the old church across from the plaza has witnessed many such romantic moonlight evenings on this very same square. When the clock chimes ten the March of Youth begins to break step. Before many minutes the entire evening event is over and nearly all have started homeward, upon the streets that lead from the old plaza that has been the scene of such gatherings for hundreds of years. This time you guessed wrong, as the boys do *not* accompany the girls home. They do not even have the opportunity of talking alone. The girls depart with their chaperons and the boys go on their way delighted in thinking of the beautiful smile his favorite senorita gave him upon the last round, as the old, old clock in the

old, old tower chimed the parting hour. The plaza is soon a lonely place, as even the musicians pack their instruments away for another day. But sometimes a few tourists loiter in the park to gaze at the beautiful Mexican moon as it casts its reflection upon the mountain peaks; or shines through the palm leaves and makes imaginary silhouette pictures upon the sidewalk. For some reason, the moon always seems larger and closer in Mexico, and especially in and around Monterrey.

Marelos street will compare with the dainty shoppes and fashions of Park Avenue and Hollywood Boulevard. But the tourist will find markets and stores more typically Mexican in other parts of the city. Many of the thoroughfares have permanent awnings to protect the shoppers from the rays of the sun. It does seem that if the pedestrian takes shelter from its direct rays, even though the afternoon be very warm, he will be very comfortable indeed. This fashionable street in Monterrey also has a special type of sidewalk surface that makes it very comfortable to walk upon.

With all this fashion and modern improvements, Monterrey still retains the charm and customs of the Old World, and the old teachings and traditions may be found in evidence everywhere in the city. There is just that something about Monterrey that holds its own even with the advance of time and commerce. In the midst of modern transportation, paved roads, and fashions, you will see the trusty burro still making his way along the streets in the same manner in which he did many years ago when there was nothing much in the city except adobe houses and dirt streets. The little burro is a very important possession to almost every household.

Many of the roads leading from Monterrey are now paved and it is possible to visit other cities as well as study the agricultural sections. The Mexican government has a mammoth road program under way. Much of the unemployment of the nation has been absorbed in this manner. At this time I would suggest to tourists who motor to Monterrey, to spend some time in and around this city, to study interesting sites within easy



Caves of Cacahuamilpa, Salon of the Pillars in the State of Morelos.



driving distance and inspect the rural farming area in the mountain valleys.

In case the traveler plans to visit Mexico City—which he, by all means should, he can leave his car in Monterrey and make the trip to the Nation's capital in very comfortable style by railroad. This is a wonderful and never to be forgotten experience, regardless of how extensively one has traveled. The trip takes about twenty-four hours. The tourist can arrange to travel the entire distance by daylight by planning to see half of it going, and the remaining half on the return journey. The accommodations are the same as you would expect to find in the States, and it is possible to receive dining car service with your favorite English and American dishes. Upon your arrival in Mexico City you can rent a large car with driver, for much less than it would cost you to operate your own motor car.

Many of the Mexican hotels like the homes are built on the patio style, with the latter courtyard in the center of the building. This type of residence is both pleasing and comfortable, as it makes it possible for all rooms to be outside ones, and furthermore gives ready access to the beautiful patio or court. Some recently constructed hotels however have been built on the American plan. As tourists appreciate the modes of the country visited many will no doubt be disappointed to find patioless hotels. In the beautiful patio type of building you walk through the office into the courtyard, where a staircase leads to a balcony that completely surrounds the patio. From this verandah you enter your room. During the evening tables are placed about the patio and the evening meal is served among palms and other tropical plants with a musical background of Mexican stringed instruments.

You will see very few police about the city and also note the very high respect that countrymen have for their officers. At all times you will find both police and town officials ready to direct you about the town, or to locate interesting land marks. Mexicans are proud of their country and its progressive cities. They wish the



Rocks and Falls of Regla in the State of Hidalgo.

tourist to enjoy himself as they fully realize that each visitor will return home with the true facts about Mexico, and thus act as a self appointed good will ambassador.

Not far from the city one can visit farm lands and see the owners at work. In this section one will notice the use of trusty ox teams with home-made wooden plows and wagons. These Mexicans do not plan upon harvesting a large crop like many farmers in the States hope for. They look upon their work as a vocation, and intend to keep at it always, with no idea of retiring after a crop or two. One cannot but notice how comfortable these farmers seem. In fact, there does not seem to be a more happy group of people in the world. They produce enough for their next year's seed, plus enough to barter off for the actual necessities of the year. This has been their method for generations, and no doubt will continue as it works out very satisfactorily for them. To introduce modern machinery in that farming section would place the entire agricultural area in a condition that similar sections of the world are suffering from—too much acreage per farmer.

The city of Monterrey is one of the cleanest cities that I have ever visited and one cannot but notice the great pride each citizen takes in keeping his city clean. Almost every corner has a metal container into which to drop waste paper. Upon a recent visit to Monterrey I noticed more construction work taking place than in any other city visited upon the continent. Monterrey, like most parts of the country, is enjoying a steady growth and building era. Mexico did not have a "boom" several years ago like other parts of the world and it is showing subsequent favorable results at this time. To give you an idea as to the conditions of the country, allow me to quote the Honorable General Rodriguez, Ex-President of Mexico. He said, "Mexico has practically no unemployment—An important industrial era is beginning in this country, and its extensive lands and farms give employment to everybody who wants to work them."

In Monterrey you will find modern taxi service as well as horse drawn vehicles. As a boy, I recall we named



The Famous Tree of Santa Maria del Tule Located in Oaxaca.

such a combination "surries." Many of the citizens have them for private use. No trip will be complete unless the tourist has at least one evening's sightseeing about the city in such a conveyance.

Monterrey has played a very important role both in the history and the welfare of the nation. It is true the city is very old but no doubt it took a very popular song to make the name so familiar to every citizen of the United States and Canada. Monterrey is the third largest city in Mexico and the outstanding industrial center of that nation. The smokestacks of the latter section continue to belch rolling clouds of smoke upward toward the tropical sky, in such a manner, the tourist will hardly believe he is visiting such a zenith city of industry, especially after viewing the wonderful sights and knowing the international reputation the place has for romance. Thus with the many combinations found here it is most appropriate to end this chapter as we started—there is but one real Monterrey.

## CHAPTER V

### TYPICAL DISHES

No doubt many travelers to the land below the Rio Grande, make selections from the menu cards, and await the consequences. Now typical Mexican dishes may be too hot for foreign patrons, but no trip to a foreign land would be complete without attempting the native dishes of that country.

This recalls a story related to me by a Washington ambassador one morning while we were having breakfast together. The Ambassador related many interesting experiences in various countries. He told one that when in Russia and just before lunch an old friend called upon him. They both went to a nearby cafe to eat and chat. The Ambassador took the menu card and in a nonchalant manner pointed to five different items upon it. The four native dishes served to them proved very tasty. His Excellency was pleased to find his selections so good while his guest no doubt felt his companion was well versed in Russian. They had been served four courses and awaited the fifth item. As it did not arrive the Ambassador indignantly called the head waiter over and pointing to the fifth item upon the menu asked, "When are we going to get this?" The man smiled and replied, "My dear sir, that is one of the musical items, and we have already played it three times for you."

Like the two in Russia you will have music with your meals in Mexico and it will meet with your approval, as most cafes use soft, string instruments. You will be able to express your wishes for your favorite dishes and in all first class eating places enjoy most any American dish. If by any chance you should wander to remote sections, you will find that several Mexican items sound much the same as when ordered in English. Coffee is called "cafe."



A Cactus in Bloom . . . and Well Protected With Many Needle-Like Thorns. The Cactus Contains Much Moisture, Very Much Like a Watermelon, Even Though it is Found in the Extremely Dry Territory.

Beefsteak sounds so much like our name for it you will receive *some* kind of meat; and tomatoes will bring you a heaping dish of the popular ancient love apple. If you wish black coffee just ask for "cafe negro," and if you use cream in your coffee order "cafe con-crema." I have often heard about the tourist who went to a Mexican restaurant and decided to have a fine thick steak smothered with mushrooms. It was very evident he could not explain his wants to the Mexican waiter, so he took pencil and paper and started to draw a picture of a cow and mushroom. The waiter smiled and rushed out the front door. The patron felt he had succeeded in making his wishes clear and settled back awaiting the fine steak and mushrooms. Very soon the front door flew open and the waiter came rushing, smiling but out of breath. He no doubt felt he had been of real service to the patron of the restaurant as he handed him a large umbrella and laid an afternoon's bull fight ticket upon the table before him.

Corn is the staff of life in Mexico and almost all native dishes contain some. The women have crude stone jars they use for grinding corn as they need it. By placing the grain in the crude stone dish, and taking another rough stone, they can grind it into flour. These stones are used to this day just as they were back in pre-conquest times. Last year during one of my trips to lower Mexico, I was presented with a corn grinding stone taken from ruins that were in all probability occupied by Mayan people over a thousand years before Christ. I have noticed similar utensils used in rural districts and they are considered one of the essential things in every home. My corn grinder may be three thousand years old but it works "just like new."

The Mexican native dishes are frijoles, enchiladas, tamales, and last, but by many considered the greatest delicacy of all, . . . the tortillas. There are countless other favorites, many of which resemble the famous tortillas. The higher classes enjoy as great a variety of dishes, as may be found among any other nationality.



But a typical Mexican, regardless of station, enjoys the tortillas above everything else.

Frijoles, or beans, comprise a part of every meal. They prepare the many varieties of beans in countless ways. The average peon will ask for nothing else if he can be assured of having his frijoles and tortillas. The beans as well as other Mexican dishes are seasoned with many spices and red peppers. The average native prefers his food rather greasy.

Tortillas are made from ground corn which is first soaked in a prepared lye solution very similar to the method used in making hominy. It is then ground, and rounded by hand into a small ball. The cook then places it upon a hot iron and pats the mixture down like the operator of an hamburger stand. Unlike meat, the tortilla mixture is cooked upon dry and ungreased iron. They look like pancakes and are fried to the thickness of a book cover. One can buy them in the markets or upon the streets . . . always hot. You will notice little stoves with charcoal fires that keep the iron heated so that the curb cafe can give them to you "red hot." They eat them without using any seasoning and often use them as forks or spoons when they eat their beans. Stay in Mexico for many weeks and you will soon be a patron of one of these sidewalk tortilla merchants.

Tamales rank next in popularity with the tortillas. But these as a rule, are used on picnics and special occasions. Tamale sales are made upon the streets, and even a foreigner soon gets the habit of going out to get his tamale . . . or maybe a dozen. The dough is made somewhat the same as for the tortilla, but is rolled out thicker to serve as an outside cover for a mixture of ground meats, mostly pork, and other seasonings. This is all pressed tightly together and then wrapped with corn leaves. Many different recipes are used for the inner mixture. Some call for sweet meats, raisins and chopped meats. After being rolled in corn leaves they are steamed, and eaten both hot and cold. Often the families will have a "tamalada," which might correspond



A "White Way" in a Rural Hamlet.

to our hot-dog roasts, but they of course limit themselves to the tamales.

My favorite Mexican food is the enchilada. They first fry a mixture of the dough, made like that used in the tortilla, into a large pancake. Then they take it off the red hot iron and heap in a mixture of chopped meat, lettuce, onion, garlic, tomato, red and green peppers. You then sprinkle hot chile sauce on the concoction. The next operation is to grab it, fold it up, and then eat it without shedding a tear. The natives look upon this as a delicacy. My ambition is to be able to eat one some time in nonchalant style so that those about me will not immediately spot me as a foreign tourist.

They have a dish that might compare with our "Mulligan stew," as they take mutton and cook it with cabbage, parsnips, onions, apples, squash, carrots, corn and any other vegetables they can find in the local market. For this boiled dish they reserve the name "puchero."

There will be found many typical Mexican dishes, some hot and some cold, but, I give you warning that if you travel to the outlying sections of Mexico and don't have your English-Spanish dictionary along you had better remember—coffee, beefsteak, and tomatoes.



A Typical Patio Hall Way in a Private Residence of a City Home.

## CHAPTER VI

### MEXICO CITY

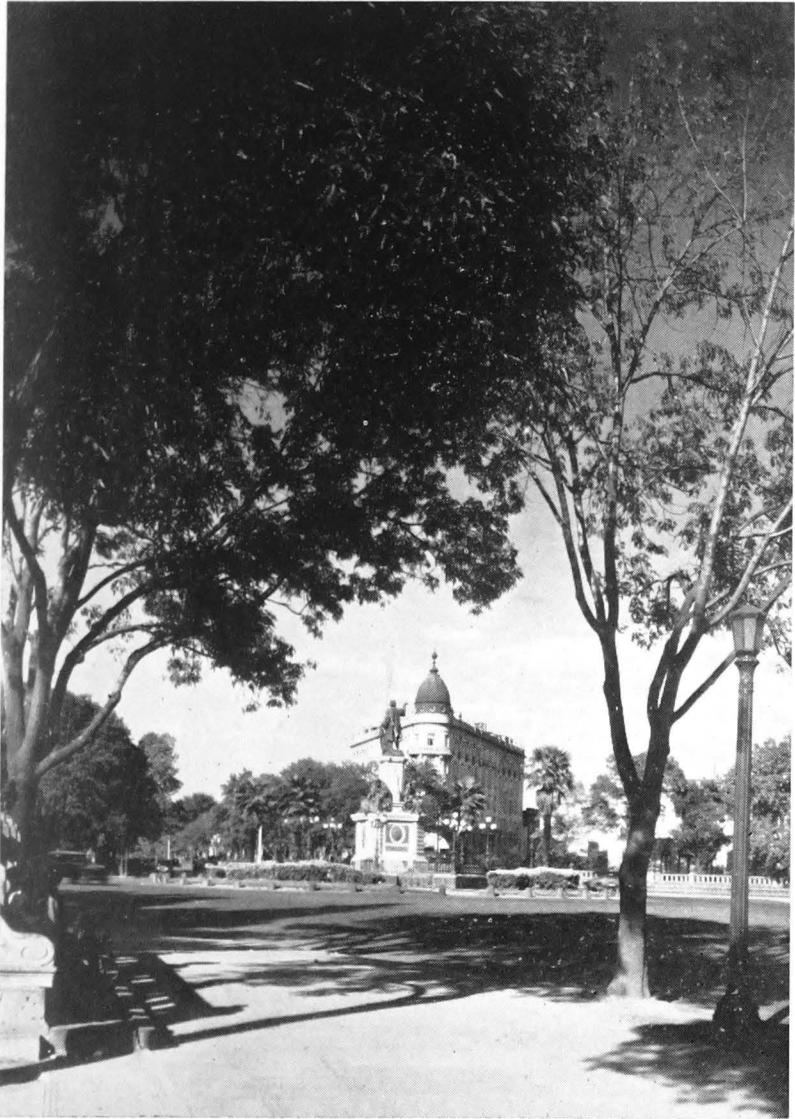
Thrills as well as surprises await you at Mexico City, the Capital City of the Nation. The old natives of the city smile and say that a "spell" comes over you upon your first visit to the Land of Manana, and that you will come back again—some day.

If you arrive in the city by train, you at once notice the well organized troupe of Red Caps that greet you at the station with "Puedo servirle en algo?" and at the same time reach for your luggage. Regardless of its amount their price is one peso for each person. The Red Caps consist of all ages and they are an interesting sight as they arrange the ropes about your baggage and heap it upon their person.

The National Capital has its Federal District, much like the District of Columbia of the United States. This territory, known as the District Federal, includes the main city as well as several near-by suburbs.

The President of Mexico, Senor Lazaro Cardenas, is a very distinguished gentleman. As a soldier would say, "He came up through the ranks." This is very true, as no doubt his past actions have done much to win him the hearts of almost every citizen of the nation—from the most humble peon to the city business man. President Cardenas was still within his 39th year when he took the office of President, December 1st, 1934.

As a youth, he found it necessary to support his mother and supply the needs of the home. So this young man found it was impossible to attend school as he wished. During the day he found employment as a local tax collector. His early life was very similar to that of our beloved Abraham Lincoln. It was necessary for him to borrow and gather what books he could in order to carry



In Many Sections of Mexico City the Tourist is Surprised to Find Monuments Erected in Honor of World Famous People. Here We See a Monument of Christopher Columbus Located on the Famous Wide Street, Paseo de la Reforma.

out the studies he wished. His evenings were spent with his head close to the borrowed books as the tiny flickering candle light was very poor. From this humble life this great gentleman rose to the highest office of the nation. Needless to say humble people have great confidence in their President and leader as they very well know he is familiar with the trials and tribulations of the average citizen. He is now in his early forties, and took office with a very large majority of votes.

The President's office is in the National Palace which corresponds, to some extent, to our Capitol building in Washington, D. C. It is one of the few old Capitol buildings of the world not constructed on the dome style.

About the city one will note large structures in which are the various Governmental departments. Embassies housing the official representatives in Mexico of the various nations of the world, are well distributed throughout the metropolis.

The United States Embassy is a wonderful edifice. The living quarters in a separate building behind, are very beautiful. But a trip to Mexico City would not be complete without the American visiting his country's official headquarters and signing his name in the large registration book. Here the late Mr. Morrow resided while in Mexico in the capacity of the United States Ambassador. It is said the world-famous hero, Charles Lindbergh, first thought of matrimony here, where for the first time he met Anne Morrow—under the famous and romantic Mexican moon.

The late Mr. Morrow evidently did much for the Mexican people. He is so well remembered by them all you still often hear his name mentioned. No doubt Mexico will erect a monument in his honor some day, as the natives love to do this for those whose memories they cherish.

It was not Mr. Morrow's wealth that aided him in winning the respect of the Mexican people. In fact, it is true that qualifications which would insure high respect in any other land become hindrances in Mexico, where the people do not place much confidence in the rich.



Teatro Nacional Street in Mexico City. Post Office and Bank of Mexico (on left) The National Theatre of Fine Arts (on right). In the Background One Can View Mexico's Only Skyscraper, Erected Upon Countless Pillings to Offset Sinking Such as Most All Other Large Buildings Have Experienced in the Capital City.

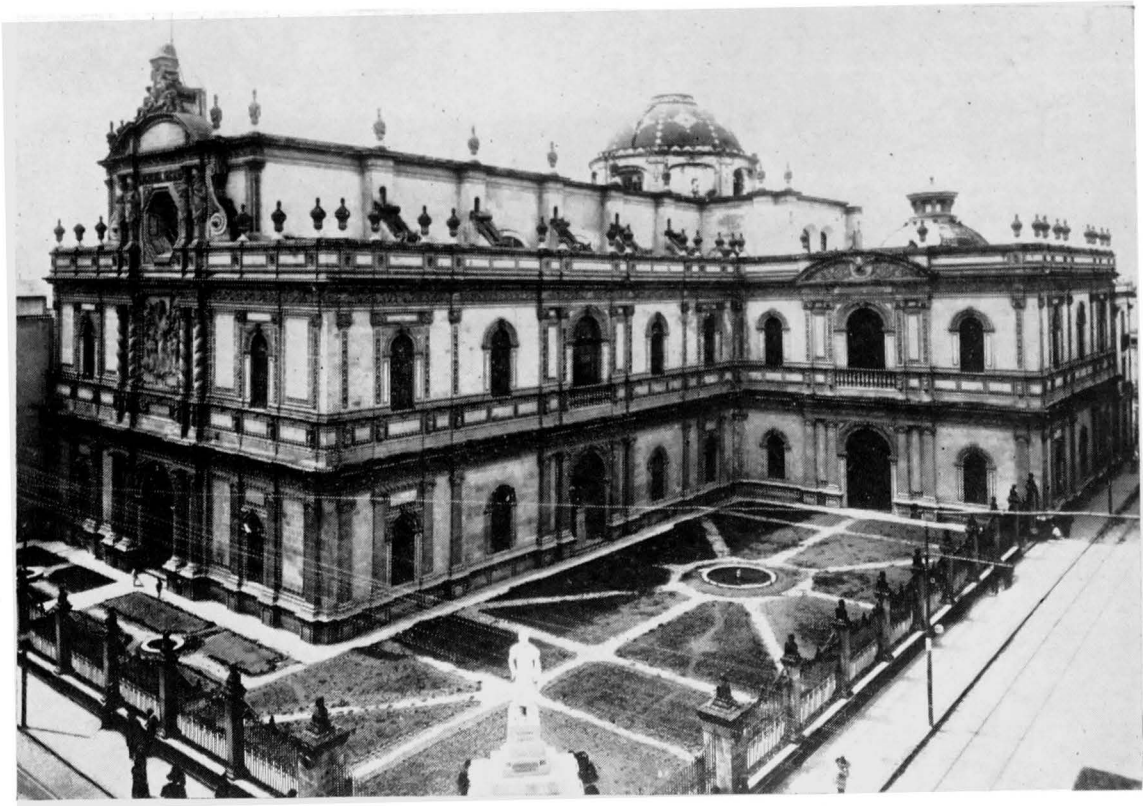


Their experiences with monied men and corporations in the past, have proven none too profitable for their country. So it is easy to see where the great majority of the citizens of Mexico became very skeptical upon the arrival of Mr. Morrow, feeling that with such a contact man for the United States, it would be almost impossible to negotiate diplomatic transactions favorable to the humble peon population.

Dwight Morrow proved himself to be one of the greatest diplomats for the United States. Before the full moon had disappeared many times behind old mount Popocatepetl the new Ambassador had won the respect and admiration of the people of the National Capital. This interest soon spread to the rural sections and Mr. Morrow had captured the hearts of the greater part of the nation.

Within the city there is a hill surrounded by a park heavy with subtropical foliage. Upon it stands Chapultepec Castle, the official residence of the Presidents of the Republic. To view this edifice built on the hill top overlooking the nation's capital, majestically rising up against a skyline of drifting clouds, reminds one of childhood fairy tales when the imagination was captured by visions of castles, in the air, and upon mountain peaks. The hill is so convenient, and serves its purpose so well, it appears as if made by man instead of nature. The main part of the Castle is over one hundred years old. It is said it was first erected in 1783, but because of warfare and successive governments the present structure bears little resemblance to the first building. There is always a troop of soldiers stationed about the Castle, as well as at various points along the hill-road that leads to the Castle from the lower street level. At the base of the height is an entrance to which the President's car can be driven and he can be lifted in an elevator up within the walls of the Castle.

During early days this edifice witnessed much active warfare. A very touching and soul-stirring feeling moves the hearts of all those who visit a specially constructed monument erected at the base of the mountain-like hill



Over a Quarter Million Books Are on File For Public Use in the National Library in Mexico City. The Books Will be Found to Contain Not Only Spanish Print But English, French, German, Italian and Latin as Well.

supporting the historic Chapultepec Castle. This stone memorial stands to the memory of that gallant group of young soldier boys who gave their lives rather than be taken prisoners by the invading enemy.

The Castle seemed to be the objective of every invading group of warriors. It served well as the final fortification for the Capital City. Upon this particular occasion the invading army was one belonging to the United States. The Mexican army needed manhood and to protect the Capital it was necessary to use many young boys to make the last stand. The United States troops were closing in rapidly about the castle-fort. The Mexicans had lost many men, and ammunition was running low. When the decision was made that there was no possible chance for the remaining few to withstand the charge of the Americans, the besieged boys quickly decided, rather than be taken prisoners, they would throw themselves from the castle wall, over the cliff, to be crushed on the stones several hundred feet below. This monument was erected in their memory.

As you study Mexico City you will, no doubt, be surprised at its size and modern ways, and the beauty and artistry shown in buildings that are no doubt the equal of any in the world, and have gained for the Mexicans the reputation of having one of the most attractive cities on earth.

Tourists find many places of interest, some more appealing to one individual than to another. Upon their first round of the city they usually visit the National Palace, the National Pawnshop, the flower markets, the Government Library, and the many National Government buildings; inclusive of the Art Gallery of San Carlos, the Old Spanish Colonial buildings, the Military College, the University and Chapultepec Park. The National Museum holds one's interest for days, and compares very favorably with the great Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C.

The National Pawnshop as well as the National Lottery is controlled by the government. The Lottery is a favorite institution all over the nation. There seems



Towers of the National Cathedral Overlooking Zocalo Plaza With the National Palace to the Left. Municipal Palace in the Background.

to be keen interest in the many prizes among all types of citizens. It is possible to purchase lottery tickets in any business place or from ever-present street sales-people. These vary from young newspaper boys and girls to elderly people who would rather depend upon sales commissions than take their chance upon lottery results. The National Lottery is operated upon rigid rules and completely under the control of the government. The profits from this institution go to charity funds throughout the nation.

The Mexican people look upon their Military College with great pride. It is often referred to as the "West Point" of Mexico. It is very interesting to study the types selected to enter this outstanding government school. A picked group of young men, the flower of the young manhood of Mexico, can be found here.

Not only the Capital City, but the entire nation is mighty proud of the National University. The average annual enrollment has about ten thousand students, each of whom may select any program of studies he chooses to pursue. The University standard now equals that of any other educational institution of its type in the world. In recent years many students have registered from foreign countries. During the summer months there are special courses for students from the States. Athletic activities are held in the stadium which has a seating capacity of over forty thousand persons.

The National Palace faces the Zocalo Plaza, as does the beautiful and historic Cathedral. The Palace is a three story building of concrete and stone. Above the central doorway hangs the famous Liberty Bell of Mexico, that once hung in the tower of a small, parish church. It is to Mexico what our Liberty Bell signifies to the United States. The patriot priest, Miguel Hidalgo, used its deep tones to call his faithful people to arms, when under his shrewd and famous leadership they wrested the independence of Mexico from Spain in 1810.

Readers and book lovers will no doubt find unlimited interest within the walls of the National Library where there is to be found over a quarter million books on

file open to the public. These books contain not only Spanish print but English, French, German, Italian, and Latin as well.

One of the first things that tourists ask about, upon arriving in Mexico City, is the bullfights. The main bull fight season begins in November and continues through March. During this period one can witness the outstanding toreadors of both Mexico and Spain, where they too claim it, as their national sport. It is at this time they advertise "Good Bulls," meaning that the best fighting animals will be used. Some of these are imported from Spain. The mammoth bullring El Toreo, the largest in the world, is located within a short distance of the center of the city. These bullrings are found in almost every town throughout Mexico and are often located at the village center usually near a towering belfry. Noting the proximity of Church to Bullring in nearly all sections of the nation I could not refrain from asking "Why?" to the Inn keeper, in one of the small hamlets where we were stopping. My question puzzled my host. He pushed back his tremendous sombrero, scratched his thick black coarse hair and smiled suddenly. Right then, I knew I would receive some kind of answer. My informer straightened his hat in place, reached down and tightened his rope belt and replied, "I think Señor, they made them close together so the folks could go to the bull fight direct from the church and lose no time." The answer appeared like a joke on me, but after making a study of their loyalty to the national sport, I do believe the old Inn keeper had the right idea and expressed it thoroughly.

Aviation has made great strides and the people of Mexico City are very air-minded. There are a number of airlines operating into the National Capital City. It is possible to enplane here for almost any point in Mexico. The Pan-American lines offer the very best equipment for passenger and mail transportation from Mexico City northward to the United States as well as southward to South America. Southbound ships connect with the large clipper-type airlines that feed



The National Palace in Mexico City. The President's Official Office Suite is Located on the Second Flight and to the Right. It Was Through the First Driveway Where Monkey-face Hastily Drove the Author to Keep an Appointment With the President. Notice the Many

in from Miami, Florida, and the West Indies. It is possible to have a typical Mexican breakfast in Mexico City one morning and the next day order your hot cakes in the early morning hours way up in the Windy City, Chicago. The government favors aviation and has lent its cooperation to the commercial lines. The Mexican Air Corps base is maintained at the nation's Capital. The popular Mexican hero of many flights, Colonel Roberto Fierro, is chief of this department.

Now that the highway has opened a new inlet of tourist trade to Mexico the city expects the number of visitors to increase very rapidly. During 1935 they entertained both the Rotary and Lions for their international convention. Due to the great influx of guests who flocked to such outstanding conventions, the hotel and rooming house accommodations proved inadequate. So the railroads went to the rescue of the hotels and erected temporary buildings along their side tracks and with these used the regular Pullman cars for convention headquarters. With this arrangement it was possible for many of the delegates to retain their same Pullman berths from the time their special train departed from home territory until they returned. This arrangement won the name of Pullman City. The Rotary delegates numbered nearly six thousand people..

Upon the published reports that the Rotary and Lions clubs had accepted the invitation of Mexico City for their 1935 convention place, a certain organization within the United States did its utmost to have these clubs cancel the Mexican visit. Much so-called "heat" was used, but after consideration the proper committees decided they would go through with their plans, and take a chance on the "dangers" this faction had advised them against, when attempting to crush the proposed trip. Those who visited the city found a very hearty welcome awaiting them at their destination, as well as at stops enroute. The President of the Republic gave them a personal welcome.

The guests who visit Mexico find conditions prevailing in that country far different from that which is pic-





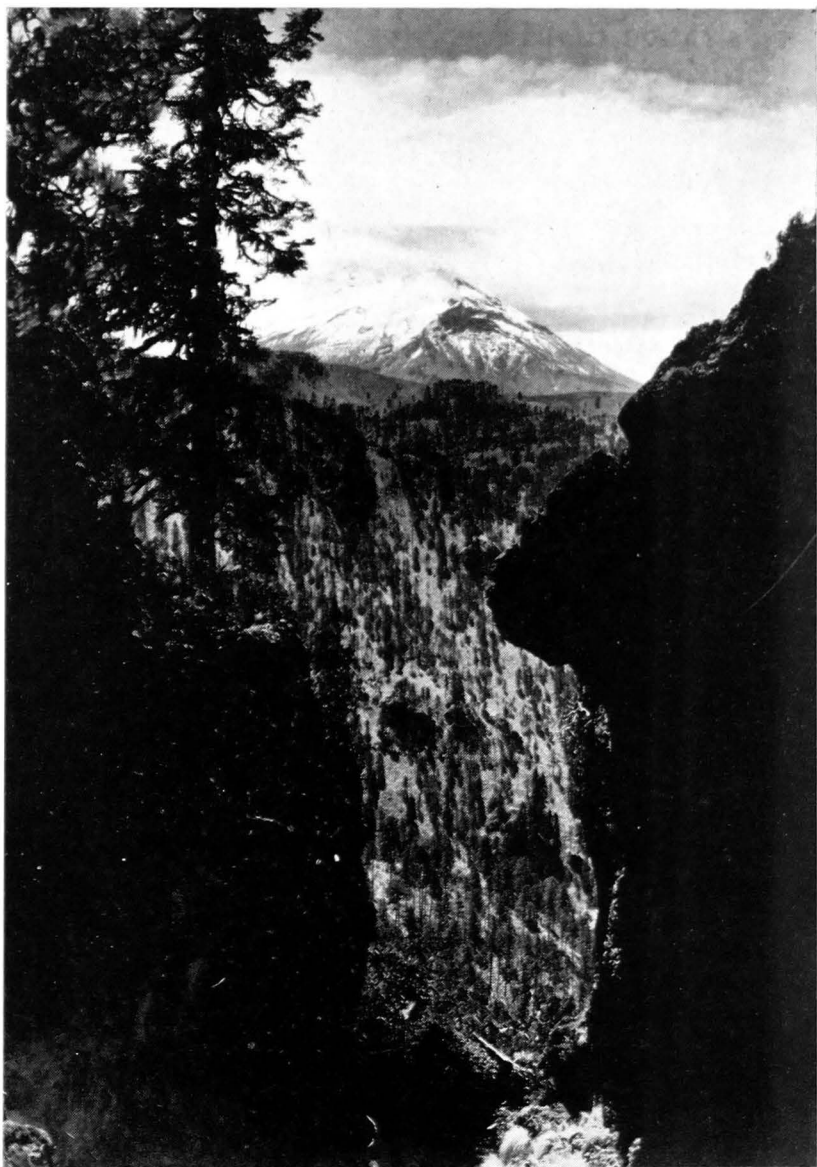
Within the Patio Balcony of the La Merced Convent, Mexico City.

turized by much of the propaganda and anti-government literature circulated within the United States. Without question the class who appeared to be so against the administration of Mexico, found that their propaganda against Mexican officials, did not "hold water" and their stories fell far from the facts when the guests investigated the situation for themselves.

Visiting with one of the convention delegates shortly after his return from the Mexican Capital, the conversation naturally dwelt upon conditions as he found them. He had previously made it very plain to me, that after hearing of the terrible conditions existing throughout the country, as well as reading about the attitude the federal government took towards the religious situation, he was very skeptical as to the feasibility of their organization considering the acceptance of Mexico's invitation. So I was very much interested as to his reactions after making the trip, as before the convention I, too, had heard of the propaganda, and recalled his statement. He said, "Naturally, with such protests I attempted to check certain things myself. Although time was brief, I failed to find any Mexican people who did not advise me that general conditions were far better than they had ever been. So with the many happy natives, I come to the conclusion that the President and his aides must be on the right track."

The tourist guides take great pride in showing the ancient buildings and other sites of interest to the historian and traveler. They always like to take you to the edge of Mexico City and there point out a certain tree over five hundred years old, and famous for its connection with Mexican history, as many peace treaties have been signed beneath its boughs.

The Old Cathedral is a very grand structure and is said to be the largest church building upon the continent. This gigantic and beautiful edifice, composed of basalt and gray sandstone has extremely thick walls and contains two towers that rise over two hundred feet above the atrium. The building occupies the entire north side of the famous Plaza de la Constitucion, more commonly referred to as



Popocatepetl From Los Centinelas.

the Zocalo. The cornerstone of the present building was laid in 1573, but completion did not come until 1667. The artistic towers took form and reached their present height much later. This work was accomplished 1791. Even with this great age the building is still in daily use and stands as a marvel for visiting architects and engineers.

A visit to the old Colonial buildings proves most interesting. One still occupied building is as old as the Cathedral. It was built for a Spanish Count. The most interesting part of my visit to this particular home was the examination of the large wooden doors that led into the main patio. They are about fourteen feet high, very thick, resemble walnut, and look like new, except in places where there are gashes from bullets reminiscent of the warfare of early days. Each door contains the coat-of-arms of the Count's family, and of the King of Spain of that day.

There is evidence that the city is built upon an old lake-bed, as the soil beneath is of sandy formation. Old buildings as well as new are built of stone, and in most cases show indications of settling. The old Cathedral has settled nearly ten feet, and most of the old buildings have sunk so that their bases are now lower than the side walk level. In most cases the entire building has settled evenly, causing little damage. There are no skyscrapers, other than the one recently erected by a group of engineers from the United States. This building was built over a foundation made on countless wooden pilings, forced far into the earth. This is expected to counteract the settling trouble.

The Government has had the mammoth National Theatre under construction for many years. In fact it was first started in 1900, though its progress was often interrupted due to the quick changing conditions of passing years. The building is now completed, and without question is the finest of its kind in the world.

The Government imported a great deal of marble from Italy, for its construction, but much of the stone was also quarried in Mexico.

During the last years of its construction the Government insisted that its completion be rushed and more men be employed if possible. Work went forward twenty four hours each day with over four hundred men employed upon each shift. It is already apparent that this tremendous and weighty building shows signs of sinking, and if one can be such a judge, as a sidewalk observer, I would say the new theatre has settled at least eight feet. It might have taken Mexico from 1900 until the late months of 1934 to finish their great theatre and the spending of several millions, but the results have been well worth their efforts and expense. They now possess one of the most beautiful buildings in the world dedicated to art.

If it is true that Mexico City now stands on ground once covered by a great lake, credit for the vast engineering feat must go to some ancient tribe. It must then be admitted that great accomplishments have been made in drainage engineering without the aid of college degrees, so this profession cannot be classed as belonging only to the modern era.

The Capital City has a population of nearly one million and a quarter with another quarter million living in the suburbs and hamlets nearby. The city covers much territory as most of their buildings are low and flat.

The street system is excellent. Nowhere have I seen such wide roads, unless it be Salt Lake City, Utah. It is true, there are many narrow streets, but most of them have been converted into one-way thoroughfares. The Paseo de la Reforma leading to Chapultepec Park and the Castle is a real treat for visitors no matter how extensively they have traveled. The Paseo is an exceedingly wide boulevard, and about three miles in length, within the city limits. Midway along this fine road is a large monument in honor of Mexican Independence, the base of which forms a sepulcher for several national heroes; and also contains a niche wherein a fire perpetually burns in honor of those who gave their lives for the independence of their country. This niche which is guarded in turn by prominent citizens can be seen from

the Castle. Even the President takes his turn several times each year.

Mexico favors the erection of monuments and statues to commemorate her dead heroes. It is very evident she honors the heroes of other nations, too. Upon my trips about the city I recall seeing statues of Christopher Columbus, George Washington, and great men of other countries.

The Government is doing much towards the safety of the foreign traveler and, without any doubt, it is as safe to travel in Mexico as it is in any other country. On the roads leading from Mexico City to the mountain suburbs, and other points of interest, there are many soldiers at unexpected places. The car will be halted, and the driver requested to show his license. He will also be compared with the photograph upon his permit. Each cabman must be registered and to gain his permit, must have a very good reputation. When your conveyance pulls away from the station it is stopped by officers who make a similar inspection. This does away with any possibility of unlawful persons disguised as cab drivers. These formalities give great confidence to the traveler and do much to make his trip to the Mexican cities more enjoyable. With such treatment and protection the most timid traveler soon forgets the terrible stories so often heard in the United States regarding Mexico's bandit-like conditions, and settles back in comfort and renewed anticipation for the great things held in store for his first trip into the heart of Mexico.

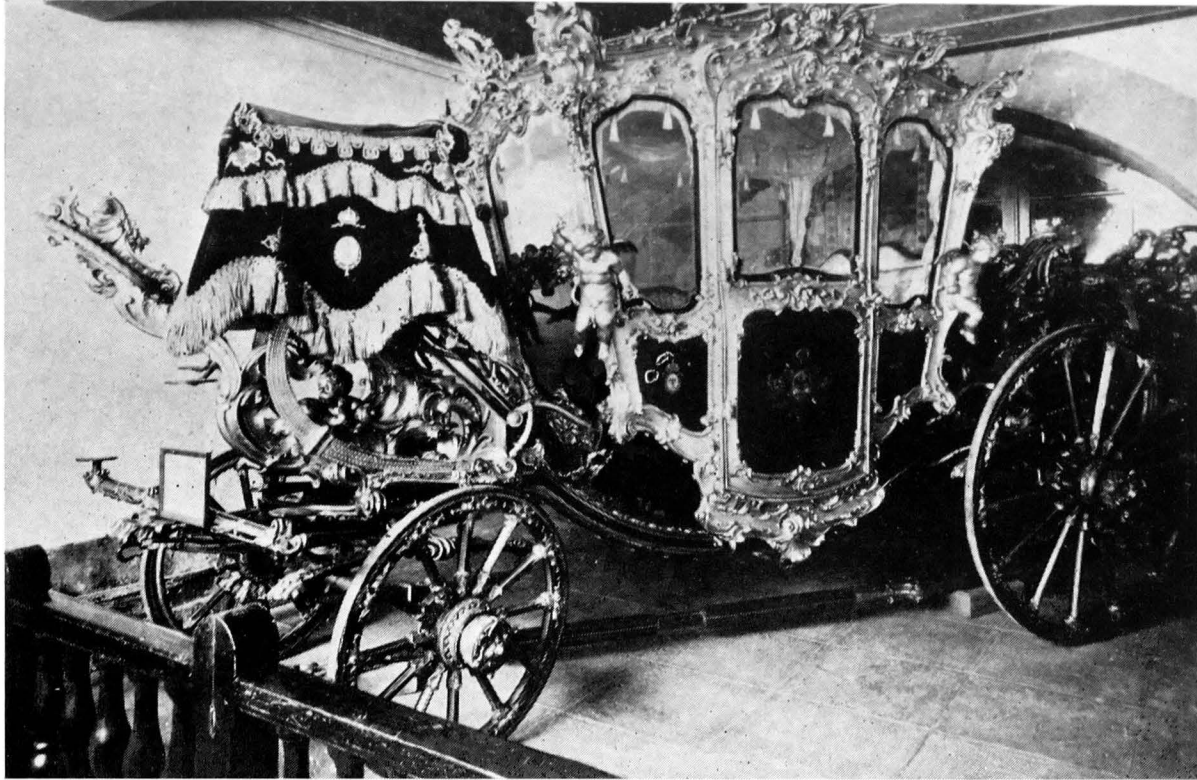
## CHAPTER VII

### MEXICAN TRANSPORTATION

To travel in Mexico one must use many types of transportation. Present day Mexico can boast of her achievements in the aviation world. This of course does not interest the average citizen. It is true, however, they are individually proud of the fact that their nation has progressed at such strides it has attracted the admiration of the entire aeronautical world. But to apply this particular mode of travel to every day use is as yet far too expensive for them to even dream of.

Railroads offer exceptional rates to those who take advantage of the special second class fare which however, should now be classed third, because almost all railroads carry a standard Pullman service equal to the United States. Their comfortable day coaches offer good service with reasonable mileage fare. This could be classed second rate. But there are also third class day coaches.

It is true only the humblest classes take advantage of the latter rate, unless of course, some traveler decides his expense account is not covering the territory, he desires to see. Such often occurs and speaking of journeys it seems second nature for the Mexican rural citizens to wander. But unlike many travelers they do not figure out any certain schedule and arrange it to accord with the finances on hand so they may be assured of returning home within a safe margin of their budget. Their first object is to secure the necessary funds to cover the expense of reaching their destination and after arrival to give consideration to the return journey. This often means the family must walk the entire distance back home. Thus, like many of us, the moment the Mexican comes into possession of some money, his thoughts turn to traveling. But it is often the case, that even if they



The Coach of Emperor Maximilian is Displayed in the Mexican Capital City. The Coach Represents the Very Best of That Day and One Can Still See the Emperor's Coat of Arms on the Side as Well as the Gold Trimmings.



do not have the means, they will start off on foot and in most cases reach their destination, maybe with no great speed, but with little worry or discomfort.

The railroads realize this traveling spirit of the humble peon class and offer them these special low rates. Such fares not only create much goodwill among rural citizens but have brought the railroads increased revenue because of the volume of business it has created. One of the officials told me that seventy per cent of their revenues from passenger transportation came from third class ticket sales. It is quite evident that Mexican Railway officials have foreseen the possibilities of retaining their passenger traffic by giving rates that make it possible for the average citizen to ride by train. No doubt if the various United States railroad companies had given the same consideration to its passenger trade earlier, the bus transportation would not be giving them such strong competition. But one might say that as yet Mexican highways do not parallel the railroads, and this makes it impossible for bus companies to offer competition. This may be true. At any rate at the present time it is much cheaper for a Mexican to travel by train, than it would be to cover the same distance by automobile. Such places where it is possible for busses to run parallel to the train lines and to contact the same towns, the railroads offer real competition and in most cases make it impossible for the busses to continue in business.

In traveling upon Mexican railroads one witnesses some of the most beautiful scenery in the world. Great mountains, beautiful valleys, as well as plateaus blend together within short distances. The picturesque native customs seem to win the heart and interest of every traveler. Each tourist who leaves Mexico carries with him the recollection of being in a country where everyone, regardless of what part of the country visited, seems to be happy and really enjoying life as it was meant to be enjoyed.

The construction of railroads—the vein-work of Mexico's commerce—was no small undertaking. As this far south country has many ranges of mountains it was



"A Boy and His Burro"

necessary for railroad officials to construct most of their mileage through hilly country. This not only takes time but money. Railroads wending their way about mountain ranges, cannot have the fastest schedules or the shortest mileage between cities. But, with new equipment and improvements upon their road-beds, the transportation for freight and passengers will compare well with any country.

The airplane is able to take the "crow line" between cities. The speed of aerial transportation for express, mail and passengers from the United States, through Mexico and into South America, is almost unbelievable. The passenger lists upon such trips naturally include men and women who due to either private or official business, wish to arrive at their destination in the shortest possible time.

Such transportation is naturally more expensive but when time is considered, no doubt the added expense becomes a minor factor. It is true, that many tourists come to Mexico by air. But to enjoy it first hand, so to speak, sightseers must use the trains, the trusty little burro, and even if need be, the old reliable legs. I say this, after covering almost every nook and cranny of the country. To understand this land one must leave the comfortable chairs in the hotel lobbies and depend upon other sources than colorful literature and taxi guides to furnish the information regarding conditions as they really exist in the Mexico of Today.

Without question, the traveler upon his first visit to some Mexican city can gain much information regarding it by making contact with a registered service car driver. This holds true in almost any country. Odd as it might seem, these young men tell me that almost every newcomer asks about the same set of questions. In the cities upon the regular tourist lanes most all taxi men can converse in English, at least enough to carry on a conversation that sounds mighty welcome to a visitor speaking a foreign tongue. It might be a suggestion worth while to have an understanding regarding your taxi rates before you start out upon a lengthy sightsee-



**The Author.**

ing trip. In most cases such rates are far below the figure at which you could operate your own automobile, even though you might have it along with you. Besides, these taxi men not only act as drivers but as guides. The usual price for a trip, in Mexico City, for example, is only one half peso (about 15 cents); and to hire a large car with driver it should not be over three pesos per hour, (less than 90 cents). This includes as many guests as you can comfortably take in your chartered car. An Englishman after learning the low taxi prices said, "By Jove one can almost ride here for jolly well less than he can furnish shoe leather." I agreed "jolly well" with him and closed the incident.

I can not pass this point without mentioning a certain little live-wire who has acquired an international reputation. This Mexican must be built upon springs to be able to cover the ground he does. He is located at present in the National Capital. Everybody knows him in the downtown business section. He is the "star" of all guides found around hotel lobbies awaiting possible clients. Heretofore this young fellow claimed his home wherever he hung his hat. He is a character if ever there was one and if no writer beats me to it I shall sometime attempt to write a book about his exciting career.

Like other men who have had wide experiences and countless celebrities listed among their friends, he seems to be of a quiet nature and never wishes to speak of himself or even about the famous people whom he has served as guide. His personal knowledge of high military men of the United States sounds like a general staff list. He served four years under the Stars and Stripes simply for the thrills. His wanderings would read like a set of Holmes' travel books. He knows full well the great trials Mexican home folks have gone through to attain the freedom they now enjoy. He has done his part, and of course knows all the leaders in the movement who made it possible for the citizens to call their souls their own and to look forward to an even better Mexico.

There probably is no individual Mexican citizen who

enjoys the freedom of the city as does this humble Mexican cab driver and guide. I have seen the President of the Republic pass along the street and this taxi driver, although maybe in rolled shirt sleeves, would rush up through the aides, greet the nation's leader and carry on a brief conversation with him. One time I was just departing from the city when I met friends from Europe who had just arrived. They stated that during their brief aerial stay they wished to include a trip through Chapultepec Castle to add to their experiences. I could not think of a better suggestion than to call back as I followed my luggage, "Find 'Monkey-face' and he will get you in." My friends looked very startled and showed their amazed feelings. They repeated, in low disgusted tones, "Monkey-face!"

I later learned that my friends soon found who Monkey-face was, and he had gained them entrance to parts of the Castle that few visitors to the city have had the pleasure to inspect. With such acts as these, the reputation of this guide has spread to the tourist quarters of the world. Strange as it may seem, very few know his real name, and the sobriquet "Monkey-face" has proved a popular trade mark.

Traveling upon third class train tickets brings one into contact with citizens who make up the greater part of the population of the country. The equipment consists of the cheapest coach facilities. As the seats in most of the cars are solid wood, the wise travelers supply themselves with cushions. The other kind resemble park benches, being made from wooden slats. Naturally these have a trifling advantage over the solid ones, and so are always crowded. Yet no arm rests add to your comfort.

Such coaches are always filled with the peon and Indian classes. They seem a happy lot as they travel along; men, women and children of all ages. Their complexions vary from light tan to deep red copper. As the nation is made up of many Indian tribes, the latter being in the majority, one naturally finds this type of people predominant wherever he goes. The children busy them-



A Street Scene in Uruapan in the State of Michoacan.

selves with hand made toys and seldom does one hear a baby cry. This is noticeable all over Mexico. Babies learn at a very early age that a sympathetic cry does not bring them attention and they must depend upon themselves to create their own amusement. By this, I do not mean mothers neglect their children. Indeed not! They take deep interest in their off-spring and it is very evident the maternal instinct is as noticeable here as among the women of other lands.

It is very interesting to note the clothes worn by the Mexicans as they travel about the country. Children, as a rule, wear light colored or white cotton clothes. In the hot lowlands the latter are most appreciated, for bright colors and patterns soon disappear. But with so much Indian blood and love for gay apparel, one can be assured that frequent washings are responsible for all faded and colorless clothing.

The native woman often goes barefooted. But upon particular occasions, such as a train trip she wears sandals. These cover but a small portion of the foot, as they usually consist of a flat piece of leather for the base. This is held in place with a strap or cord about the ankle, with another strap extending from ankle band down between the toes and fastened to the stiff sole.

These women seldom carry luggage cases, but depend upon baskets or shawls to hold their belongings. The scarves are mighty handy garments in which they carry everything from small packages to lunches. They are also used to wrap up the babies or to carry the younger ones on their backs.

It is customary for the women to wear dresses of much material, quite long and far from form fitting, but comfortable. Not only in the trains but in all parts of Mexico, the visitor will notice many women wearing black garments with flowing veils. This mourning attire is not only worn for immediate relatives but also for distant kin. It is conventional for them to don this sombre black for at least a year in memory of a departed relative.

The men from the rural districts and hamlets always carry their serapes with them. They are as handy as





The Church Towers are Evident Everywhere in Mexico.

the scarves of the women folks and as indispensable to them as coats are to the men of the United States. Everyday serapes are not quite as colorful as those found in their homes or in curio stores. For they naturally carry one that will give them the best service and not soil so easily. Upon the train they come in handy as cushions although the average passenger does not seem to mind the present equipment. As for me the train trip compared well with the usual week-end excursions where they sell more tickets than they have accommodations. Whether a native travels on foot, horseback or on the train, he always takes his serape. When riding, and not required, he rolls it up and ties it upon the saddle horn. If by any chance he needs it to keep warm in the evening, he wraps it about his body, and it takes the place of a top coat.

Upon the main lines it is possible to receive dining car service. This is much too costly for the peon traveler. In fact he would not care to eat in there even though the prices suited his purse. He also has his favorite dishes. Some of them carry their food with them. Others delight in purchasing it along the way as the train stops at the various stations. The time of day has no bearing upon eating when they travel. They do not have dining halls or stands near the depot. But live-wire folks of the town bring out favorite Mexican dishes direct to the side of the train. It is possible for the traveler to purchase almost any standard Mexican food. The selection is wide so his particular taste can be satisfied. The sales folks include all ages but, as a rule are kindly old women. Not only food but your favorite drink can be had at a very low price. The beverages consist of everything from goats' milk to national cactus drinks with the kick of a mule. It is however very rare one finds an intoxicated native. It may be true the greater part of them make their own liquor but it is evident they possess a degree of intelligence in the use of it.

Mexican railroads are not very old and when they rose to such an important role in the nation's business there were very few native men who would or could take the re-



A Character Study of the Mexican Natives Who For Generations Have Carried on With Their Little Fishing Industry on a Lake in the Heart of Mexico. A More Honest or Happy Group of People Never Existed.

sponsible positions that railroading offered. This was due to their never having had such training. They were no more in a position to take charge of their rail system than they were to operate successfully any other enterprise requiring experience. It was therefore necessary to import trained men and thus positions came to many experienced railroaders in the United States. But the Mexicans had the future in mind and started to train their own men. After a few years of experience with professional rail men it was possible to take over and operate their railroads with native labor. The Mexican takes his work seriously and shows much pride in responsibility. This was a great economical factor, as it was possible to employ native labor for much less than that which they had to pay the imported workmen.

If the traveler in Mexico fails to view a typical army troop train he has missed an interesting sight that will long remain in his memory. The government, on certain occasions, uses regular freight trains to move the troops. The head cars will contain the horses and machinery needed on the trip. The cars following will contain the men—not inside but up on top. Often upon such moves the women folks go along with their men; and their place is inside the box car. It is customary for the individual soldier to take care of his own "beans," and in so doing, he finds it more convenient to have the good wife accompany him. Sometimes they take the family goat along to supply the necessary milk. Recently while passing one of these troop trains on a side track I noticed the family goat was riding upon the top of the box car. It was evident this animal was some relation to the famous mountain chamois that appreciate high places.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SIX YEAR PLAN

The people of Mexico no doubt are in better circumstances today than at any period since the invasion of their early Indian settlements by the Spaniards. Probably no country in the world has gone through the heated and blood flowing days Mexico has experienced. No other country has been the victim of so much political and religious graft, or suffered so much from special privileges granted to foreign interests by those in power.

No foreign element has ever entered Mexico with the sole purpose of carrying out a program to aid in her education and progress. It might be they had such plans upon their first entry but the lust for Mexico's natural resources soon overcame whatever good intentions they may have possessed. For the natural resources of this country are greater than any other part of the world.

This mighty craving for Mexican gold, silver, oil and other products has speeded the pulse of many nations as well as large corporations, ever since Cortez fleeced the natives of their hoarded gold. This greed would still be in evidence were it not for the present administration's attitude regarding special privileges; and I mean by administration the entire set-up back of the present governmental power—the National Revolutionary Party.

This latter body possesses a title that suggests revolutionary activities. It happens to be the name of a political party in power at this period and was instrumental in bringing about the progressive showings in Mexico at the present time.

Many of the present leaders in this organization took active part and leadership during the Revolution and preceding years. They were not only willing to go out on the "stump" for their principles but risked their lives

to bring about a change, they sincerely felt would give the common people opportunities that never existed under the leadership previously in control. It is true that thousands and thousands of home-loving citizens gave their lives for this present freedom.

Since the church lost control of the political operation of the government, much publicity spread to other nations to the effect that the present administration intends to do away with the entire Catholic organization in Mexico as well as promote teachings against all religions. No doubt through the friction arising after this powerful church had lost its grip upon the commercial and social life of the country, both church and state went to extremes in protecting themselves. On one trip, far back in the rural mountain section, a conversation regarding the separation of church and state became the subject around the evening's camp fire. The oldest member of the party was a peon who had served on many occasions as a guide. His parents and grandparents had followed the same humble rut for countless ages. Heretofore this elderly man had never joined in the conversation. But upon this particular evening he some way or other felt an interest in the discussion. I recall he told us he was very happy that there was a "new" Mexico and it was going to be possible for the humble classes like himself to feel they had some freedom; and could consider themselves a part of the new government now to control Mexico. He explained already the new era of Mexico had shown results even upon his family. Our tall guide went into detail to express his great joy and satisfaction in having a small tract of land he and his family could now call their own. This, he explained, was one of the greatest happenings of his entire life as it would now be possible for him to provide a comfortable living for himself and family. No doubt, he was one of the first members of his "kith and kin" to be able to "squat" long enough in one place to call it home.

The eyes of this slender, erect, old gentleman beamed as he explained it was soon going to be possible for his children to attend school. For the government had prom-

ised to build many such throughout the rural sections of the country. He used many English words, due to the fact, that he had upon several occasions acted as guide for some United States mining engineers and prospectors. His eagerness to learn, aided him in picking up his brief English vocabulary and remembering it, even though mixed with Spanish phrases. One can picture the future of such a people now they have the opportunity to study, as the average American boy and girl in the splendid public school system of the United States.

I did not ask our talkative guide just why he blamed the church for the conditions that existed up to the new change in administration, but he carried on his conversation to cover a number of these points. "With conditions as they existed during my earlier days, and what my old man told me," he said, "I would gladly go through the hell I did in the Revolution again, in order to bring about the rights of us poor people and the possible fine future that our children will enjoy. They will be able to carry on their worship and support the church as they feel best and not be forced or be brought up with instructions that they must consecrate their lives to the church and give it almost everything they can make or produce by labor." Before rolling up in his blanket he further remarked that he surely did not think it was necessary for the people of a nation to remain in almost total ignorance and poverty, because the church had developed and approved of such conditions for hundreds of years. His last words that evening were, "Thank God a new day for the Mexican people has come."

General Abelardo L. Rodriguez, former President of Mexico, played a very important role in the drafting of the Mexican Government's Six Year Plan. General Rodriguez proved himself not only a soldier but a wonderful statesman. His name will go down in history as one of the country's most noted citizens. He has played an outstanding part in shaping policies that have proven popular with the common people of the Mexico of Today. General Rodriguez once served as governor of that fertile strip of land known to us as Lower California,

He was not on the ticket for re-election, but belonging to the same party as the new youthful President, he was behind him 100 per cent. The National Revolutionary Party swept President Cardenas into office with at least eighty per cent of the total votes.

General Plutarco Elias Calles, former President, was the organizer of the powerful Revolutionary Party which he headed for many years. In the United States, General Calles was often referred to as the "Iron Hand" of Mexico. Without question, for nearly a dozen years, this powerful individual was a near-dictator of the land below the Rio Grande. He has been a great inspiration to the Party and its young national leaders and his suggestions have proved beneficial to the entire nation . . . from the city to the most remote rural sections. It was for the liberty and progress of the rank and file that General Calles carried on his great fight which brought the present administration and Party into power. During this struggle General Calles, General Rodriguez, General Cardenas, and other leaders did not remain in the background and merely direct their men into battle from safe points. They were truly leaders and at all times could be found out in front of their respective armies. Like the other men, they were fighting for a cause and knew what it was to be short of equipment and without food.

Natives report that the great secret of their success was due to the leaders remaining on a level with their peon soldiers. To this day these division leaders are greeted in all sections of Mexico as fellow soldiers and not with the dignity and style most generals would request. They all fought side by side for a cause each thought well worth the chances encountered. Most of them who survived the many battles lived to rejoice in Mexico ruled by Mexicans instead of foreign interests.

Just one hundred years after the fall of the famous Alamo a special airplane flew northward over this very same building. In the airliner was General Calles enroute from Mexico City to San Diego, California, to visit his daughter, Mrs. Josefina Torre Blanca. The once Presi-



dent and "boss" of Mexico was traveling on a Mexican one-way ticket . . . to exile. In addition to General Calles, the Mexican government arrested and exiled several other former national department heads who were known to be ardent Calles supporters and active in having the General remaining as an unofficial dictator.

President Cardenas, a protégé of Calles, officially ordered the exile. The President said, "I desire to depart from the lamentable precedents which exist in the history of our bitter political struggles, and in which frequently little value has been placed on respect for human life. Therefore I consider circumstances demand, as imperative for public welfare, the immediate departure from national territory of General Calles, Luis Morones, Luis Leon, and General Rafael Melchor Ortega."

No doubt, General Calles would have been satisfied to have settled down and "rested" from political life as he claimed he would do in exile in California. But apparently in order to further their own interests his close associates, while in Mexico, became too active in his behalf. President Cardenas holds a greater national support than has any other Mexican president, including former President Calles. Calles provided an excellent political platform but it has taken the present President to carry out the platform's actual benefits for the natives. This success in administration of the Party platform won the strong support of students, peons, workers and the army.

The Catholic church has been an object of severe attack by General Calles in the past. Thus the Church's hopes for greater progress rose high upon his departure. President Cardenas has always stated that he was at all times willing to cooperate with the Catholic church as long as they refrained from attempting to dictate the affairs of state.

If there can be such a thing as a "friendly exile" we venture to say that the Calles banishment is of such a type. For although the great personal political machine of Calles has passed his political party still marches ahead and with younger blood. Father and sons sometimes have their quarrels but retain their respect for each other.

Calles is a wealthy man so his exile will not be inconvenient and maybe some day he will be able to return home to his native land to "rest."

The Six Year Plan was inaugurated during the late months of President Rodriguez's administration. This gave it an excellent start prior to the inauguration of the new President which took office December 1st, 1934. President Cardenas will serve a term of six years and at that time the law states he must not run for re-election. This period will allow him to carry out his program already established and worked out on a schedule that as time passes will compare well with the progress of the nation. No doubt there will be many minor changes but on the whole the program will be carried out as arranged upon at the time of drafting the Plan. So far, the citizens have found that the word given by their Indian President has been carried out to the letter. For example, upon taking office he told the press it was his intention to close all gambling places within the borders of Mexico. This was one of his campaign promises. Many thought it merely a routine campaign promise to gather votes from certain sections and that it would amount to the usual pre-election promise. I recall being in Mexico the week of his inauguration. The element who promote gambling for a vocation and the ones who chisel a living from it were more than anxious to see what he would do. Several places in the Mexican Capital thrive in grand style by operating exclusive gambling clubs. The shock soon came. In fact only a few days after he had taken the President's chair, orders came to close every gambling place in the Federal District and soldiers were sent to see the order was carried out. I guess the tourists and local residents who were present in the fashionable Foreign Club will long recall the "official closing." Later, word came from the Palace all gambling would be stopped in the country and this meant the places along the United States border as well. Such privileges bring much revenue to the border states and it was thought their various governors would be able to arrange exceptions in order to give United States visitors

an opportunity of paying into the Government's coffers substantial sums for a "sporting chance." Even the gambling lords chartered airships and flew to the Capital to see if some fixing could not be arranged. This was a terrible blow to the resorts across the border from American cities and in particular the high class places found below the Californian line. But the issue was closed as far as the President was concerned . . . so were the gambling halls.

The Agrarian problems rouse much interest in all sections of Mexico as they do in many foreign countries, where they have great tracts of idle land. It is well known that for hundreds of years Mexico has been controlled by special privileges, some of which date back to special grants of lands given out during and after the visit of Cortez and his small band of young men. Such land grants, often reached into the hundreds of thousands of acres and were handed down from one generation to the other. As only a small per cent of Mexico can be classed as agricultural land, it was almost impossible for a peon to gain enough territory for himself in one spot sufficient to fill the necessary needs for his family. The Catholic church of Mexico, which was often referred to as the country's largest business corporation, owned property of great value throughout the nation. So with all this, the humble peon, through generation after generation, had to be content to reside wherever it was possible to secure enough from the land owner to feed his family in exchange for his labor, as well as the toil of other members of his family including even the younger children. This probably is not called slavery, but they say in Mexico that once you were located you were almost certain to be working for the same landlord all your natural life, as he somehow arranged that your account never balanced.

The administration not only plans creating small plots of land so the peons can be independent, but this is actually being accomplished in many parts of Mexico today.

To carry out this policy the Government will have to

redistribute the land. The aim of the administration will be to convert as many peons as possible into free and property owning agriculturists, who will profit by the results of their labors. The government has already made great progress in this direction. Irrigation schemes that will bring about more ideal farming conditions are being carried out on a large scale. Many large dams and projects are underway for this development. The great interest and progress made with this portion of the program has won strong favor with the natives who have longed for such conditions. The leaders of the administration state that there is no reason to prevent any one of the numerous peons from becoming economically and socially independent. They agree it is this type who really need the land, and the government will do everything in its power to convert them into independent farmers through which they hope in the near future to achieve a general state of agricultural prosperity. With the success of this plan however Mexico will see the elimination of large land owners.

It is very interesting to note that the administration not only has taken steps to convert large acreages into peon "homesteads," regardless of who might own them, but they will turn over any land to individual peons with title clear, even though the property belongs to the government. So to bring about the home and farm owning plan they will sacrifice any tract in Mexico, providing it be suitable to production for the new owner. Officials make it clear they do not expect to stop with the granting of land to the peon, as they realize that for him to succeed further education must be given him. They will instruct him as to new methods in agriculture, various types of cultivation, selection of seed, the use of fertilizer, and how to take advantage of farm by-products. The use of certain modern machinery will be introduced in many sections. From my questions in farming areas, with men who carry heavy responsibilities, I found the change from ancient methods of tillage to the most modern ideas will not be their present object. As one travels about the rural section it is easy to see it

would not be best for the country to introduce modern labor saving machinery. Such would soon swing production to a high figure; and from agricultural experience in the States, it was reported by the government that over-production was the cause of low prices. The introduction of such machinery would also create a desire to farm upon a larger scale than the government has in mind for the present program, which is going to make it possible for the peon farmer to raise enough upon his plot of land to provide the necessary needs for his family. It has been figured that under average conditions his small farm should produce enough grain and other products to furnish seed for the following year, with enough to barter for family necessities as well as a little for reserve. In time he will thus acquire a surplus. With this campaign it will be almost a sure thing that the farms will produce their actual needs in the poorest years. Experts claim that with careful selection plus irrigation systems to aid in the various projects now planned, the farmer will almost have a certain crop.

It has been necessary for the government to make a close survey of various homestead locations as to soil, climate, water supply and what is best adapted to that particular locality. The greater portion of Mexico's valuable soil is located in mountain valleys and often at different altitudes. It is interesting to visit such sections for even though the valleys are close together their productivity differs a great deal because of the different climates governed by altitude. In order to further cooperate with new small farm owners, the Government has established a special department to make small loans to those entitled to them. During the duration of the Six Year Plan the Farm Credit System will place fifty million dollars (Mexican) at the disposal of farmers.

As the greater part of Mexican land is poor, for agriculture, special attention is being given to the building-up of independent herds of first class stock. It is not the intention of the Mexican Government to take care of this detail by granting special favors to large cattle interests. Instead they will give every possible co-

operation to the individuals of their country willing to carry on in this great industry. The Government gives assurance of aid in breed selection and will give a guarantee to individual cattle men for their protection. To encourage stock raising the Government will hold cattle shows, and provide lectures that will prove educational to the younger ranchers.

The leaders report their Six Year Plan has provisions that will create a new department to protect the national forests. A forest ranger system is being organized the purpose of which will not only be to protect the woodlands but to replace trees lost by fire or used for commercial purposes. A systematic plan of reforestation for the entire nation will be instituted as soon as details are complete. Hothouses will be built to start the young trees in sections of the country that most need reforesting.

As the laborer and farmer comprise the great majority in the population of Mexico, it was necessary for the National Revolutionary Party to give serious consideration to them when drawing up the Six Year Plan, which is the basis of the present administration and majority party. As this body controls politics from mayorships to Presidential chambers, it might be interesting to know its attitude and principles regarding worker and farmer:

1. Every individual has a right to such work as enables him to satisfy his necessities and enjoy honest pleasures; work enjoined upon him by society to contribute his share of energy towards the general good.

2. The State will intervene directly or indirectly in guaranteeing every individual in the Republic a right to work.

3. Measures of Article 27 and 125 of the Federal Constitution will be upheld to embody an accepted reality in our social medium, and the laws thereof will be enforced to prevent a corruption of the national spirit and profound humane tendencies which inspire these precepts.

4. Collective contracts of workmen will be encouraged to convert them into the only or at least, the most preponderant relationship between industrialists and workmen.

5. The State will protect human work agreements

to safeguard the rights of workmen: fundamentally with respect to minimum wage—sufficient to satisfy the workmen's needs with honest pleasures, with rating as head of a family: stability of the workmen in his profession or position, as well as other compensations and guarantees granted him by the Constitution and the Laws.

6. Regarding contentions of classes within the productive system, subjects of the state are in duty bound to stimulate the growth of syndicate labor organizations; and majority rule will settle differences among them.

7. The Federal and State governments will be subject to the same responsibilities imposed on employers by the Labor Law when these (the governments) execute work that could be done by individuals.

Mexico has well protected its laboring class. A company doing business within the country, regardless if it is foreign or owned by Mexican interests, must employ at least 90 per cent native Mexican labor. In case the company is controlled by foreign interests this margin will allow it to supply its own technical or executive help from its own home country.

With the protection native labor has from its government one finds the un-employment question does not give the officials any greater worry than the usual strain that prevails in the governing of a nation. At the present time in Mexico it is possible for any citizen to secure work if he so wishes. In that country recently I talked with a foreman in charge of a large road building project, and he stated that he could use nearly five thousand more men than he had on the pay roll at that time. He had come to the city to see if it were possible to secure more labor so that he might hurry the work to an earlier completion. But he returned to his project up in the mountains with only a promise that several might come out within a few days. It seems strange to imply there is little, if any, unemployment in Mexico, especially with millions on charity in many countries. But I wish you to take into consideration the fact, that the needs of the humble classes in Mexico are not great

and sometimes a little work goes a long way in providing household necessities.

The Government has maintained a steady program both in building and road construction. This itinerary is neither false nor temporary but well planned and along permanent lines that fit in well with both the city and national improvements now well under way.

Many Mexicans established themselves in the United States during the "boom" days. They squatted and secured what seemed to them to be extremely large salaries. Many were in the States for years. They sent their children to our schools. The adults either did not think about taking out citizenship papers or did not wish to. Along came the depression and Uncle Sam sent trainload after trainload back across the border to the homeland.

Mexican officials met them and welcomed them back. But here was a new problem for the administration, as the treatment of these returned exiles would have to be somewhat different from that given to local folk. Many of these families, and especially the children, had remained in the states for years and were accustomed to a higher level of living. This problem was soon taken care of as the government found them work upon the various projects, thus enabling the families to stay intact and receive a salary that made it possible for them to live in comfort.

Even with conditions in a turmoil in almost every civilized nation, from the effects of either the World War or a period of extravagance thought to be a natural or steady boom, we find Mexico going forward. This progressive country does not ask favors from other nations, but simply wishes to be treated according to the Golden Rule. She is ready to compete with international markets, and has already established a world wide credit that is the envy of many nations. It is very evident that this grand old country has stood the test and the great majority are looking forward to the bigger and better Mexico of Today.



## CHAPTER IX

### NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM

The administration with its Six Year Plan has taken close interest in educational facilities and has already accomplished much in making it possible for the poorer classes to send their children to grade schools. In past years very few of the nation's population attended school. This phase of social life has been sadly neglected in all parts of Mexico. It is true that young students belonging to families in comfortable circumstances were able to attend schools in the cities. In past years the official circle appeared to be the favored class. For the families connected with the administration through the long Diaz régime were well taken care of. But the Government's interest in the common people did not include educational facilities for the rural population.

About the only opportunity the peon children of past generations had to gain brief knowledge was through the schools the priests maintained in the churches in many parts of the country. The prospects of gaining a common education under such conditions were very slight, not because the priests did not have the ability to furnish the proper instructions, as they were men of high scholastic attainment. In fact, most of them had studied in foreign lands. Few only were natives of Mexico. There is no denying these priests were intelligent, shrewd men. They worked in Mexico under most difficult odds and without question accomplished much for the natives. Many priests became very wealthy in their own right, besides developing the church holdings to a figure that made it the largest business organization in Mexico and the un-disputed leader of government and political enterprise.

During recent years officials have told me of the many

public schools in operation. It no doubt seemed many to the citizens, but to come from the United States, where rural centres of education are scattered in every vicinity regardless of location, Mexican school houses appear scarce as one drives through the country on improved roads at the modern speed rate.

The Six Year Plan now in operation calls for the erection of 12,000 rural school buildings by the federal government. The number has been pro-rated, and as each year passes, country districts will increase their schools. This latter figure does not include the educational building programs now being carried out by the state and city governments. As one travels through the cities he will find many modern school buildings which structures of beauty compare well with those of any nation.

There has been much criticism of the Catholic church for the meagre learning the priests gave to the humble classes of Mexico. Charges are made that it was the sole idea to restrict the masses to a low degree of mentality. By so doing it is claimed the church was able to hold the great power it enjoyed throughout the country. By continuing to limit the amount of knowledge as generations passed, the priests held almost complete control over the humble classes or common people. As one business man in the city of Aguascalientes stated, "There was an idea that prevailed through all the teachings of the early priests to educate the Indians to a height where they would look upon the gifts to the church as a matter of routine and a part of life itself. Such control over the minds of the poor natives virtually maintained them in bondage."

To gain this business man's viewpoint as to other angles of the early church teachings I asked him, "If such conditions existed, why didn't the Indians complain or move away?"

He quickly replied, "You had black slavery in your colonial states, did they complain?" He answered his own question and continued, "If they did complain, it did them very little good. In early Mexico, in fact up to within the last few years the greater part of our popula-

tion's productive power went to the church, if not by gifts it was by having their labors controlled by the church. And to explain your question I ask you to take into consideration the vast control the church held over most parts of the country that showed productive power; also the poor Indian, who through generations before him, had been taught by the church that it was the wishes of the Almighty that they make such sacrificial offerings."

He had not as yet answered my question, so I again asked, "Is it not true the Indian had a mind of his own and could have escaped this bondage you mention?"

After thinking a moment for a way to explain it, he replied, "No, it is not true that the Indian had a mind that you might term his own. Ever since the invasion of the foreigner the church has controlled the new type of life that was thrust upon the natives. So with this burden the native had no way by which to make comparisons. Through these many years he has known there was something wrong but as soon as some of them voiced their opinion they would be punished. To attempt explanation of your question, you must give thought to the fact that the peons had no other avenue of thought. They had never known any other condition, let alone ever hearing of anything that took place outside of their immediate rural vicinity."

This interview brought out many statements that were current talk over the Republic. But I wished to have the impressions of a Mexican who had been successful in operating a business. As my new acquaintance had freely expressed his personal thoughts I wished to ask him one more question, so I ventured, "It is very evident you are not in favor of the policy carried on by the Catholic church here in Mexico. So with such impressions, may I ask if you are against all church work and feel the nation would be in better condition if it had no churches?"

"That's the trouble with you foreigners!" He slowed his speech, smiled and then continued. "Just because one wishes to correct a fault within the church, everybody thinks we have to be against its true principles. That

is not the case here in Mexico. Many of us citizens, in fact, the great majority, have no ill feelings towards the religious teachings of any church, as religion should be a part of all social life. The time came in Mexico when it was necessary to separate the State and church as well as to have a public school system with religious freedom similar to all progressive nations. But as far as the propaganda you foreigners hear about Mexico doing away with religion is all false and I guess your visit will prove that without taking my word."

Even though I had previously remarked I had given my last question I could not pass up the opportunity to say, "May I ask, Señor, if you are a member of the church we have been discussing . . . rather, I mean do you attend, since the friction came about between the government and church?"

"Most certainly I and my entire family attend mass every Sunday morning!" With another great smile that would sell most any dental product, my host added, "I suppose you think, that is impossible after coming from the States where I understand they tell about all the churches being locked up and all the priests deported from the country. But my friend, you'll learn after you travel about our country there is very little truth in these outrageous stories. I am told such reports are being circulated and printed in the United States to gain sympathy."

My new acquaintance did not know he was to be quoted nor did he realize how truthful his last statement was, as I had visited in all parts of the country, and some places many times, and had talked to men of all vocations, in cities and the most remote rural mountain hamlets that burro-express served. My interviews thus included all stations in life, from the most humble rural peon to the recent Presidents of their nation.

One cannot but admit Mexico has its problems. But in spite of it all, almost everybody there appears happy, looks forward to great things for their nation, and expresses the utmost satisfaction with present conditions. In all probability the propaganda distributed in foreign nations against the administration, carries few facts. No

doubt Mexico has made many mistakes and will continue to do so . . . but what nation has not? I did notice that nowhere in Mexico was public sentiment one-tenth as strong against the administration of their government as could be found in *this* country against the present United States administration during 1936 in most any western agricultural town. My figures are high. Yet I repeat that one seldom hears any criticism in Mexico against the government and this is at once noticeable, especially coming from the United States where many people too openly and often loudly make their feelings known.

The teachings of the priests in early days must be given much credit for the manner in which they encouraged the Indians to carry on their typical handiwork which to this day plays such an important role in their livelihood. Here in the United States our early day settlers moved in on the Indian's favorite hunting grounds; and with very little consideration pushed the true native of the northern continent back, ahead of the so-called modern progress. Later of course it was necessary to corral the Indians and insist they stay upon small allotments of land called "reservations." In touring about the United States one readily comes to the conclusion the only reason the Indian received the reservation land was that the white man knew he could not make a living on it. It so happened a certain reservation gave forth a production of flowing black gold after many years of Indian possession, and it is a foregone conclusion that this would never have been their's, had the United States thought there was a possibility of the land being of any value, even for agriculture. With this in mind the people of the United States have little excuse for criticising any other nation upon the way they treat their native people.

In the United States it is evident that our government attempted to force another type of culture upon the Indians. It is very true that schools of high standard are maintained for them, as well as collegiate instruction that compares favorably with the course of study in other scholastic institutions. In most cases, upon their gradua-

tion, they possess what is often referred to as a "white collared education." After many attempts to enter the world of commerce and finding competition keen, most of these Indian boys return to resume the routine of reservation life. Whereas the early priests of Mexico gave close attention to customs that were such a part of the Indian tribal life in pre-conquest days. With the development and acceptance of customs, natural to the native, the peon felt as contented and as close to nature as his forefathers did thousands of years before Christ.

The new plans for the public school system will not carry any great changes. True there will be opportunities to specialize in certain favored trades. This idea prevails, as it would be along the lines of former teachings. They will make no attempt to force a "white collared" education upon them, knowing it might be dangerous to bring about an education of the majority and perhaps form a class of modernists to later prove a hindrance rather than a benefit. So the course of study will cover instruction in subjects of more practical use in the social life of Mexico. A close supervision of professional occupations will be maintained at all times and federal schools will attempt to regulate the number of graduates in that class; and this will be governed by a study of the needs of their country along those lines. Officials feel that this cooperation will give the young student greater advantage than to let him graduate into an already overcrowded profession. Students may thus select a calling that will have less competition and offer more far reaching possibilities.

One of the issues in the above educational system will have great effect upon present as well as future generations. The study of hygiene will be the main factor in the present courses and will no doubt show the greatest results upon the largest number, as this phase of instruction has been sadly neglected in nearly all rural sections. I do not wish to reflect upon this class and to have my readers think they live under unclean conditions. It is quite the opposite. The Mexican peon housewife is very clean and the linens of her home are always as white as

snow. You can hardly pass a home without seeing washing on the line, over a nearby fence or spread over the ever-present mesquite bushes. The Mexican home may be of rock, adobe or constructed of palm leaves and even have earthen floors. But you will nearly always see a very well arranged and clean place though the furnishings may be hand made. Yet it is obvious that without hygienic information it is impossible for humans to give their bodies the necessary care.

The administration has a department, the Tribunal de Menores, where lawless children who have already shown indications of wrong doing against society are under observation. This special school attempts to win the confidence of the boy and carry on instruction beneficial to him. The government's idea is not to punish the boy for the first bad act, but to scientifically study the individual young mind and thus carry out a program that might correct the faults responsible for his actions.

The national government as well as the states are fully behind the "Campana Antialcoholica," that spreads over the nation to educate the masses on the abuses of alcohol. It was explained to me that this campaign, now in progress, was not necessarily aimed at adult citizens but included the public generally, young and old. The greatest interest will be focused upon the growing child. I was very interested to find the campaign did not limit itself to lectures and "don'ts" alone but went about it in a very sensible manner.

Besides the athletic program included in their school curricula, the government will continue to cooperate with the various states and cities in the erection of special athletic centers where experienced instructors will be employed to manage the spacious play grounds and teach the public "how to play." Boys and girls as well as grownups, are interested in this type of education which has already shown marked success. It will not only occupy much of the leisure time but create a feeling among the younger generation that success upon the athletic field depends upon temperate habits.

The Mexicans are natural athletes. Bull fighting of

course is the national sport, but baseball has progressed in recent years. One cannot but feel that the former pastime will, for the first time in the history of Mexico, have a close competitor. For baseball is a very fast game and Mexican boys and young men are fond of recreation requiring speed. Although Mexico is adjacent to the United States, where baseball is played upon almost every vacant sand lot, this game has but recently invaded their country. A few years ago I visited many Mexican tracts where the game was first being shown to the youngsters. Recently I passed through the same territory to find this sport had captured Mexican imagination as it had the natives of U. S. A. It has now spread to many parts of Mexico, and the completion of the Six Year Plan will further increase its popularity, while in the States it is now on the decrease. So with the passing of the vogue for soft ball, the national game will in time be a relic outside of professional circles.

With the introduction of athletics in the educational system, school rooms will no doubt hold a greater fascination for the youth of the land and create a heartier desire to continue through to higher grades, than has been customary for the average Mexican student to attain. Not only is this the reason for its introduction but the school department knows that with young students taking active part in competitions they will do everything in their power to attain physical condition, so that they may compete under the very best advantages and have a greater opportunity of winning worldwide recognition.

Athletics lead to the development of a better race of people, physically. Proof of this is found in ancient history when the Greeks discovered they could excel by incorporating physical education with mental training. These ideas and experiments proved so satisfactory among the citizens of Greece it led to the origin of the famous Olympic Games dating back to hundreds of years before Christ. It was my good friend who was so popularly known as the world's fastest human, Charley Pad-dock, who often said from the lecture platform, "No



country is stronger than her athletes." With that in mind and the great interest that the youth of Mexico now display in all branches of sports, I will venture the prediction that we will, in the near future, hear great things about Mexico in this respect.

Back in 1932 when Los Angeles played the part of host for the United States in the International Olympic Games, it was somewhat of a question how many nations would be represented there and by how many athletes. Previous to the Games many sports writers referred to Mexico's possible entry in a joking way. But when the time came and the doors of that mighty stadium opened for the ceremonies, visitors found that Mexico was represented, and the 105,000 (cash customers) that day gave Mexico's eighty-six athletes a great hand when they paraded around the stadium. Mexico won the heart of every international sports writer who attended the games, and there were over 800 present. These reporters knew of Mexico's situation and it would be almost impossible for Mexico to give close competition with the world's best athletes in each event. They knew Mexico had come to associate with foreign athletes and learn all that was possible during fifteen days of heated competition. The Mexican boys and their trainers lived at Olympic Village where the various athletes of forty-three countries made their headquarters during their stay as guests of the United States. Mexico seemed to enter every event and even though they did not capture first place in any particular one event, they received great praise from visitors as well as athletes, for going into each and every event with the determination to win if possible. If they could not carry home any trophies they would, at least, compete the best they knew how.

The Mexican Indian runner could no doubt out-distance any competitor if allowed to select his accustomed course over mountain trails and nature's paths. As you may know, he seldom wears shoes and prefers to run barefooted. Upon reaching the smooth course of the Olympic stadium, the rural Indian runners of Mexico were very much handicapped because they had not had

enough experience in running with spiked shoes. The movement and strain upon the foot is according to whether you run with special spiked shoes or merely barefooted. The Mexican athletes had arrived in Los Angeles to compete and they entered all the events and in most cases ran barefooted. It was impossible for them to win over the spikes yet in every event they ran their entire race and crossed the finish line.

With such determination and more years of training under proper instructors, it can be expected that before many Olympics are registered in the annals of history they will carry off their share of honors. Once a great French sportsman wrote, "The important thing about the Olympics is not the winning but taking part—the essential thing is not conquering but fighting well." During the Los Angeles games these words were placed at the end of the stadium in such a position they could be read from every seat in the mammoth structure. The Mexicans traveled north of their boundary line to compete under rules that govern all athletes, regardless of what nation they represent or language they speak. During this visit they captured the spirit of the Olympic slogan, fought well and showed real sportsmanship, making many friends with representatives from other nations.

Neither did they return home without carrying international honors as their rifle team won the outstanding place in marksmanship. This feat did not pass the scrutiny of the press boys without a comment from several who had represented their papers in a most faithful way, by sitting every day in the reserved press section to rush out results upon official announcement by the time keepers. Now one would have to actually sit in one of the hard press seats under a California sun to fully realize the hardships the reporting staff endured. After the official announcement came to the press box, that the Mexicans had captured marksmanship honors, one of the reporters in the center row called out in a high pitched voice, "Hey you Sports, I told you Mexico would come through with a win before we got through here, as any country that has done as much training with rifles,

as Mexico has, during the past revolutions surely should be able to win that event with their eyes closed." The boys had their laugh and mutually agreed the rebellions, at least, served some good purpose.

The Mexican administration's public school program is going forward with full cooperation in all sections of the nation. They will devote the greater portion of their energy through the Six Year Plan now well on its way, in primary schools. They have announced they will continue to exclude religious instruction, and at all times supply truthful answers to the young student in the most scientific and rational way possible, as well as clarify all details as classes progress. By so doing, officials feel that the young student will receive a true mental picture of the world that surrounds him as well as a clearer understanding of the society within his midst. Unless they achieve this important part officials feel their educational system has not carried out their expectations and hopes, for the welfare of the young citizens of Mexico.

## CHAPTER X

### PRESIDENTIAL VIEWPOINTS

There was great joy and much celebrating for many days at the time the present young President accepted the responsibility from General Abelardo L. Rodriguez to take up the reins of the National Government under the National Revolutionary Party. Celebrations took place in practically all parts of the nation. But the greatest interest was shown in the Capital City where the inauguration took place. It was my pleasure to be there at that time and attend several of the fetes including the public inauguration held in the mammoth open air stadium. The comfortable seating capacity of the concrete structure is rated at 40,000 and from the manner they were packed into it that afternoon, I would estimate that between ten and fifteen thousand more persons were within the stadium than the seating capacity called for. They were jammed so tightly thousands of them had to remain standing, and because of this, it was necessary for others to rise in order to see what was going on during the inauguration. I have been in many crowds, and feel I can give a fair estimate of its proportions.

So I would say there were almost as many people remaining outside in the hope they might hear the new President's voice through loud speakers as there were in the stadium interior, which filled to capacity hours before the scheduled time of the inauguration.

The stadium is built in a horse-shoe shape. A large high platform was erected on the field between the two ends. This was to be the scene of the actual inauguration where the retiring leader was to officially turn the Presidential office over to the newly elected executive. Upon this platform, chairs were arranged to seat hundreds of special guests. This reserved space was given to a few of

the high ranking Mexican officials but the chairs were mostly occupied by diplomats of foreign nations and their ladies. The affair was very formal as the distinguished guests dressed in high silk hats, striped trousers and cut-away coats, arrived with their aides.

This public inauguration is somewhat new to Mexico. For in years past incoming Presidents did not wish to take a chance on being targets for assassins, who often frequent these public gatherings. At the best, life is none too secure for these leaders of men. But times have changed; and to show the confidence in which they held their fellow citizens, these great men of the hour chose to walk instead of motor to the special platform, a procedure that would take them the entire length of the stadium. Thus everyone came to attention as the band struck up the national anthem and these distinguished leaders of the people entered, and followed by their military aides, and the members of the Mexican body of legislators walked to their special seats.

This was one of the most impressive sights I have ever seen. Here people dressed in every conceivable costume. Stadium visitors by the way, are mostly men, as women take small part in such public affairs. The merchant, the clerk, the soldier, and the humble peon class all cheered at the tops of their voices. Such a demonstration of faith in their new leader must warm his heart to such a degree every ounce of his strength will go toward furthering the welfare of the Mexican citizen. Hats were flying in every direction and men were swinging bright colored serapes in the air over their heads. The President and President-elect took their seats but it was many minutes before the cheering stopped so that they could go on with the scheduled exercises. People in every section of the stadium, including those who had found a way up on the roof, gave forth great cheers as President Cardenas outlined the policies he expected to carry out during his administration in the six years to follow. Upon the completion of the inauguration the entire group stood, until the newly elected President and his party had retraced their course



Colonel Irving Speed Wallace With a  
Tropical Mexican Background.

on foot down from the platform on to the opposite end of the stadium where their cars awaited them. It appeared as if every person present was 100 per cent in accord with President Cardenas.

As the presidential party walked in and out through these many thousands, I could not help thinking of the great risk they took if but a few of the many stories I had heard in the States were true. A shot from any amateur marksman could have found its objective, if they had had in mind the assassination of the President; and this, either as he passed on foot before the entire group, or as he stood upon the platform during the ceremonies.

For several days one could notice the influx of people who had come to the city to celebrate the inauguration of the new President, General Cardenas . . . the peons' friend. Of course it was most noticeable to see the rural folks who were in the city and lingering along for a visit. Naturally many came in automobiles and upon the trains, but the bulk of visitors had come by burro or on foot. Some brought along a few hand made articles to peddle upon the streets in order to purchase the necessary food for their stay. At night they squatted down on the sidewalk against some building to sleep. It is odd how they can rest and doze in such a position, but it seems natural to them. Rarely does one see them lying full length upon the sidewalk. As Mexico City has a high altitude, the evenings are cool in both winter and summer, though the days are tropical. So these street sleepers find it necessary to cover up. Squatting down, wrapping the folded serape about their shoulders and arms and resting the forehead upon the knees seems to be their favorite position. They appear very comfortable with serapes wrapped about their bodies and large straw hats pulled down over their heads protecting them from the cool evening air. Such a sight is most interesting.

Mexico City is at a high elevation and could almost be described as lying in a cup with a rim of mountains around it. This cup shaped district is called the Valley

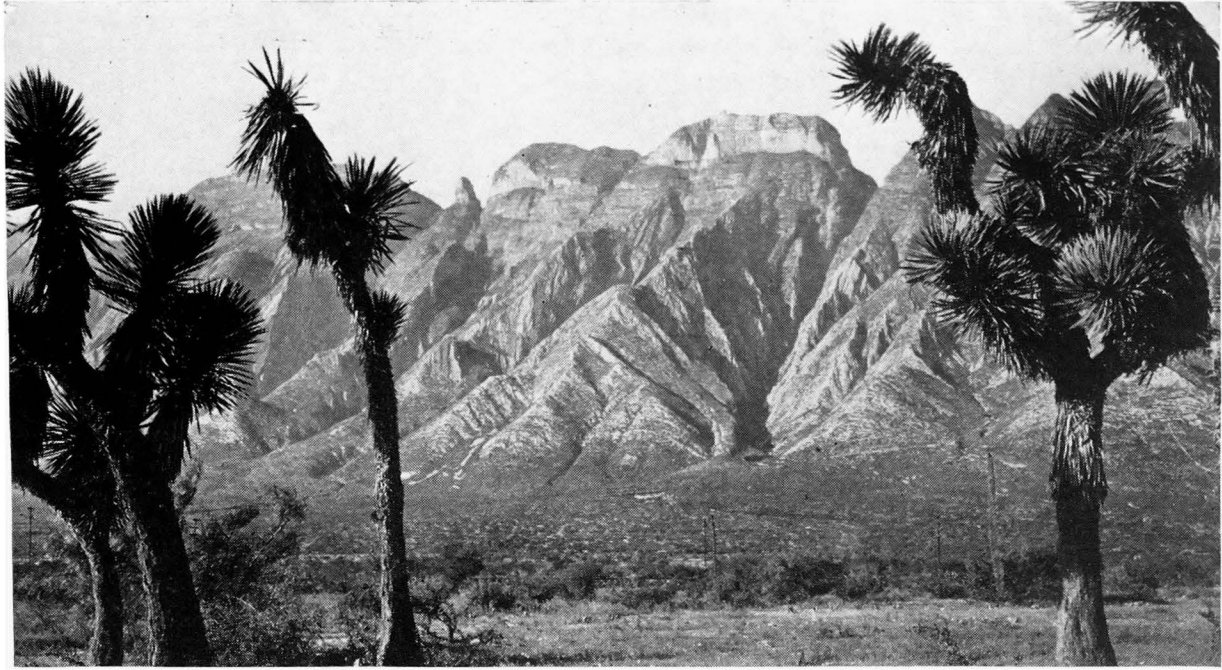


Siesta Time and All is Quiet. This Typical Street Scene Would Almost Fit in Any Part of Mexico. The Lower Windows Have Iron Bars Over Them and the Door Type Windows Lead Out on an Individual Balcony.



of Mexico and is very fertile. The territory which the city does not command, is for agriculture and airports. To leave Mexico City by road one must travel a short distance and then climb this rim. Then, you can look down over the valley and city at a sight that is one of Mexico's finest, especially if you visit this point in late afternoon when shadows are low and long. After the ridge is reached, winding mountain roads carry one to lower levels and to other small valleys and hamlets. For several days these peons could be seen trudging their way homeward down the mountains to lower altitudes to some agriculture or mining vicinity that meant home to them. Many no doubt, had to walk days in order to reach their destination. Some were young, but others evidently quite old although it was impossible to judge their ages because of the humble dress and whiskered faces. The majority had their trusty little family burro with them and their pace was very slow . . . and quite sure too. They all seemed happy and, no doubt, would look back at some future day with great pride, and say they went to the Capital and helped to inaugurate one of their favorite sons as president. Without any questions, there is great pride deep in their hearts, under their tattered clothes, for this young man who has been elevated to the nation's highest office because they look upon him as one of them, as he, too, was of humble parentage.

With the great celebration over and also another very enjoyable stay with the people of the National Capital, I packed my luggage and set forth for other places as, after all to find the real Mexico, one must visit the remote parts as well. Here I also found folks had warm feelings for their new leader and many, especially the women, held great confidence in him as they knew he would continue to aid the common people of his country. They were sure he would never forget the teachings received from his mother. They pointed out also, that with such maternal training, received during boyhood, he would be the man to aid the peons; as well as to make



"No Place Upon the Continent Will the Tourist Find More Picturesque Scenery."

it possible the church and State might both exist, even though separated.

Later, upon returning to the States I was surprised when a friend handed me a clipping which he had extracted from some eastern newspaper. The author must have referred to the Presidential inauguration in Mexico, as the paragraph read, "I saw these peons come running from their free trains, herded by police into the stadium where the inauguration ceremonies were to take place. They only knew that they had been rounded up, presented with money and given a ride on the trains without cost, and that they were to be witnesses to a big show."

The clipping sounded possible and no doubt made excellent copy but being so completely at variance with the actual facts I could not help seeing a joke in it. I often speculate if other such "wonder" stories about Mexico in this propaganda campaign against the federal administration, carry the "truth" to the same extent as the clipping which my friend secured from the eastern newspaper.

I do not claim to be an authority upon Mexico although I have traveled it east to west, north to south and then "kittie-cornered" many times for good measure. It has been interesting to study the changes during the rebellions and up to the present time. Even with this experience I do not feel I really know Mexico. If there were any friction between the government and Mexico's largest church, at the present time, I would not feel qualified to enter into an argument, much less take sides with either faction. Like thousands of others who visit Mexico, I am a foreigner while in their country, and conduct myself in such a way I will hold the respect of my native country—the United States, of which I am mighty proud. So why should I, as a foreigner, feel it my duty to take any part in their national affairs? But even so, one is granted permission to travel about and study their country and conditions so long as their laws are obeyed. Just why the public is concerned about all the paid propaganda circulated and printed in this country against the church's action as well as against

Mexican political powers I cannot fully understand. It seems that some of these "twenty day wonder" tourists can travel into Mexico, follow the main beaten paths, and return to the States with material for a sensational series. If one really has great interest in Mexico and truly wishes to learn about conditions as they exist, I suggest he refrain from reading any material upon Mexico. Let him even stop here at this page, and treat himself to a trip to the interior of Mexico and learn the conditions first hand.

One time I passed through the Mexican National Capital and late one afternoon returned to my hotel, to find a note awaiting me. It had been delivered from the National Palace and was from the President requesting me to call in person at the presidential office that evening. To make a business or official call in Mexico in the early evening is purely a matter of routine. In almost every city they retain the custom of closing their business establishments about one o'clock in the afternoon and re-opening about four, with business hours lasting until seven or seven thirty. This may seem a very odd thing for business people to do, but the custom seems to be ideal. The hours between one and four in the afternoon are usually the hottest part of the day. Mexicans are in the habit of lingering over their meals. So it is quite all right to include a short siesta at that time of day. Then you feel very fresh for the remaining hours of business.

This visit to the President's office was one of the most outstanding thrills in my life. General Rodriguez was president at that time and our conversation was, to be chiefly on athletics. As time was so short between the receipt of the note, and the hour of my interview, I had no time to change my clothes, before being ushered into the private office of the President of the Republic. It so happened I was decked out in a semi-sport outfit, appropriate for afternoon street wear, but very much out of taste for presentation to the Chief Executive in the evening hours. But if I took time to change my arrival would be delayed and I felt it would be *in fra digue* to

keep this great man waiting. So dressed, I was in a dark coat, white striped trousers, and white and black sport shoes, I dashed for a taxi. To my good fortune I located my trusty friend "Monkey-face" who with few words of explanation had me at the Palace on time. Monkey-face did not stop at the customary place outside, but whirled through the private entrance reserved solely for the President's car.

As we came to a halt within the patio of the Palace, soldiers with glistening bayonets, on guard at the gate which my driver had just "crashed," rushed up to the car. I had no time for delay and started out of the conveyance, leaving the trouble to Monkey-face. Just then he gave forth a string of rapid-fire Spanish and the soldiers saluted us and went back to their posts. I turned to inquire of Monkey-face how he had so quickly satisfied the guards. He showed that everlasting grin of his and said, "Before they got to say anything to me, I bawled them out for not giving us better attention and, asked them if word hadn't been sent down that I was to arrive with a very distinguished person from the United States to see the President."

I venture to say there are few like my aide. Due to his courtesy and neat appearance he was more like a service car man and guide man than a cab driver. So after this display of quick wit I told him he had better accompany me as my aide. At the invitation he jumped out of the car and escorted me to the steps that led to the balcony of the second story where the President's office was to be found. Here my driver-aide fell one pace to my rear and accompanied me to the first office of the Executive suite. The secretary came into the room to welcome me. I presented my card to "my aide" and he, in turn, carried it to the secretary who stood but a few meters away. I glanced at my wrist watch and noticed my arrival was to the minute.

Now during the rush to the Palace I had forgotten all about my attire. I then made up my mind I would not let my appearance cause me worry and spoil my audience with the nation's President. But I must admit, as

long as I live, I shall never forget that pair of white and black sport shoes I wore that day. They had leather heels, and I was soon to learn that the many offices and the exceedingly long hallway which I was to walk through before meeting the President consisted of very highly polished hard wood floors. Word came to the secretary that the President awaited me. An official escort preceded me down the long hall to the entrance of the great man's private office. I followed with my special aide behind me. It was then I realized I was going to have one terrible time to make a complete "upstanding" finish of this venture. During those brief moments I reflected on the situation and the subsequent embarrassment of making a three point landing under such circumstances.

Furthermore it was necessary for me to bow several times as we neared the door that led to the official suite. For whenever we met an officer obeisances were given and received. Each one of these genuflections very nearly took me off balance. Never again do I hope to view so slippery a floor. The President met me and we entered his office. He excused his aides so that we might be alone. At his command they came from behind a curtain and made their exit. I decided they were his body guards. Just why he bade them depart, I do not know. But here I was alone with the highest executive of the nation looking eagerly forward to a discussion of mutual interest, namely the development of amateur athletics. General Rodriguez soon makes his guests feel comfortable. He personally selected a chair for me, pulled his own back from the desk, propped his feet upon his highly polished desk and then told me of the plans he had in store for the youth of Mexico. Later, I learned he carried them out and personally led and sponsored a nation wide program for the development of athletics throughout Mexico. For he was instrumental in drawing up the athletic itinerary now being carried out in the Six Year Plan. Upon my visits I found he was keenly interested to learn ideas from others who had had experience in the promotion of athletics, especially of the type most suitable for the young amateur.

President Rodriguez possesses a wonderful physique, that would do credit to any football player. It has always been his idea to give every Mexican child the same opportunity for splendid physical development. Besides the introduction of proper bodily training to aid the individual student, and make school more interesting, the President, at that meeting told me, he cherished the great hope such would lead to their having Mexican athletes compete with other nations especially with United States and Canadian teams. He further said he realized that competition upon the field with athletes of other countries, would lead to a closer friendlier tie, which would ultimately bring about more cordial international dealings. For he considered the athletes of the various nations would be factors in the business and political world of the near future. Competition on the Olympic field among international teams certainly will no doubt carry much weight in the future welfare of their respective nations.

Before my departure that evening, President Rodriguez asked me to carry a friendly message to the athletes of the United States in which he stressed the points of the aforesaid conversation, stating, it was his sincere hope that Mexican athletes would soon be able to compete for honor with the United States. But he also informed me it would take time before the Youth of Mexico could give real competition on the field. He however added they would be willing to both learn and compete, and he hoped this healthy rivalry would bring about a mutual interest between the two countries.

After that one enjoyable visit followed by others, I fully realized why this middle aged gentleman had won the hearts of every youth in Mexico as well as the affection of their elders. He has brought about conditions for the younger generation, that never before existed in the Republic, through which Mexican youth has offered both continued cooperation and interest in even though General Rodriguez has stepped from the leadership.

Time came for my visit to end. The conversation was

so interesting and the Honorable President so hospitable I had forgotten about my unsuitable attire. Upon my departure, this great man called an aide to escort me to my car. Just how the President knew of my experience upon the world's most slippery floor I cannot guess. But after bidding me good bye he smilingly suggested that the aide, escort me another way, which brought me through a series of office rooms with thick carpeted floors. This was indeed much more satisfactory and I walked away with a much more graceful step.

As I left the office and came upon the balcony I did not find my aide. Could he have forgotten his special duties, I thought, as I recalled how well he had handled the situation upon our arrival, and figured he probably had another appointment, and knew I could stop a service car and return to my hotel. But as I walked along the balcony overlooking the patio I saw many high ranking army officers, who appeared very busy. The building contained the War Department as well as the President's office! As I came to the stairway that led to the ground level I stopped to study the mammoth painting upon the wall. Probably no other artist in the world paints such a type of art as that found over this spacious stairway. One can study it for hours and, it seems the longer you gaze upon his work the more you can see. The artist was the famous Mexican painter known under the name of Diego Rivera. He has earned an international reputation for his type of work.

As I returned to the patio I found my combination driver, guide and aide, down on his knees in the midst of a group of soldiers who had evidently just come off duty. Immediately I thought he must be in some kind of trouble again. But upon seeing me, he jumped to his feet, opened the door and we were soon on our way down the narrow street leading to my hotel. Upon our arrival Monkey-face grinned and advised me he would not charge me anything for waiting at the Capitol. He further explained he would not feel right in accepting pay for that service because while I was in visiting the President his "luck" with the soldiers had been extra good.



Upon another occasion it was my privilege to propound a number of questions to General Rodriguez, while he was still President and upon reviewing this yet unpublished conversation I feel such data is so direct and to the point and covers so much of the existing conditions in Mexico today, I must submit both questions and answers as they were given to me by this distinguished gentleman.

*Questions and Answers for Travelers*

Question—Does a native Mexican look with kindness upon a foreigner traveling in Mexico?

Answer—Yes, Mexican hospitality is well known among foreigners who have traveled in Mexico.

Question—Does Mexico wish tourist travel?

Answer—Indeed yes! Mexico as you know, has an ideal climate and the number of tourists has been increasing steadily in the last years.

Question—I wish to inquire as to the protection offered tourists by the government against bandits? Also your idea as to the safety in travel conditions in Mexico compared with other countries?

Answer—There are no more bandits in Mexico than in any other country in the world, perhaps fewer, and due protection is offered by the rural police and militia.

Question—What steps has the Mexican government taken to aid their unemployment question?

Answer—Mexico has practically no unemployment—an important industrial era is beginning in this country, and the extensive lands and farms offer employment to everybody who wants to work.

Question—It is said the depression has had the least effect upon Mexico of any other country, especially in the rural or community sections. Can this be true, Mr. President?

Answer—It is true that the depression affected the rural population of Mexico very little. This is explained by the fact that farms continue to produce as before, and the needs of our humble classes are small.

Question—It is said, Mr. President, that Mexico has fewer holdups, fewer bank robberies, fewer kidnappings than any other country. Why is this so, if true?

Answer—Bank robberies are almost unknown in Mexico. It is not unusual to see bank employees carrying money in large amounts from one building to another, without any trouble. Holdups may have occurred but in very few instances.

Question—What would be the punishment for such cases in Mexico?

Answer—Punishment for such crimes are provided for in the Mexican criminal codes. They are long terms in prison, or death.

Question—In case a criminal should flee and cross the line from the United States into Mexico, would the Mexican government cooperate in the return of the criminal?

Answer—According to existing extradition treaties, one government must turn over to the other any criminals who seek refuge within her territory.

Question—It is reported that so-called underworld characters keep from operating in Mexico as they fear the firing squad.

Answer—Mexico uses the firing squad to execute criminals.

Question—It does appear as one travels about Mexico, that the natives seem to be much more contented and show their joyous spirits to a greater degree than they did years ago. Do you personally think that is a fact?

Answer—The standard of living has become higher among the laboring classes, salaries are better, and sources of work are more numerous on farms and in industries. Everybody can enjoy quiet and peaceful life.

Question—May I ask why Mexico has not had revolutions of late as they did upon occasion a few years back?

Answer—Having gone back to normalcy, revolutions, at present, would not be justified. The people have attained most of the rights for which they fought. It is natural that they should now go back to normal work.

Question—From my travels about the rural sections of your country it is evident the citizens feel they have

a closer interest in the national government. Is there any justification for this feeling?

Answer—The government is in closer contact with the people than ever before. The new Labor law, the Agrarian Law, and the Six Year Plan, as well as national federal life, all bring the Government nearer the working men.

Question—Mr. President, I would like to ask what became of the generals who led the recent revolution and is it possible for them to retain residence in Mexico?

Answer—When former generals have lead unjustified uprisings, they have preferred to live in a foreign country. Many politicians return to Mexico, however, to work in their private enterprises, after they have exiled themselves for some time.

Question—Do you think the time has come when the citizens of Mexico realize that there is little to gain in taking up arms against each other?

Answer—As I said before, there were strong reasons for the Revolution. Mexico should be considered, in many respects, a pioneer in the social welfare of the present generation of the world. The people fought for rights and principles that might well serve as a standard for the newer conception of real democracy.

Question—Now that Mexico has public schools, do you expect the students will attend higher grades than heretofore?

Answer—I must say that Mexico has always had public schools, though they have increased in number very considerably of late. Illiteracy is not higher here than in any other Spanish speaking country. Mexico has the oldest University in North America, and most of the capitals of the states have a University or a school of higher learning. Rural education has received a tremendous impulse from the government. Our aim, as you no doubt know, is to give the students of all classes a liberal and practical education, in order to destroy ignorance and fanaticism. And we expect to carry out a program in conjunction with the schools that will develop the individual physically as well as mentally.

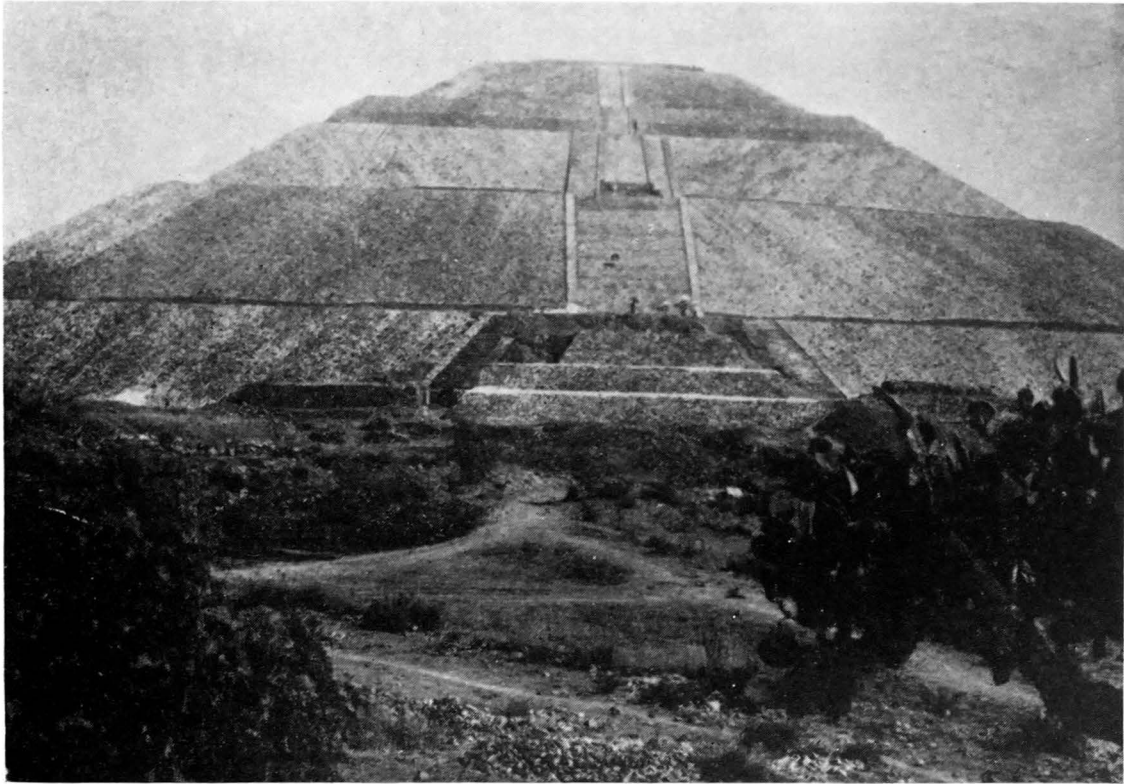
With that interview and the above list of direct replies, we found General Rodriguez one of the most interesting men in Mexico. He showed his willingness in answering questions, regardless of how deep they probed into the administration. I was told by officials at the Palace, and men close to the President, that my interview was one of the most personal he had ever granted. One party added that it was the only one of its nature the President had ever given to a foreigner. We must admit he did not attempt to evade a single question.

## CHAPTER XI

### MEXICO'S HISTORY MAKING

Probably no other nation in the world has had so many changes of leadership as Mexico during its brief history. Historians do not agree as to the probable number of years that the lower part of the continent has been inhabited. But ruins now being uncovered show indications, according to archaeologists, that a very high degree of culture existed upon this portion of the continent long before the time of Christ. As to the exact period these ancient inhabitants lived there, or from whence they came, historians and pre-historic findings do not show. They do, however, claim that as far back as two to four thousand years before Christ there existed Indian tribes upon the lower part of the continent who were well versed in art and home making, as well as combat practices. Within these Indian ruins, they found high grade jewelry and stone carvings that gave proof of the possession of great culture. It was apparent that various tribes at different times had held the reins of power for a number of generations. One, and then another would muster enough courage and support to overthrow the ruling tribe and take possession of principal locations for the duration of their power.

After hundreds of years, modern scientific men are gathering details from findings in these ruins and attempting to form a history of this portion of the continent that will throw light upon what happened here four to six thousand years ago. Some of these scholars state that indications show the possibility the "Lost Continent" once really existed. There has been a legend handed down from the early peoples of both the New and Old World that land connecting these two mighty continents, without warning sank, to be covered by the



The Pyramid of the Sun, San Juan Teotihuacan.

ocean. Legend has it that this gigantic tract disappeared about eight thousand years before the time of Christ. Men who have made a study of these ruins claim that certain articles of pottery discovered beneath the earth's surface, along the lower Gulf coast, correspond to types found in distant lands across the Atlantic. Through these findings, archaeologists explain that this immense strip of land connecting Europe with North America, made it possible for Indian tribes to travel great distances, and as was the custom these early natives left bits of pottery behind them, these now prove tell-tales of their wanderings.

It is claimed that the islands of the West Indies are part of the Lost Continent, and because of their great height retained altitude enough to be spared immersion like other parts of the sunken area. The learned men who are collecting data upon this possibility gained added material for study when, several months ago, more pottery of that nature was found in the interior, evidently showing if this were true, this particular tribe's itinerary included the territory that is now the states of New Mexico and Arizona.

Upon the arrival of Cortez, the Aztec Indian tribe held supreme power and maintained headquarters in the same location now occupied by the present National Capital. Although the Aztec tribe held power at this particular time over the other tribes, it is claimed by students of early Mexican history, they were not the most advanced or cultured group that existed or had held power. It was evident they commanded the most power at that particular time, as they had been successful in holding the throne over all other tribes, losing it after the invasion of the young Spaniard and his daring group of young soldiers.

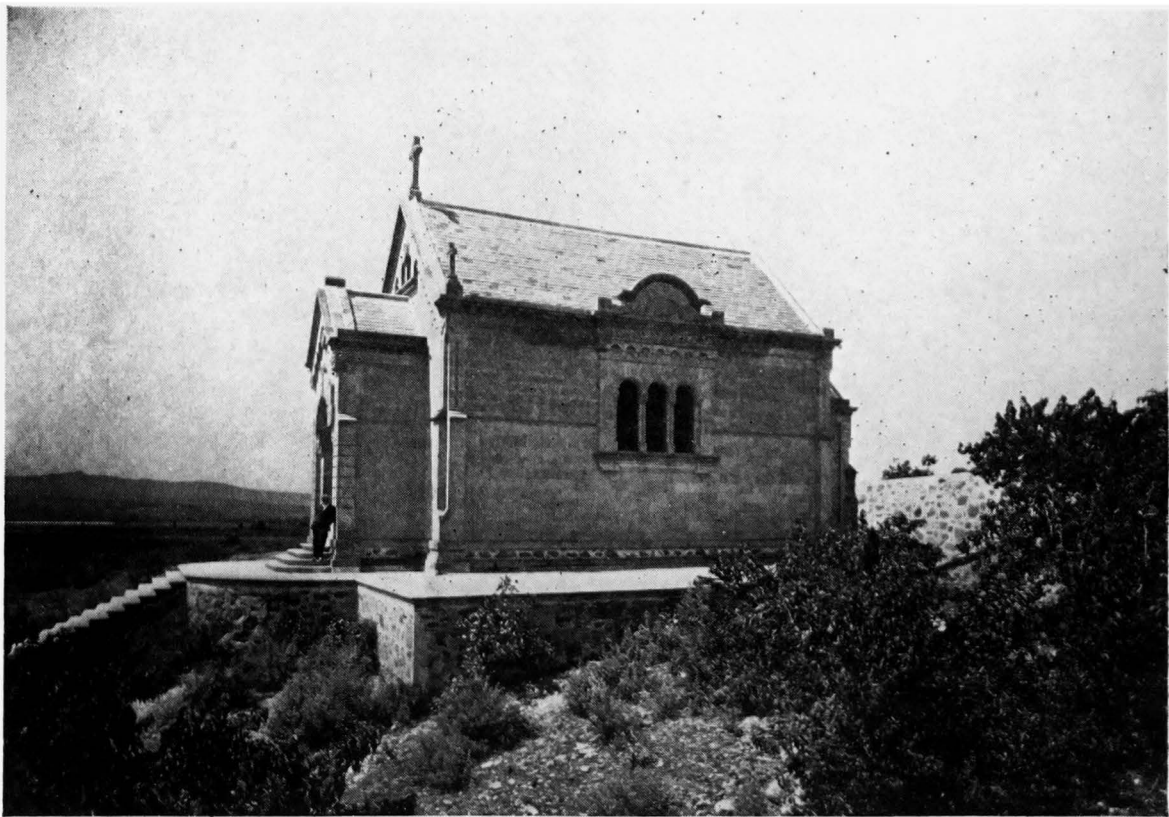
Three tribes, Mayas, Aztecs and Toltecs are rated as being the most outstanding in the progress of Indian life upon the lower portion of the continent. History students do not agree which were the most cultured and progressive. Some give credit to the early Mayas while

others look upon the Toltecs as the most progressive of them all.

The Mayas seem to have been more contented to develop certain portions of the country and leave the roaming to other more venturesome tribes. Their favorite locations were the plateaus of the extreme southlands. It is stated that the Mayas began the study of the stars and planets about 2,000 B. C. It is quite evident from this time onward the Mayas began an era of very high culture which probably reached its height many hundreds of years before Christ. It is now proven that while Europe was seeking a solution of their bewildered conditions, this continent in many places enjoyed a marked degree of tranquility. The supporters of the Mayas point out present indications show that, during the era Europe was at low ebb, the Mayas held the highest degree of civilization existing upon the earth. In brief, the students who favor the Mayan theory state, with the agricultural progress, their arts, handiwork, craftsmanship, and expert stone masonry, they excelled. The Mayas took great interest in the erection of various types of pyramids and no doubt built them as a monument to the memory of their people. Other indications may be that such weather-resisting structures were constructed for sacrificial purposes or to show honor and respect to certain gods they worshipped whom they thought were responsible for their progress, their health and the production of their main crop—maize. It is not known how long corn was raised in Mexico but the Spanish invaders first discovered its many uses upon their initial trip to the New World. The Indians raised corn and after gathering it stored it for future use in large corn cribs.

Other tribes built everlasting monuments and many volumes could be written about this phase of Mexico. Still the reader would not find the interest or information, comparable to a personal browse about the ancient pyramids and monumental structures found in many parts of the country. It would be impossible to give details here regarding this interesting subject and I can only suggest





Chapel on el Cerro de Campanas Where Emperor Maximilian Was Shot.

that you attempt to include as many of these historical land marks in your trip to Mexico as possible. Your trip would not be complete if you failed to do so.

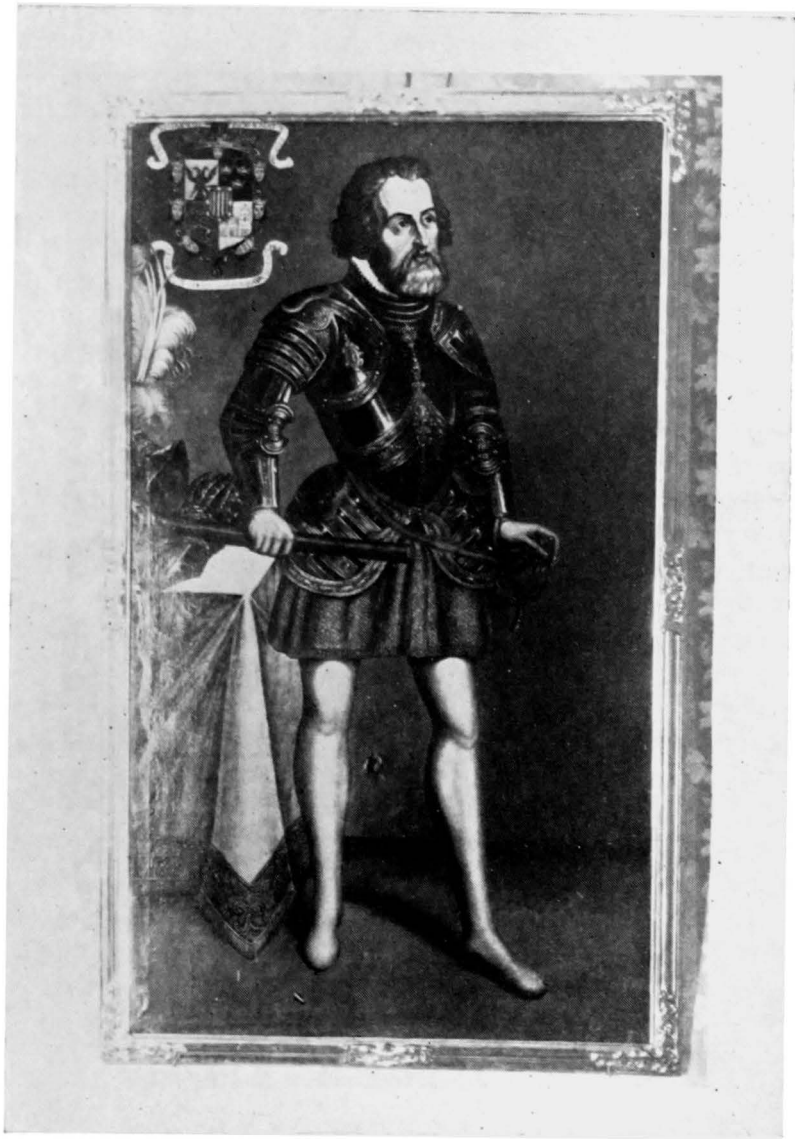
The pyramids of the Moon and Sun as well as the Temple of Quetzalcoatl may be seen near Teotihuacan. The erection of these monuments are credited to the Aztecs and Toltecs and their history is largely fiction or veiled in mystery, yet holding fascination not only for the travelers but the natives as well. The larger of the structures, the Pyramid of the Sun, is greater in area than any of the famous Egyptian pyramids. No doubt, the Egyptian structures have received more publicity, but the impressive monuments here upon this continent, will no doubt create a greater thrill and win more publicity when more travelers visit the interior of Mexico. These ancient land-marks afford such an interesting and amazing experience that a visit to them is in itself well worth a trip to Mexico.

Many wonder why there are so many mysteries connected with Mexico and so little known, and on record, as to what took place before the time of the Conquest. It seems to be a fact, that upon the arrival of the invading Spaniards and their priests, the natives destroyed all the available records the Aztecs kept in their Capital City. The only records the historians have to follow are the reports of the invaders and the carvings upon the stones in many parts of the country. It is said many of the other tribes had an intuition that at some day a fair complexioned invader would visit their shores and take them into bondage. Upon word by their runners that Cortez had arrived and was marching inland, the Indian chiefs at once called their people together and ordered them to destroy as much of their property as possible. After this was done they left their established locations and became wanderers. Finally after a lapse of years most all of them came under the control of the Spanish conquerors. In this modern day they are uncovering cities which have been buried for all these years and covered with many feet of soil and a heavy tropical growth over what once was a thriving Indian community.



The Author, Second From Right, and Three Officers of the Mexican Army Air Department Standing at the Base of the Mighty Pyramid of the Sun. This Pyramid is the Largest of its Kind in the World, 761 Feet Long, 722 Feet Wide and 217 High.

Senor I. Jepeda Salas, (2nd From Left) is a Member of an Outstanding Family in Mexico's History, All the Men Having Taken Important Roles For Generations. His Great-grandfather Was Once President of Mexico. Tnte. Jorge Castillejos on the Left and on Extreme Right, Tnte. Amado Arroyo.



**A Photograph Taken From the Painting of Senor Cortez Who With Several Head of Horses and 500 Men Conquered Mexico With its Millions of War-Like Native Indians.**

There are places in certain southern mountain areas where there has been found under much cover, the ruins of magnificent homes and municipal buildings. It appears these tribes heard of the invaders and at once began to destroy their valuables and attempted to cover their fine homes with fallen trees, and dirt slides which they forced down the mountain side. They succeeded in keeping the location of their treasure and buildings a secret until recently. No doubt there are many such undiscovered places in various sections of the country. In recent explorations it was found that the houses were made of stone slabs representing long tedious labor. There was evidence of their having larger buildings which, no doubt, served as city buildings and places of community gatherings. It is surprising to note the great amount of work upon many of these buildings. Often the entire stonework of the building was completely carved, representing great skill. Historians have been able to decipher some of the stone work and this discovery has aided them in patching together the history of the race. At one such place there was a large space and it appeared that it was used for a community playroom or gymnasium. This room had a stone floor and the walls were of stone. There was no evidence of a roof and it is possible that this building had a wooden roof which had crumbled either through the ages or was destroyed by the Indians before their departure. It could be true that this particular community room was of the open air type or the roof had given away to the earth and debris which had covered it for hundreds of years. Upon the wall there was a hoop shaped affair extending out from the stones that made up the wall. This hoop was hewed from stone and served as part of a game of that early day. It was found that the players used a small round stone and attempted to throw it through the stone circle on the wall. After this discovery one cannot help but think our modern day basket ball game is a delicate sport compared with their tossing a stone ball through the stone hoop back in the Dark Ages.



The Old Cortez Palace Located Down the Mountain From the National Capital in the Popular Residential City of Cuernavaca. Like it was Back in 'the Early Conquest Days of Cortez, Cuernavaca Remains the "Week-end" City For the Business and Official Class of Mexico, D. F.

There are many stories as to the legend which caused the many Indians to destroy their property upon word of the arrival of Cortez. It was very evident this legend had been handed down for many generations and the Indians looked upon it as "their freedom's end." Upon receipt of the news which was spread over the mountains and southern plateaus by the native Indian runners, they at once began the destruction of all property. There is another interesting legend which was told me by a very learned native. He explained the reason how it was possible for Cortez to invade the continent with less than five hundred men, and to win not only their hoarded gold but the entire Aztec tribe. Later this victory developed into the complete control of the lower continent.

There was a legend current among all the tribes that some day there would be an invasion and it would mean the slavery of all. As to how far back this legend went or when the invasion was to take place, of course, no one knew. It was taken for a fact that during some generation the invasion would take place. The story was handed down from one generation to another. I asked this old gentleman if any thought had been given to the origin of the legend and why the natives of that time gave it consideration as a possible reality! Upon this question he explained to me, that at some time—some great distance—no one knew, as they accepted it as a fact, a very strange thing happened within the circles of the ruling tribe. This event dates back of course before any white man stepped upon the continent, at least as far as history is concerned. A fair complexioned man with light hair came among them. The Indians carried word of the arrival of this strange man to their chief and he asked that this man with such odd description be brought before him. In some way the visitor was able to impress the chief and soon he proved to be a very close friend of the entire tribe. His ability to do many things unknown to the tribe made him a miracle man and he was adopted by the tribe and took an active part in its progress.

Legend has it, that this man told the Indians some day people with complexions and hair, much lighter than



At Xochimilco, Near Mexico City, One Will View One of Mexico's Most Famous and Picturesque Sights.



the Indians, and of his type, would come in great numbers and attempt to capture the Indians, run away with their treasures and capture their maidens. It seemed that everything this miracle man had attempted was successful and with this prophecy they could not question the possible facts. The word spread to all sections of the country and for many generations the various tribes awaited the "terrible" day when this prophecy would come true. He explained to them the different methods of combat the invaders would use and the weapons which would act like magic. This strange man explained to the Indians, when the attack came the men would not be walking or running but would be riding upon large white horses. The mention of the horses drew deep interest far in the minds of the Indians. At that time, they could not conceive of such an animal.

I was very interested to learn what became of this miracle man of the early ages on this continent. I was then told no one knew just where he went. One day he called upon the Indian chief and explained he must go away—must sail *far*, far away to distant lands and maybe someday would come back. The chief did not wish him to depart but granted any request he wished. Men were called to his service and legend has it some kind of a raft or boat was built for him and he sailed away—no one knows where, never to return. As to where this sailing departure took place the grapevine news did not record, but most all had the impression that he was escorted to one of the coasts.

Being a legend one can not give it too great consideration but as this miracle man showed marked knowledge of the other worlds, could it not have been possible, he was some sole remaining survivor of an expedition which had set out to discover new lands for their King or Queen? Could it have been true that he decided to take the small chance of making a return trip home by starting from the Gulf shore with hopes the trade winds might carry his tiny craft seaward, with its limited provisions, and either be picked up by some other ship or reach some island in the West Indies? If history only



Probably No Place in the World Did They Construct or Equip Their Churches Better Than the Spanish Did in Mexico—All at the Cost of the Poor Humble Peon Indian.

gave some credit to China or Japan for having a little early exploring ability and desire to seek new lands, one might think it could have been one of these races this mystery man represented. With hair described as much lighter than the Indian, this exempts the Far East and brings about a possibility of his having been a member of some Viking crew which took such great pride in sailing the seas in the early days. It is a question which never will be solved.

The time came when word spread, the invaders had arrived, which this miracle man had prophesied. Cortez arrived on the east shore with about five hundred men. They were all young men. In fact Cortez was in his early thirties during his greatest activity. His men originally came from northern Spain but had been recruited by Cortez in the islands of the West Indies. The men were none too pleased over the plans Cortez held for the invasion of the interior to capture the Aztec capital where he had learned pure gold was plentiful. The men threatened to return and, to offset this move, the young leader had the boats destroyed. The odds were great, as everywhere scouts went, they found great numbers of Indians. There was little to do but to follow their leader and hope that they might gain the aid of Indian tribes which held ill feelings against the Aztecs. Several scouts found that the many Indians in the tribes not in accord with the ruling Aztecs, might be induced to give their support in overthrowing them. This support could not be relied upon. Regardless of what happened, Cortez decided to start the invasion, as by this time he was gold-mad.

In some way this Spanish conquistador learned of this legend which had been handed down through many generations and, being a very shrewd man this legend proved to be his trump card; without any question it led to the success Cortez had in conquering Mexico. Cortez had a blonde wig made and selected his whitest horse to lead his band of men and, according to my new friend, this proved to be so successful, before many moons, Cortez was up to the mountain Capital City of the

Aztecs, with conditions well under his control and already had bargained for the delivery of much of their gold. Although the Indians offered resistance, they seemed helpless against the leader with light hair, fair complexion, and riding on some odd looking speedy, white animal. The sight broke their resistance and they felt they would much rather bargain with the invader than to harm him. The Indians felt that to harm this man might bring destruction to all of them. The capitalized legend did not hold its power for Cortez forever, but it was instrumental in aiding him to maintain his position until Spanish reinforcements and priests could come to his aid.

There seems to be no definite knowledge regarding the Toltecs, or from whence they came. The only explanation one can find, regarding the early settlements of the Toltecs is that legend which says they "Came down from the North." After their arrival in the southern part of the continent, it is evident they mingled somewhat with other tribes and attempted to gain whatever culture they could and include it with their own. They did not care a great deal for the finer artistic cultures of the Mayas, but did learn very rapidly regarding the production of corn. Some think the Toltecs came from the far northern part of the United States to seek the warmer climate and to be in a territory where "much food grows."

After Spain took complete charge of Mexico and established "New Spain," there was no trouble from other countries for centuries. The Indian of the lower continent attempted to fall in line with the new Spanish policies and gave little trouble. Three centuries passed under these conditions, with the powers of Spain milking every possible resource. These centuries passed with few events recorded other than routine Spanish rule. From this quiet colonial life we find them swinging into twelve years of terrible struggle and heroic wars, that ended by making Mexico politically independent of Spain and with a full republican government. Many years followed, with chapter after chapter which is written in blood. Much



A Visit to the National Museum Will Allow the Visitor to Inspect Many of the Aztec Idols.

of this ended when Maximilian lost his throne and his life as well. From this point Mexico found itself with a restored republic and it appeared progress would again favor the nation.

With the second decade of the present century, we find Mexico up in arms once more to win an era of social conquests. Since that time Mexico has shown with all the bloodshed in years of social and economic evolution, it has now gained a position for the first time, when they can feel they are politically free and can hold aspirations for secure intellectual and social freedom. The downfall of Maximilian put an end to class privileges and consecrated definitely the republican ideals of Mexico. The post-Imperial period inaugurated an age of material showing in progress as well as economic building. The recent Revolution which had Mexico in a turmoil for many years, has now brought it to a level of quiet, peaceful life, bringing to the humblest citizen a program that will secure economic emancipation as well as possibly a higher degree of civilization. With such high standards in mind the leaders of the country hope to receive the full cooperation of all citizens and make it possible for Mexico to forge ahead towards a great destiny entirely of its own.

It would be impossible for any person, regardless of his international or diplomatic training to supply a program for Mexico, unless they truly understood present conditions there, and the Mexican people. In no place upon earth will one find conditions to compare with those of Mexico. Their people hold a background of pure continental Indian blood and with the invasion of the Spaniard, infusion of Castilian blood slowly made its mark upon the Indian characteristics, and the forced customs from Old Spain leaves a race which is neither Indian nor Spanish. Not only did the Spaniards find one pure Indian race but there were many in the lower continent as well as races farther north. During those early days it was evident the various tribes retained their own individualism and inter-marriage was very rare. At this day one can find but a small per cent of pure Indian blood that represent any of the ancient tribes. It is true

there are many pure Indians in Mexico but most of them have blood of several tribes in their veins. The intermarriage of the Indians began after their disturbance and tribal scattering which took place with the iron hand of Spain and its Viceregal Dominion in the new world. With such a conglomeration of humanity and customs, one finds a little world all its own, and with such conditions existing within Mexico, it seems very necessary that the leaders who rise within their own people, will be powers who will bring about a condition which will spell progress and peaceful contentment for the seventeen million souls that remain. Outsiders have surely failed and, now the entire world watches with great interest the outcome of their own ideas which show evidence of having the support of almost every citizen, from the most humble peon to the families whom fate has been more kind.

With all the warlike conditions which have existed since the days of early Mexico the traveler can find little in Mexico to indicate such turmoil once existed. Mexico has gone through much for her Independence as did the United States. The history of Mexico is very interesting, but to the prospective tourist to that country I would suggest they worry little over the past of Mexico and go there to enjoy the country as it exists today and take advantage of the many thrilling things it has to offer.

A few brief notes such as these will remind one of their trip about Mexico. Brief but with much coverage—

The Imposing relics of her Indian past.

The glory of her ancient architecture.

Her indescribable national beauty.

Her volcanoes, her lakes, her tropical forests.

The charm of the Mexican city and rural life.

## CHAPTER XII

### HOME LIFE

Visiting the many sections of Mexico one finds many types of homes. The home life varies as much as the types of houses. To understand the variation one must take into consideration the many conditions under which the natives of Mexico live. Upon the whole, there is a very distinct class of their own within the country. You can not refer to it as an Indian country in the terms that we class the pure blood Indian. Nor can you term it a Spanish country even though the Spaniards came and conquered, inter-married to some extent, and even forced their language upon the natives. There developed a change over the country after the Conquest which made their land a unique nation of itself. It is a nation far too individual to wear a group label which might tie it with any other race or nation. The word "Mexican" is the only word that I can find which will truly represent the nation and its people and do justice to their own rich, romantic personality, as well as to adequately describe their rural scenery, people and cities.

The question is often asked, "Who and what are the Mexicans?" This question can only be answered by saying that all citizens of that country are Mexicans. This answer may not cover what the individual has in mind. To explain this, let us take into consideration the infusion of people from countless countries who come together in the United States, making up the citizen of the United States which we term "American." Like our own country, the nation to our south has an individuality of its own. In Mexico, the Spaniards came and found a territory which held a population outnumbering them a great many times. In fact the percentage of foreign blood that came into Mexico and took root in building

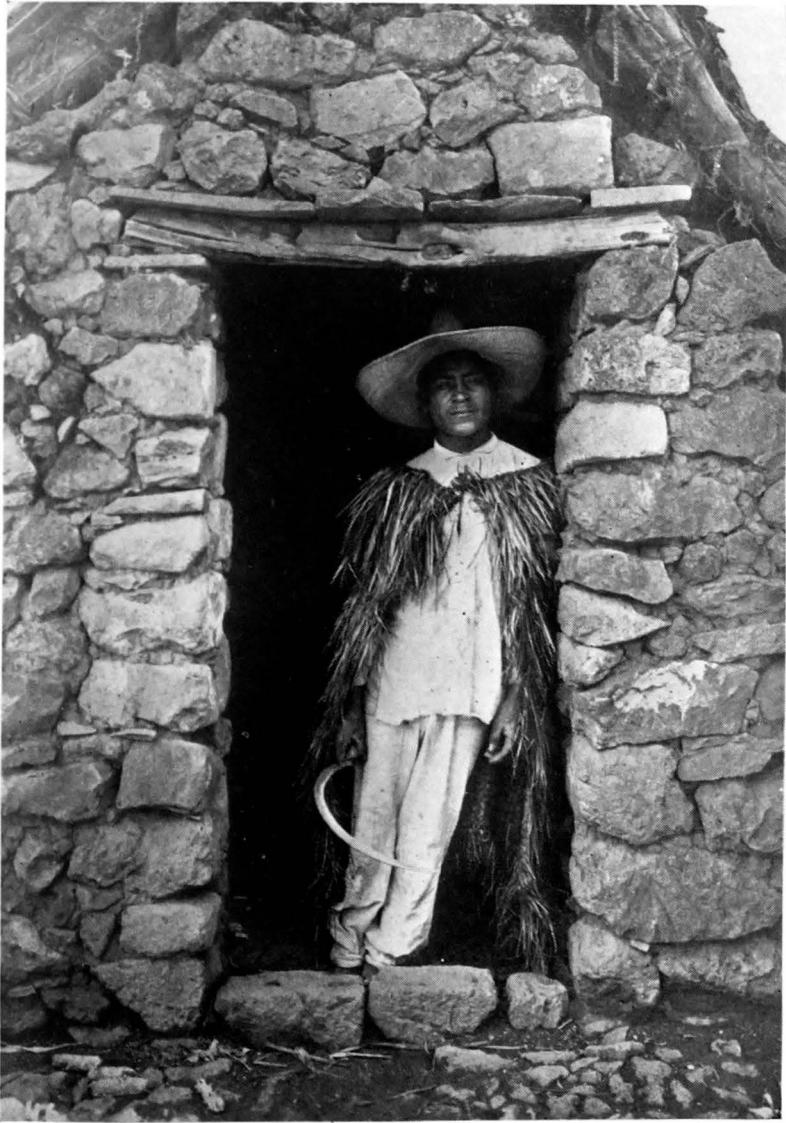


up this new race, was very small in comparison with the native population, even at the height of the "New Spain." With that margin one can readily see just why the Indian predominates in the population of Mexico today. In traveling about the country, and without the use of statistics, one may easily draw his own conclusions regarding this great majority, even to the extent of thinking that at least ninety per cent carry the Indian characteristics.

The United States "invaders," or early settlers, as we refer to them, who came to this part of the continent, not only found fewer Indians but came to make their homes and to seek greater freedom than they enjoyed back in their respective countries. The settlers of the United States and the invaders of Mexico's territory cannot be compared in the least. The Spaniard came and remained for the sole purpose of getting everything possible that would mean a quick turn-over in either cash or gold. The priceless resources of Mexico held their interest, and they used the bulk of the natives to aid them in securing this treasure. With Mexico still holding the distinction of being the world's wealthiest nation, according to size, one can readily comprehend the great wealth which was extracted by Spain, and other foreign interests, up to the time the Mexican people actually took control of their own country.

The foreign blood which makes up the great population of the United States comes from nations where the great majority have similar characteristics, therefore inter-marriage resulted in a new race of people but with characteristics that are in nowise so outstanding as those left on the Indians in Mexico. It is true, no doubt, that there were many settlers who inter-married into the Indian tribes in this country, but the percentage was so small there remains but a small trace at this day. Evidently, the foreign invaders of the territory which later became the United States, found more interest in fighting the Indian back, killing them off, and herding them into our wastelands which we now officially term reservations.

It will be found that in Mexico the citizens are



In Some Sections of Mexico the Natives Build Stone Homes With Thatched Roofs. This Humble Peon Stands in the Doorway of His Hut Which Served Many Generations of His Family Before Him. He is Wearing His Waterproof Cloak.

very proud of being referred to as "Mexicans." This includes even the people who are of the "best families." They take great pride in the fact that their veins carry mostly Spanish blood and may even be descendants of some old aristocratic family which had a coat-of-arms tacked over their door in the hey-day of Spanish rule. I learned this by actual experience many years ago in Mexico. It was from a beautiful lady, too. There was a large group of us together and the conversation drifted to travel, as is often the case when groups get together in foreign countries. This particular young lady was very attractive and from the gown she wore one might think that she had just stepped from one of Fifth Avenue's smartest shops. Her fluent use of many languages betrayed one's guess as to what her native country might be. With her sparkling bright eyes and her hair dress, one's conclusion might well be that she was Spanish. The curiosity was not only mine but was shared by several others. During the conversation I, in some way, got in the question, "I presume you are Spanish?"

Her answer was very polite and in a slow but proud manner she answered, "No señor, I am Mexican." To those of us who had but little travel experience in Mexico, this answer seemed quite a shock. Up until that time our experiences and knowledge had been gathered from hotel lobbies and advertising literature, and it was our impression that to be in the Mexican class, you were one of the humble peon citizens. We later learned that this young lady was a member of one of Mexico's outstanding pioneer families and all her descendants came from Spain. We also later found, regardless of who the person might be, the most humble peasant or some member of an ancient Spanish family, he takes great pride in being a "Mexican" if he is a citizen.

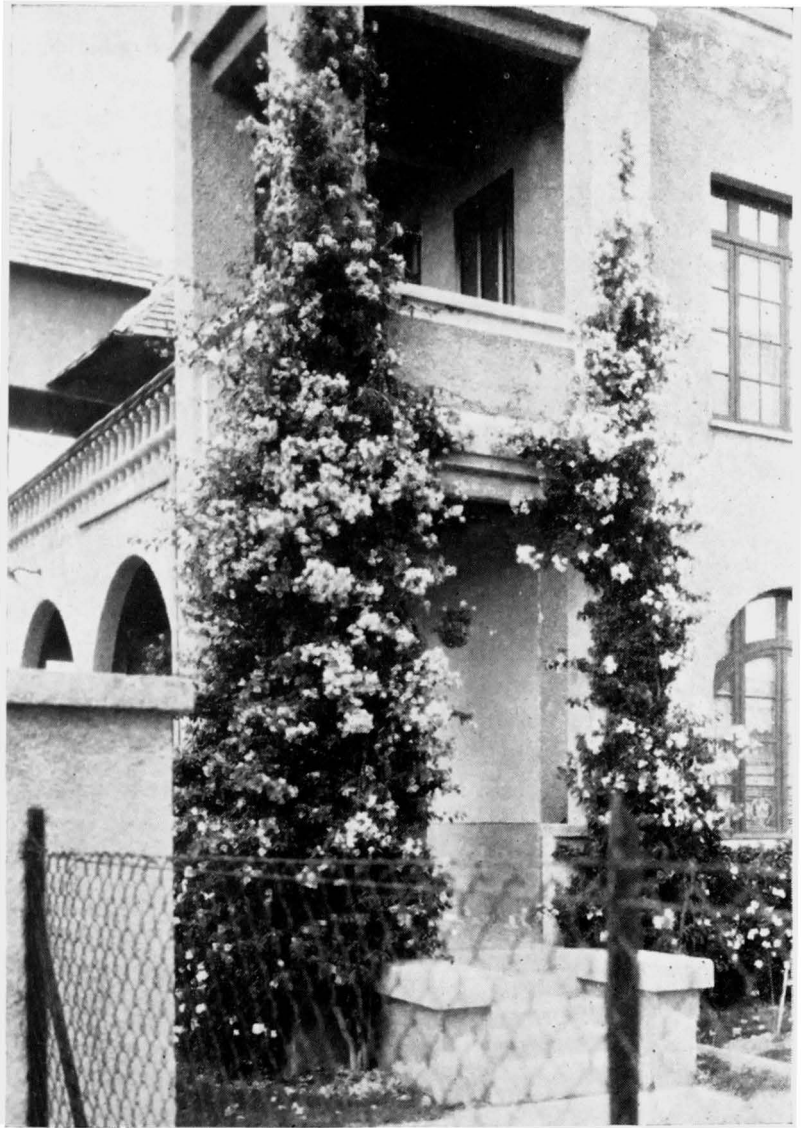
The homes in Mexico vary as much as they do here in the States. In the United States our homes must be built very warm on account of the winter climate which visits the greater portion of the country. With the exceptions of the extreme South, our homes are designed not only for comfort and beauty, but much attention is given to



"A Young Citizen With a Typical Native Background."

insulation. In the South, by that I mean all southern states, the home owner does not have this worry of insulation, his attention goes to comfort and beauty of design. In both Florida and California, it seems their one and only idea in erecting a home is to create a masterpiece, in exterior appearance. During my many visits to the winter "warm" states of our country it seems the "unusual" weather shows up quite often. If the architects would arrange to leave room for a stove it would often be appreciated by the northern folks upon the visit of such unusual weather. In Mexico, they are not so proud, and if a cool spell comes down upon them, they will arrange somehow to have heat, even if they have to bring in a tub or large iron kettle and fill it with a charcoal fire. At the worst, the weather does not get very cold and a small fire will absorb the dampness. In traveling about the country you see small fires placed on the ground just outside the door, and under average conditions enough of the heat will drift into the little home to make it very comfortable. They say in California, the citizens are so loyal to their climate, they will not build a fire, regardless of how cold it may get. They wish to maintain a record which will back up their local commercial clubs. That may be the reason one sees so many folks attending the theatres, clubs, and even health lectures, on inclement days, as evidently there is no unwritten law about absorbing the other fellow's heat.

If the weather should by any chance, stay cool for several days, in any vicinity of rural Mexico, the traveler will see a sight to be remembered. When the weather cools to such an extent the little fires outside will not keep the small board shacks warm, they move the fire inside. If the houses contain floors, they provide some sort of a container to hold the fire, but with the homes which have earth floors, they find it convenient to place the fire right on the floor and in a short time the comfort of their home is ideal. Such fires are made from mesquite wood and burn with great heat, as well as lasting a long time with a small amount of fuel. The strange sight comes from the smoke making its way



The City Homes Are Most Always Adorned With Beautiful Flowers.

skyward up through the cracks in the roof, or penetrating through the palm leaves that so often are used to construct the roof. At a distance, one's first impression is that the house is on fire and that it is apt to break out in a blaze at any moment.

It was a beautiful morning along the Gulf and an expert fisherman told us it would be an ideal day to make a big catch. A friend from the northern part of Michigan had just arrived and, from his fishing talk we knew he would like to compare some experiences along the Gulf with what he found way up north at the Sault. We started out for the Gulf in the early hours. We arrived near the Gulf and here were several thatched covered homes which evidently belonged to Mexican fishermen. They were typical houses like one finds in many parts of rural Mexico or in the small hamlets. The occupants of one of the houses evidently had just improved their fire and the smoke was oozing upward through many parts of the roof as if it was soon to be entirely enveloped in a mass of flames. Our friend from the far Northland had just noticed it and with much excitement he halted us. This was his first view of such a sight, and now was the time for the rest of us to help make the incident one that he would never forget. We did. All of us jumped from the car with great haste, and having a pail with our fishing outfit he was given the honor of being "our hero." There was some water close by, in an inlet near the road, and soon the pail was filled. He thought that we were evidently very slow as we fussed about the car as if trying to get some more fire fighting equipment out. Our friend dashed over to the hut, it was by this time giving out smoke in grand style. He pushed open the door and, with a swing dashed the pail of water into the house. No doubt he had in mind he was doing a great thing and might be able to save some poor family's home. He had no more than settled back from the mighty swing when out came members of the family dripping wet, and no doubt, as surprised as our friend. He turned around and with the sprint he exhibited on returning to the car, I would almost bet Paddock,

with Nurmi thrown in, would have taken second place. We attempted to explain the act of our good samaritan friend to the Mexican family and all seemed to be satisfied, with the exception of our fishing partner. To this day, he steadily believes the rest of us knew that the house was not on fire.

To describe the Mexican houses, calls for the same wide spread differentia that exists between homes within some of our States. In the South, we find mammoth colonial homes, which stand as proudly as its pillars in front, also the modern family homes which mark present progress and, yet within that district, there are thousands of unpainted, shack-type buildings which house the Negro population. Often many families live in these small buildings. So, like here in this country, we must select certain types of homes and describe them separately.

Taking into consideration the climate of most parts of Mexico, one can realize the few requirements necessary to make shelter to protect a family from the elements. The great majority of the population have been held to peasant-like conditions for so many generations few have any great desire to possess homes of modern convenience. Within the cities one can find homes that rate with anything found in other parts of the world. As a whole, most of the rural homes consist of small buildings ranging from one room to several. Many of the homes are but one thickness of boards and due to the cracks, in many cases, are none too comfortable. In certain sections, because of the heat, they build their houses so that the floor is twelve to sixteen inches above the ground. This is done by cutting a number of short pieces of mesquite wood and driving them into the ground for posts to hold up the building. This space affords a circulation of air that aids in combating the heat. This mesquite wood is taken from the ever present mesquite tree which is found in most all parts of the lower section of the North American continent. At certain places, this tree grows to a fair height, while in others it might be classed as a shrub. Its branches are very crooked and it is impossible





Some of the Private Residences in the Cities Are Very Large and Resemble Spacious Office Buildings. They Have a Large Patio in the Center of the Dwelling.

to cut a straight piece of any great length. If one found a piece a yard long, it would almost be as rare as finding a four leaf clover. Mesquite wood is very hard and seldom decays even when placed in the ground as a foundation. In many cases the portion in the ground will outlast the boards which go to build the home. In mountain sections where there is timber, the natives fell the trees and split the logs for use in their own homes and seldom use any manufactured material. There is one thing sure, the citizens of Mexico, in the small cities, hamlets, and countryside, have few worries in regard to the shelter needed to house the family. If there is any worry or consideration given the roof that covers them from the tropical sun or the famous Mexican moon, it is mighty insignificant.

The traveler who comes from a country where much thought and expense is given to the erection of homes, he will find a mystery involved about the tiny homes which the peons seem so contented in. The mystery so often spoken of, by these travelers, is the question of why these happy contented folks do not take advantage of the prevailing conditions, and erect buildings for homes that would be much more comfortable. The ones they now use so often force them to cuddle up tightly with one or more families living in a one, two or three room home. Once the building is erected, they seldom give it necessary repairs until almost ready to crumble down.

Many of the homes in certain parts of the country have no floor other than what nature provides. By making the ground level and then sprinkling water upon it, a hard surface is obtained caused by the heat upon the moistened earth. When this surface has been attained the housewife can sweep the floor and it is very neat. The surface often resembles some of the hand made sun dried bricks which the Indians make. As a rule, the brooms are made from branches of trees or from palm leaves tightly tied together. Where the natives use round poles or bamboo poles for walls and palm leaves for roofing, they depend upon their skill in tying the material to-



A Modern Residential Street in the National Capital City.

gether rather than the use of nails. Few nails are used by the Indian peon.

In a country where it is so natural for vegetation to grow, providing it has water, one would think that the folks would have their yards full of flowers and shrubbery as well as countless beautiful palm trees. This is not the case, as few in the rural sections, or towns, take advantage of this means of beautifying their premises. The native peon is typically Indian in some respects. They do not attempt to improve upon nature, nor take from it more than the bare necessities of life. It is true these humble homes often have a few flowers about the place, but in most cases, it will happen to be a cacti plant or wild flower that has seeded itself and started growth. With so little interest given to flowers and beautifying their yards, the natives are nevertheless to be envied by visitors from the North where it is necessary to put forth so much effort in order to have a few prized flowers and shrubs gracing their front yard for only a few months each year.

The prevailing explanation for the slight interest in beautifying the yards leads back to the Indian nature again. In Mexico, the climate as well as other conditions make it possible for a great amount of beautiful wild growth. This prevails, more so, in the extreme south portion but very noticeable wherever you find a densely populated district. The bulk of the population will be found, not out in the open wild country, as one would expect, but in the valleys and the mountain districts where moisture is furnished from rains and snow water. With this prevailing year around beauty the native does not necessarily feel inclined to put out much labor upon a small yard.

By all means, do not think the homes in the cities have few flowers. This is far from true as their patios are always splendidly arranged and very beautiful. The radiance they afford upon one's arrival, always adds to a typical Mexican welcome, if such a thing is possible. The parks are always beautifully landscaped with many colored flowers which could not help attracting the



Many of the Elite Residents of the Cities Have Heavy Iron Gateways.

attention of the most casual observer. Palm trees of many varieties always play a very important role in bringing about a beautiful as well as restful appearance. The palm trees of the tropics differ from varieties that are grown in the houses to certain kinds that grow as high as a four story building.

There are many varieties of cacti in Mexico and, as you visit various locations or gain altitude, it seems that new kinds are always confronting you. There is a certain variety which grows to a great height and stands erect. This type serves a useful purpose for many of the home owners, as they often plant it about their buildings to serve as a fence. I shall quote a tourist who examined one of these fences. "Those cactuses with their sharp needle-like thorns make a better fence than a real fence does." I thought his remark explained it very well. These cacti plants do not need replanting as almost every variety of cacti lives indefinitely. Such a fence creates much attention from a newcomer but, from experience, allow me to suggest that you never attempt to crawl through one of them.

The women visitors to Mexico are always much interested to learn the methods used by the housewives in their routine household duties. They are always surprised to find that the women cook outside upon a home-made stove. If the weather happens to be unfavorable they move the stove right into the house. Some of the houses located high in the mountains, where it becomes very cool in the evenings, have their stoves arranged permanently in the house, with the stove pipe run out through the window. When wash day comes, and that is almost daily, the women do their wash in the yard. The clothes are boiled in a tub or in an immense iron kettle which is suspended over the fire by two large Y shaped irons. The women folks surely believe in allowing their garments to boil for a long time. They complete the washing by hanging the clothes over the fence or on bushes nearby. Rarely does one see a "regulation" clothes line. Just why they do not stretch a clothes line up in their yard, I do not know, and must



One of the Many Small Pyramids Representing Early Life  
Upon the Lower Continent Which Are Being Uncovered in Mexico.  
San Juan Teotihuacan.

admit I have never been able to find out. The only conclusion I can gather is, to spread them over mesquite bushes is taking advantage of nature's own provision, which seems a close part of their native characteristics.

The clothes seldom are pressed, but with the care they are folded one can hardly tell the difference. In certain sections, where there is a river convenient, the women will be seen along the side of the stream, on their knees, washing clothes. When this method is used they sometimes use soap and after lathering the article very well will pound it upon a large stone. The occasion affords a very interesting sight as you see dozens of women along the river swinging garments in the air, over their heads, to bring them down on the large stone that lays, with its top surface flush with the level of the water. It would seem that the clothes could stand but few of these riverside community wash days. However it is evident that they well understand their business.

At various points in Mexico, I have often arranged to have some Mexican lady launder my clothes. Upon returning through the community, it would seem that I had no more than registered in at my hotel before word had spread to my wash lady, and she would be there to collect what soiled clothes I had accumulated. It was extra money for her and such occasions were few. The laundry was not returned in such elegant wrappings as many high class laundries use but it was very soft and clean. It seemed the women who did my laundry, regardless if near the west coast or in the interior, had but two prices. They did not charge according to the number of articles or the kind, but if it appeared to be a small bundle the price was a certain amount, and if it carried resemblance of being larger than the average bundle the price was double. Besides this price they always add a few pennies to the amount and explain this is for soap. The prices charged always seem very small to one from the States where laundry charges are considerable.



Over on the Gulf coast there is a lady who has done my washing, during my trips to that section of the country, for many years. I recall many years ago I showed her how to slightly starch the collars and cuffs of my shirts. She took great care to return them in just the condition I had explained to her. Whenever I return, she attempts to carry out these wishes without being told again. She stated that it was her first experience in the use of the "stuff that made the cloth hard". Upon my recent trip I happened to have a black shirt in my laundry she was to wash. Time came for my departure. No laundry had been delivered to my hotel. It was necessary that I leave that day, so, I jumped into the hotel taxi, a horse-drawn vehicle, and attempted to locate my laundry lady, from the meager directions received from the bell boy. She had completed the laundry with the exception of my black shirt, explaining that she had trouble with this particular shirt but was still working on it, but with no better results than she had met with on the two previous days. You can imagine my surprise upon learning that a single shirt had given her so much trouble, so I asked what her difficulty was. She said she had starched my black shirt the same as the others, but when she placed the hot iron upon it the collar and cuffs would turn a milky white. She knew there was something wrong but could not find the fault. She had worked much of the time during the past two days attempting to make that black shirt meet the requirements I had set for my other shirts. Time meant nothing to her in comparison to the satisfaction of doing her work correctly. No doubt if she had been able to find the fault and to have corrected it, she would never have mentioned the long tedious work. A word of praise to any Mexican will be greatly appreciated by them and will bring about gratifying results. Being that my laundry lady had done her very best to starch the black shirt to meet my requirements, I did not have the heart to explain that it was the action of the starch upon the black cloth. Feeling that she might never have another black shirt to starch I told her that no doubt it

was the cloth that caused her trouble. I took my laundry and left sufficient money to compensate her for the actual time she spent upon my laundry, including the black shirt.

There are certain settlements which carry out their ancient custom of building homes of stone and in other parts one may notice they prefer the use of mud or what might be termed adobe houses. This habit or custom of building different type homes seems to depend upon the early training of those particular people in the use of certain materials for construction. If one could trace them, it might be that their custom was handed down from their Indian ancestors. It is a fact that the various tribes had varied customs.

Many stone houses are built of small cut stones that are laid brick fashion. These stones the natives use are much larger than brick and somewhat similar to our sandstone. I recall visiting a hamlet where all the buildings were constructed of this type of stone. It was located in the state of Nuevo Leon and it was evident few, outside of their own people, ever visited them. The hamlet was so old that it was impossible to gain any idea as to its age. The natives lived there as their ancestors had before them and there was no cause to worry about the past. They seemed concerned however, with the future. The streets were very narrow, and like most city buildings, stood to the street line. The yard would have a stone wall, constructed like the house, all around it, and no doubt this had furnished protection from marauders and revolutionists more than once during the long history of the town. Regardless of what anyone might say, one realized that the town was very old. This was evident from the deterioration shown in the stone walls and buildings. It would take generations and generations before the elements could affect stone as it had here in this town. I shall never forget how beautiful the century plant appeared, as it towered along the edge of the stone walls and houses. Some of these cactus plants had grown to great size and I couldn't help wondering how long they had been there, and how they were ever able to take root,

up so high in the cracks between the stones. We could not imagine any reason why individuals might plant them there and went away feeling that nature had carried the seed to these out of the way places either by birds or the wind. As quaint and ancient as the city appeared, they are now having public school instruction and the boys are playing modern athletic games just like the boys in the most modern city.

There seems to be several methods in constructing the adobe houses. Some are constructed from adobe mud bricks and they are laid in brick fashion such as the stones we found in these old mountain towns. When they are about to construct one of these adobe brick houses they gather straw and have it handy so when they mix up a batch of mud they can mix some of this straw with it. The straw acts as reinforcement. The mixture which consists of a heavy thick nature is then placed in molds. These molds vary in size but the average seem to be about 10 x 14 x 4. After they start to harden in the mold they are removed so that the sun may bake them. After several weeks of sun baking they are ready to be used to construct the walls. I noticed that some of the workmen would mix up a similar mixture to use between the large bricks. Others would finish the inside and outside wall by plastering them with mud. This gave a smooth surface like plaster.

To erect an adobe home with little labor they often erect a frame work of lumber or poles, and then plaster the wall on both sides with a very heavy coating of mud. There seems to be a considerable use of palm leaves for roof covering. In some places, I noticed that long grass was used for the same purpose. It seems regardless of how much it may rain, these thatch covered huts will stand it and turn the rain off like the proverbial duck's back. One might think from the reputation which Mexico has for dry weather, one would not be concerned about a leaky roof. It is true much of Mexico's land is extremely dry and might even be classed as waste land, but still one finds sections which have tropical rains. Speaking of these waste land areas, it is found

that wherever they can apply water vegetation grows prolifically.

From the fact that the great majority of the population live where it becomes quite hot, one often thinks the natives could find some other type of construction not requiring much labor, yet giving them greater relief during the hot spells, when the sun seems to drop earthward within a very close range. The native knows his country. It must be admitted he has found, even with the extreme heat, if he can get under a shelter where the air can circulate, he will find a great deal of comfort. It seems the most humble rural thatched shack, offers almost equal comfort to the city homes with their tremendously thick concrete walls. In the greater part of the States we are always warned to avoid sitting in a draft and especially allow no drafts to pass over us when sleeping, otherwise we may catch a severe cold. It is just the opposite in Mexico, as one can have his bed right up to the window and allow a fresh, soothing, tropical breeze to pass through during the night. In the morning one will feel no ill effects but rather very much refreshed and ready for another blistering day, which will give a newcomer a coat of tan which would make him the envy of any Miami Beach patron.

Beautiful residences are to be found in the cities and many of them are very costly. The greater majority of them might first appear as large business buildings because of the independent balconies and the door type windows. These large residences are often found within the heart of the city. As you have guessed they are built up to the sidewalk, and the building covers the entire property with the exception of the spacious patio. These beautiful patios play a very important part in the everyday life of these typical Spanish homes. Such buildings are usually constructed two stories high with a balcony extending around the patio on the top flight. With such construction almost every room has an entrance from the patio, as well as large door type windows on the outside. The upper rooms have independent balconies while the lower windows have iron bars across

them. Each room has a complete circulation of air which adds so much to the home comfort. These patio type homes allow much freedom within their walls yet afford complete privacy from the outside world. The large homes of this type require many servants and often the servants have their private quarters within the building and maintain households of their own. During times when the weather is ideal, and it is so, most of the time, they have their evening meals served out in the open patio among the palm trees and beautiful flowers.

There are of course many homes built of the patio type not maintained like the so-called higher class homes. I have visited many where they have their burro, family goat, and chickens within the patio. Such homes, of course, do not rate among the "best people." Many residents have a pump or bucket to draw water from what one might think a well. Upon inquiry it is often discovered they have built an immense cistern beneath the patio floor. This cistern is used to catch the water during rains and then it is held there as a reserve in case it is needed for future use.

In the evenings as one goes about the city he will see folks sitting out on their balconies in the tropical evening air as well as watching the activities of the street below. Old and young alike always seem to be enjoying themselves to the greatest extent. It seems that everybody in Mexico is happy and really getting much from life.

As I mentioned, the large swinging windows of the lower floor are always guarded by iron bars. They, as a rule, are very ornamental and give no jail-like appearance. I recall riding about a city one evening with one of Mexico's highest army officials. It was a beautiful evening and almost all the balconies were filled with family members, including many señoritas. I took the liberty of asking my friend many questions while we were driving about. I remember one of them being about the irons over the windows. I explained that I understood there was seldom a case of house burglary and wondered then what value they were. My companion

reached up and pulled the visor of his military cap down so it tilted slightly over one eye, turned towards me and with very serious voice replied, "My dear friend, it is said they are needed to keep the beautiful daughter in . . . and the boy friend out." Then he smiled, and with evidence of thinking back to his own youthful days, he jokingly said, "But I sometimes think they don't always carry out this mission."

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE NATIONAL SPORT

Bull fighting is the national, as well as the favorite sport, in all of Mexico. Various athletic games are winning the hearts of the younger Mexican generation, as it is possible for them to take an active part in most of them, but deep down in their hearts, they take a great interest in their national sport, which was only one of the many things imported from Old Spain to the New Spain. Few are able to participate in the national sport, but this does not keep them from taking an active interest in the game even if such must be confined solely to attending the fight via the box office. In Mexico, they re-fight the main bull fights orally many times and extol the virtues and fighting ability of their favorite bull fighter as against the merits of other outstanding fighters. It not infrequently happens that the argument leads into heated words and results in personal combat; in some cases they resort to knives to settle the argument.

The game of fighting bulls dates far back into the past as there are no certain facts as to its origin. It was thought by some to have captured the interest of early Spain when the Spanish noblemen were attracted by the sport of the Moors. According to some historians the Moors used the art of fighting wild bulls in order to train their soldiers. It is thought the Moors raised a special breed of strong fighting animals, exclusively, to condition their warriors for war purposes. They evidently felt if a soldier could enter the ring with a mad animal and, with quick actions survive his powerful and quick charges, that there would be little danger in sending him against any person who might invade their territory. The historians point out they do not



The Plaza de Toros in Mexico City is the Largest Bull Fighting Arena in the World. The Matador is Showing off a Bit For His Many Fans Before Making the Kill.



believe each man was expected to kill the animal as under such circumstances it would take an almost inexhaustable number of animals.

Noblemen of high degree brought the sport to Spain, according to some students, and created an exhibition that greatly resembles the present day show. For many years, these King's men held bull fighting as their exclusive sport and it was well patronized by the aristocrats of the nation. From Spain it was carried to Mexico as well as to other Latin countries.

If I were experienced in all the details of this national sport, no doubt, I would be able to command a higher degree of technic in describing the professional terms used in the sport to my readers. My bull fighting experience has been confined to that of a mere spectator. I imagine my rating would be that of a layman. I have witnessed many such fights advertised as, "The killing of six big brave bulls by Spain's most famous matadors." Although I have seen a large number of fights I cannot truthfully say I favor the sport. I see where there might be great artistic action and ability displayed by the matadors and their assistants which would require, not only bravery, but many years of practice. On the other hand, I do not see where the sport of killing bulls, in such a manner, or the goring of horses, can claim any great fame in the mythical halls of sportsmanship. The bull, although brave he might be, has the odds against him, as upon his entry into the ring his life is measured by minutes. The bull always loses.

The fighters take great chances in their activity in the ring and must depend greatly upon coordination of mind, eyes, and foot work. A slip or mis-step might mean instant death or disability from the bull's horns. There are many technical terms and phrases about the sport the average layman does not understand and, without question he misses many of the high points of the game, without this knowledge. It is apparent most of the criticism against the sport comes from people in the layman class. It would be much more fair to the

game of bull fighting, the Spanish and Mexican national sport, if those who criticize would make it a point to further their knowledge of the sport before pointing out its faults.

From a layman's view point I shall attempt to picture the sport as I found it. It is no doubt possible other northern visitors would view their first bull fight from the same angle.

When an outstanding bull fighter makes a tour of Mexico, the people turn out in great numbers. Such an event is talked about many weeks before the scheduled appearance of the bull fighting "star." The town takes on a holiday atmosphere, with the people using all modes of transportation to arrive in time to see the famous man and the killing of the six large brave bulls. Each afternoon's fight usually employs that many bulls, that is, the killing of six animals takes place. People will arrive on foot, with burros, on horseback, as well as



The Author With the Popular Mexican Athlete, Jose Jesus Pena (right). Pena Once Ran Second in a 100 Yard Dash Against the Great Charley Paddock . . . Then the World's Fastest Human.

in highly polished horse drawn vehicles and modern automobiles. The only incident which might be used in comparison, in this country, would be the visit of some all-star league baseball team upon a post season barnstorming tour of the "sticks." If they carried Babe Ruth, with his hey-day popularity, their invasion might give some comparison to the excitement when an outstanding bull fighter visits a Mexican town.

Almost every town has its bull fighting arena and they are so proud of it, that it is often in the heart of the city. The world's largest arena, built exclusively for bull fights, is located at Mexico City. This mammoth circular stadium was constructed chiefly of steel at a cost of over three quarters of a million dollars. The special steel work was imported from the States. The Mexican National Capital City spreads over a large area and it would be difficult to state what portion of the city might be referred to as "the heart or center of the city." Regardless of where the center of the city is, we might state that this world famous fighting bowl is located well within the main part of the city, in fact it is but a short distance from the National Palace in one direction, and a much shorter distance to the Chapultepec Castle in another.

The little hamlets are not without their part in the national sport and though they seldom afford a permanent structure they have a place made which will serve the purpose for their type of fights. Often such arenas consist only of a corral erected from poles upon vacant lots, which gives resemblance to one of our western rodeo settings. There are many thrilling fights in the small towns, although they do not claim any national or international bull fighters, such as it is possible for the cities to do, because of the meagre cash gate receipts. The towns must depend upon their local men who have gained local reputations, and who aspire to become famous in the sport where they must match their skill against the speed and power of the bulls. The towns have their regular fights and often these fights are held on Sunday afternoons. The Mexicans are great for their holidays, and

it is often remarked by travelers that if they continue to increase the number of holidays it will soon be one continuous celebration. If this were true it, no doubt, would suit the average Mexican, as there is nothing he likes better than to gather and celebrate with a bull fight and fiesta.

I asked one of the old natives why they used to have so many holidays. He explained to me it was natural for the peons to wish to congregate and visit or celebrate, as it is a custom that has been handed down through the generations, from the time of the roving Indian tribes. At that time, they had their festivals, to give thanks to their various idols as well as to the gods whom they thought controlled the sun, the moon and stars, as well as having the power of control over their maize harvests. These ancient celebrations varied from the gatherings for great feasts, to the sacrificial ceremonies. The great sacrificial celebrations consisted of giving portions of their crops as an offering as well as offering the lives of countless young men and women. Some tribes selected the most beautiful girls of their tribe for sacrifice to their ruling gods. At certain periods of life upon this continent, it is also said the Indian tribes selected a certain number of their best looking young chiefs to give their lives on great occasions. Historians claim it was considered a great honor to be selected for this sacrificial ceremony. The doomed men were selected by certain picked chiefs. They selected the young man or men who had the best physique. Several weeks before the ceremony, the young man would be notified and he at once would arrange his affairs so he might depart into other "hunting grounds." He was then taken in charge by the main rulers of the tribe and placed in some official residence. Here, he was given anything he wished and the very best foods were brought and prepared for him. A group of the most beautiful Indian maids were brought to act as his slaves. When the appointed day came, the entire tribe would gather for the ceremonies. It is said these boys would march with great pride, showing no fear, to the platform which was to



All Dressed Up for the "Dance of the Old Men." A Common Sight and a Popular Dance in the State of Michoacan.

be the scene of the sacrifice. The students of early Indian life explain to us that after certain phases of the ceremonies had taken place, the Indian to be sacrificed would stand before the crowd, unmasked, and one of the chiefs would take a razor-edged instrument, make an incision and cut out his heart then throw it to the crowd below. After this, the flesh would be distributed among the various tribe leaders and eaten as a part of the ceremonies.

I again asked this elderly native if the government were to cut out many of these holidays if the action would be resented. He then explained most of the holidays were not "official" and many of the festivals came about from the teachings of the priests in earlier days. He said, it was generally understood that these priests knew of the eagerness of the natives to gather and to celebrate, so took advantage of the situation by having them carry out such celebrations in the various settlements. But the joker in it was to have the natives bring in food, pottery, ore, blankets and other commodities to help carry along the celebrations. Such gifts came into the church by the peons wishing to give thanks for what they had already received from nature. My informer stated the priests were able to get much property from the Indian peons in this peaceful fashion by sponsoring the celebration, and advising the ignorant natives it was necessary to present such gifts in order that they might expect to be favored with the possibility of acquiring more in the future.

Great celebrations are held in the towns and smaller cities which might be compared with our county fairs in the States. You can be assured the bull fights are the main attraction. Here, the best local fighters display their skill although rarely one of them gains an opportunity to enter the "main show" in the cities. One has better chance of reaching stardom in the motion picture world in the States, than the young matador has in gaining a reputation which will entitle him to be classed as a professional high class bull fighter.

Visitors attending one of these fights in the rural dis-



At the Suburbs of the National Capital One Can Visit the Churubusco Convent Which Also Serves as a Land Mark Where Combat Took Place Between the United States Troops and the Mexicans.

tricts are often given more thrills than are found in the so called high class fights. The non-professionals, of course, do not offer the graceful actions of their brother professionals but being that amateurs make more mistakes, one will see more accidents. Very often such accidents prove fatal but if the young fighter recovers he often returns to his chosen profession to master details so that it might not happen the second time. Many of the injured lose heart and take their future interest in bull fighting from the reserved seat section.

The main bull fighting season is during the winter months with an attraction advertised for each Sunday afternoon. During the balance of the year they carry on what is called the amateur fights and it is often the case that in this way, many of the young fighters through out country districts are given an opportunity to display their skill. Such an opportunity comes to the fighters who have shown a great amount of skill in their respective territories and created a large following. Such an opportunity might be compared with one of the young boys in the States receiving an opportunity to report at one of the big league training camps. If they display a marked degree of ability they have a good chance to succeed. Exhibitions that use these amateurs charge a very moderate entrance fee and, it is possible for many of the humble class to attend more regularly than they would if the prices were based upon the employment of famous or imported Spanish fighters.

The bulls are a special breed and are very expensive. The animals used in the high class fights often cost anywhere from five hundred to a thousand dollars. Some of them are imported from Spain and when this is the case they give great publicity to the fact that the bulls are "Imported, big, ferocious, man-killing bulls." Some of the publicity given to these fights would almost sound as if it originated in a Hebrew motion picture publicity department. Large ranches are sometimes devoted to the raising of these animals and will be found in Mexico as well as in Spain. Such ranches are often owned by matadors who have retired and go into this vocation as



a hobby. Most all professional matadors who have participated in the big time events retire, if they live that long, with very comfortable fortunes. The leading matadors receive a very high salary for each appearance.

It is a great honor for any boy to be able to get close enough to touch the clothing of a great matador. If the occasion should ever present itself, so that one of these boys could carry the bull fighter's cape, sword, or any of his belongings, he would be thrilled and treasure that memory for a long time. You can imagine that it would give any boy a real thrill if he received a bat or a ball from Babe Ruth, or an autographed football from "Red" Grange. Well, this privilege of carrying a matador's cape or even to walk with him would be "tops" for the youngster and he would be envied by every child of his acquaintance. It is the greatest ambition of every boy in Mexico to some day receive the cheers of the throngs of citizens as their favorite bull fighter.

One evening, I was loitering in a park in Vera Cruz. In the distance, I noticed two young boys playing a game which looked unusual, so I slowly ventured towards them in order not to attract their attention from their playing. If this was a new kind of a game, I wished to learn it and carry it back to the States and Canada, so the boys of other parts of the continent might enjoy it, too. As I neared I could tell the youngsters were not over five or six years old. They were very enthused over their game. One of the boys had a red handkerchief of great size in one hand and a long narrow wooden sword in the other. The other boy was bent over and he held a couple of short sticks to his head which no doubt, were to represent horns. The boy who took the part of the bull had to be more active than the young matador but he would carry out his part of the program by making powerful charges at the red handkerchief. When he tired, he would exchange places with the other boy and resume the role as a cheer loving matador. This went on for many minutes, until both became very tired and had to retire to a nearby park bench. I could see right then the love of the national sport of bull fighting takes hold upon



The Flowers and Vines Add to the Beauty of Most Homes.  
Notice the Two Young Shy Senioritas in the Window Above.

the natives of the country at a very early age. It will be very difficult to ever supplant a sport which holds the interest this one does with the majority in Mexico.

The routine of all fights is about the same and the manner of the "kill" for one animal of the fight is very much the same as the other five in the same afternoon's sport. Different bulls offer the fighters varied worries. It is said they can soon size up the nature of the animal by watching how he charges into the arena after the door is opened. The fighter studies his bull and his actions warn the matador as to methods he must use to outsmart the bull's charges.

Within the lower circle on the ground is a heavy solid wood fence about six feet high which is erected to protect the various men who take part in the fight so they can jump back behind it—in case they are quick enough. As one foreigner who was sitting near me remarked, after seeing one of the men barely escape the bull by dashing behind the fence, "It's all right when the man beats the bull, but I would hate to be the one to have a race with the animal and to have it a tie." Before the fight was over that day there were several such ties.

There are two kinds of tickets, those that call for seats on the shady side, and the less expensive ones which will direct you to the sunny side. If I may describe it as such, there is a class distinction, because upon entering the structure you will find yourself sitting in the shade if you bought that type ticket, but before the fight is well under way, the sun will be up in the sky and its rays will be over the entire stadium. No doubt, from having a "sunny side" group of tickets it allows the more humble class to enter and be among themselves. There is no covering over the arenas. Upon entry one will be ushered to his proper location but it will not be long before he will find himself renting a cushion for use during the afternoon. These cushions can be rented from the boys who go about the place selling refreshments. It is possible that some of the fighters at times wish the cushions were not for rent as I have seen the time when some fighter, either from fear or lack of knowledge, committed

an unsportsman-like act and soon found the wrath of the crowd upon him in the form of these cushions sailing through the air, with him as their object. The Mexicans do not hesitate to show their disapproval when it appears to them the fighters are not fighting within the ethics of matador sportsmanship. They will "boo" in a manner that can almost be classed in the category of the famous baseball term of "Bronx cheer." Upon several occasions I have seen these cushions floating through the air like snowflakes, sometimes pop bottles were included, and the matador will run for cover with no idea of returning before "his public" on that day and maybe never, in that same ring. The fight would be delayed until the attendants cleared the large arena. The patrons seldom find it necessary to carry out their feelings in that manner, and in the great majority of cases, demonstrate their support by great cheering for their favorite matador, or any matador, who gives a good exhibition and makes a "good kill."

High up in the top row of seats one will notice a special box that is reserved for the judges. The judges watch every movement of the many men who take part in the fight and in case any do not exhibit great skill and follow certain definite rules, they fine him. As to the amount the judges decide upon, it is shown upon a large blackboard in front of their box, in view of the patrons. When some infraction of the rules is committed the judges notify the trumpet players that stand nearby. There are certain meanings for the various tunes that these musicians blast out in high pitched tones.

When the time comes for the start of the fight you can be assured most all the seats are occupied for to secure a reserved seat one must make the reservation several days before the big fight. As the gates open into the arena ring one views a great sight. It will provide a scene one will long cherish as he looks back upon his first bull fight. Some of the scenes might thrill you, turn you pale, but the sight you will retain as the feature of the day will be the opening parade which comprises all the men who take part in the fight during the afternoon.

Each man is dressed in his most attractive costume. These costumes are made of the very best materials that can be purchased anywhere in the world. All the suits are hand made and some of the suits worn by the matadors, represent years and years of labor because of the great amount of lace and needle work. And such colors, one may never see assembled again. The colorful clothing is simply "gorgeous," as one lady in front of me remarked as she viewed her first parade.

The men circle the spacious arena several times and then make preparation for the beginning of the fight. During this parade a number of the men are mounted on beautiful horses. These are not the horses used during the fight as the horses used are often gored and must be killed. The animals are blindfolded and have a padding to protect parts of their body from the goring of the bull. The manager purchases old broken down horses, with ribs prominent, for this service.

Upon attending the main fights in Mexico City one can be assured that throughout the crowd there will be many outstanding patrons of the fights who belong to the government, army, and social circles. You may have the opportunity of viewing most all types of clothes worn by the people of Mexico. On the sunny side, that is, the side that was sunny at the start of the fight, will show the peons in their tattered straw hats and clothes of rags. They love their national sport so well they will save for many months in order to be able to attend one of the first class fights. In the other sections, one will see many women, gayly dressed, as they, too, are greatly interested in the dangerous sport. If one wishes to see the women of Mexico who have gained an international reputation, famous for beauty, grace and dress, I know of no better place than to be present at one of the outstanding bull fights of the season. The women will be there with members of their families and if the señoritas are not accompanied by some close relative you may be assured that she is well guarded and taken care of by a chaperon.

When the gate is opened a large bull will dash out in



A Home Along the Shore, Where Everyone Seems Happy and Taxes Are Few.

angry fashion to the center of the ring, his pace never changes as by that time he catches sight of one of the men in the ring, and it is natural for him to charge the first moving object. During all the time, prior to the entry of the bull, the band has entertained the crowd with lively marches, many of them being especially written and dedicated to the bull fight fans. As the angry animal charges out, he is attracted by the toreadors. They are dressed in their bright clothes and carry a cape which is about the size of a small blanket. Most of these capes have a bright red lining with a beautiful green satin or velvet outside. They use this cape to attract the animal, holding the red side towards the bull. The color red arouses the ire of the bull. It is sure to attract his attention and cause his charge. Most of us recall, as children we were told the bull of the cattle herd would charge us in case we ventured near him wearing a red garment. The famous Believe-It-Or-Not man, Robert Ripley, has said that the bull has no sense of color and it is the fluttering of cloth, instead of the color, which displeases the bull. Another thing we often hear is that a bull closes his eyes when it nears its object, in charging. This is not the case with these bulls in the ring, as they often turn as quickly as the fleet-footed toreador or matador. The next time you see a fight or view motion pictures giving bull fighting scenes, notice how quickly the animal can change his movements in order to follow his objective. The shortest definition I can give for a toreador would be the one word—tormentor.

The toreadors take turns in displaying the fastest foot work they possess before the bull. They will have the animal charge them and then in a very graceful manner attempt to sidestep him. As this progresses, it further angers the bull. After they have played their part, the man mounted upon the blindfolded horse will begin to show some activity. There are generally two or three of these mounted men in the ring at the same time. Sometimes the horses have but one eye blindfolded and by the use of the other can move about better than if totally

blinded. The eye which is free to view, is always kept on the opposite side of the mad bull, as it is hard to handle a horse or to guide him within striking distance of the bull if he knows it. As the picador, the man on the horse, nears the center of the ring, the bull makes a dash at the horse. It is the intentions of the picador to hold back the charge of the bull by a long wooden pole that he carries. He attempts to catch the bull in the neck or head with this pole that contains a sharp metal point on its end. More often the animal finds its mark, than can be credited to the picador in withholding or averting the strike. These horses seldom go through a whole day's fight without receiving fatal gorings which necessitate their being killed. During the last fight I attended I recall one horse being caught in the rear leg. The injury evidently cut an artery as the blood squirted many inches and, as they led the horse across the bull ring, it was visible where the blood sprayed over the dusty arena showing the course the horse covered enroute to the gate. They shot the horse immediately after taking it from the ring.

All this goes to irritate the bull to a high degree of anger for the matador's kill. Before the matador makes his entry the banderilleros must give their display of work which appears to be the outstanding bravery of the entire affair. He walks to the center of the ring carrying two banderillas. These banderillas consist of a piece of wood about thirty inches in length and wrapped with crinkly fringed paper of many bright colors. At one end there is a sharp metal hook resembling a harpoon, as it is so constructed that it will pierce the hide of the animal and be held fast by the hook. These are used to anger the bull and when they dangle from his neck he feels them flopping about his sides and becomes dangerously mad and exerts every bit of his energy to kill the men in the ring whom he knows are the cause of his predicament. The odor of his own blood as it trickles from the wounds caused by the banderillas adds to his feelings. It is now the duty of the banderillero to step out in the ring and await the charge





A Street in a Rural Hamlet. Notice the Outside Stairway.

of the bull. He must wait in that position until the bull is close enough to allow him to reach over the animal's head and thrust these banderillas into the bull's neck, one on each side. To fully appreciate the danger, as well as the speed of this man, one must consider that he has to be directly in line with the charging animal, coming with great speed, and to be able to step away before the bull's horns tear him to bits.

Several years ago it was my experience to converse with one of these banderilleros. We talked about the dangers of fighting but he would not admit his work held any danger. He presented me with a set of banderillas and suggested that if I attended the fight on the following day he would perform a stunt which was seldom done. I learned later he was the only man who had ever successfully accomplished it. I attended the fight especially to see what this particular surprise might be. The time came for my new friend to appear. He walked to the center of the ring, took the banderillas in his hands and broke them in two over his knee. With this, he had to hold to these sticks that were less than fifteen inches long. The crowd let out a long gasp that faded into complete silence over the entire arena. No doubt the same question entered our minds, "Could he successfully place the sharp darts and side step the animal in time to be safe?" The big black bull saw him, turned quickly and started the charge. The animal had reached such a high degree of anger that he was frothing at the mouth. The banderillero stood erect, arms outstretched holding the short banderillas. Thus poised like a statue, awaiting the brute that was thundering towards him. Centuries seemed to pass before the animal neared him but no doubt it all happened in a flash. When the dust cleared our gallant banderillero was walking away, his work for the day was over, and the bull was carrying two more darts which were half the length of the others. The crowd of many thousands showed their feeling with great cheers and it was necessary for the new hero to bow before the crowd before the fight could continue.

When the bull is aroused to the highest degree of

anger the outstanding performer of the day makes his appearance. He first takes a red cloth and exhibits his foot work to the crowd as the animal attempts to attack him from all angles. It is soon time for the kill and the matador takes his sword and resumes a position similar to that of the banderillero, only that he holds a long, sharp, glistening sword. As the animal makes the charge the matador must reach over and thrust the sword into the bull's body, penetrating it to the hilt. This particular part of the fight is almost over and soon they will send in a fresh animal. Rarely does the animal die at once but slowly bleeds to death after the thrust of the matador's sword. Upon one occasion I saw the bull topple over dead immediately after being stabbed. As a rule, the animal staggers about until life has almost ebbed away then falls flat to the ground dead, with all muscles relaxed. The trumpets blast forth from the official stand high in the arena giving notice that another bull has died at the hands of a great and brave matador. Upon this signal, the mighty gates open and in rushes a team of mules, three abreast, gaily decorated. They dash across the arena to where the once powerful bull now lies motionless, upon a ground where many of his kind have given their lives for the Mexican national sport. The attendants quickly snare a rope about the animal's horns and the mule team drags him from the arena to make room for the next fight.

The matador must have great ability and have implicit confidence in his aides. This comes after many years of experience. During his career, the matador has had to work up through the various stages of bull fighting. To become a matador of the high class fights, he has had to excel in all the details. By making the wrong decision at some critical moment, a highly paid professional might ruin his whole career. As the matador prepares to make the final thrust of the sword few in the crowded arena fully realize the great skill that is required, especially those who are not regular attendants. Odd as it might seem, it is explained that the matador must strike a certain spot with the point of the

sword, otherwise it will be impossible to push the point to the proper place and cause death. Not only does he have to hit a spot that is no larger than a nickel, but he has to thrust the sword at just a certain angle into the body or his mission fails. It is easy to realize how difficult it would be to do this correctly with the fast forward motion of the bull as well as to have in mind to escape his charge.

When the matador makes a kill that pleases the crowd, he receives the applause and great cheers of the crowd and sometimes is hoisted upon the shoulders of his friends and carried around the edge of the arena while he bows politely and smiles up at the audience. It is a great honor to have the matadors dedicate the dead bull to you. They often do this to show honor to some distinguished guest in the audience. I recall several years ago attending a fight in Mexico City while Buster Keaton and his bride were there on their honeymoon. That day the frozen-faced comedian of the screen was asked to lead the grand parade that preceded the big fight. He accepted and was decked out in a very beautiful costume. The parade started and the man from movie-land was at its head. As soon as the final circle of the arena was made, Keaton lost no time in getting out as he was taking no further part in the ceremonies and had no personal date with the first bull that was scheduled to dash very soon into the arena. The special guest returned to a box especially reserved for his party. All went fine and the announcement was made that the matador had dedicated the first dead bull to Buster Keaton. This custom was somewhat new to Keaton and it is said he turned his ever-expressionless face to a nearby friend and said, "Well, now that I've got a dead bull, what am I supposed to do with it?"

The Mexican people do not wish to have anyone make fun of their national sport. The natives are devoted to it and stand by it religiously. Upon many occasions they have placed a ban upon certain motion picture films that make comedy of the sport.

There are many names and many terms that I have

failed to mention regarding this Mexican sport, because the average person upon his first visit to see the game is not inclined to make a deep study of it. I recall a conversation upon the street, one evening after an excellent "good" bull fight. It was between several newcomers who had seen their first bull fight that day and another individual who professed great knowledge of the sport. This gentleman was explaining the various details, and then mentioned the picadors, toreadors, and matadors. Just then the traveler from New York interrupted and said, "Well, I'm telling you sports, that I thought football was mighty tough on the constitution, but this bull fighting has got it beat. I don't know anything about picadors, and your toreadors, but, if I was in the bull ring and one of those bulls came my way, I'm telling you all, that I'd be tearing for a door too." Just then a taxi stopped, they entered and drove away.

Many wonder, upon their first visit to a fight, if many accidents occur during these fights. Sometimes "lady luck" is none too kind and many things happen. They always maintain a first-aid room at the arena so that no time will be lost before the fighter has medical attention. If the fighter is caught, and knocked down by the bull and he attempts to escape the mighty feet of the beast, which are very powerful, the bull will try to crush and gore him to pieces. In the meantime the other fighters attempt to draw the attention of the animal and have him charge towards them so that others may go to the rescue of the fallen man. There seems to be an un-written rule that, if a fighter is knocked down and can get up alone, he rushes back before the bull so as to show the crowd he is not injured. Upon such occasions the fighter wins the applause of the audience. I was told by one of the fighters that the manager of the arena arranges to have a small chapel near the hospital room, so that in case the wounds of the injured fighter appear to be fatal, it will be possible for him to receive the Sacraments of the church. I asked why it was necessary to do this in such a place as beneath the grand stand of a bull fighting arena. He then

explained to us that years ago a number of fighters were refused burial rights by the church, as they had passed into a world where they hold no bull fights, without giving confession. He also stated that this had proven a mental handicap to the fighters, who realized their great danger, until they were assured of this protection.

Before we close this chapter I shall relate a story told me by a very interesting Mexican character, Pedro Armendariz, of Mexico City. Senor Armendariz has made a very close study of the national sport, and has written many interesting articles about the famous men who have held such a prominent part in the game and held the high respect of many nations. Armendariz selected a typical setting to relate the story to me as we were having lunch in the famous Fornos Cafe in Mexico City. It is in this cafe that one may meet many of the famous bull fighters as the cafe is often referred to as the "Bull fighters' headquarters." The story as I recall it, was something like this:

Once there was a brilliant young fighter who wished to fight in the same ring with the "Great Guerrita." This would be considered a great honor and would aid him in his chosen career. After many attempts this young aspiring man gained an interview with the famous Guerrita. It so happened just before that, Guerrita's most favorite and loved aunt passed away, and he was in mourning and advised the young man that it would be impossible for him to appear in the ring with him before the public. In some way or other, the young chap must have created a good impression upon the famous matador as he later consented to appear in the ring with him.

The great moment of the young man's life came upon the day which found him in the ring with the widely recognized fighter. The first bull was fought and killed by Guerrita. The second animal was soon to come and this one was to be fought by the young man who had invited this great Guerrita. He evidently had an intuition that something would happen. Just before entering the

ring he walked over to Guerrita and said, "I will say hello for you to your aunt in a few minutes." Within a few minutes after he approached the bull he was caught by the bull's sharp horns, gored terribly, and then trampled to death.

Regardless of what your personal views may be, regarding the national sport of Mexico, it would be a thrilling experience for you to take advantage of your first opportunity to see one of their high class fights. It may not raise your enthusiasm for the sport but, at least, you will have an experience that is impossible for any layman to properly describe.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THEIR HUMBLE LEADER

Surely seventeen million Mexicans can not be wrong. They selected one of their own kind to preside over them in the presidential chair. They are confident that he will continue to carry out their program which will bring about the best possible condition for the majority of natives. In Mexico, if the majority of their citizens are served by a leadership giving satisfaction, it is possible to say if this majority is served well it will be of mutual benefit for over ninety per cent of Mexico's entire population. It is very evident over ninety per cent of their population consists of the humble peon class. Their president is well qualified for the high position he holds. His vast experience from the time he resided in his humble home to his present executive position, no doubt, gained for him a great knowledge of the needs of his country and his people. The most humble peasant looks to the future with great hopes.

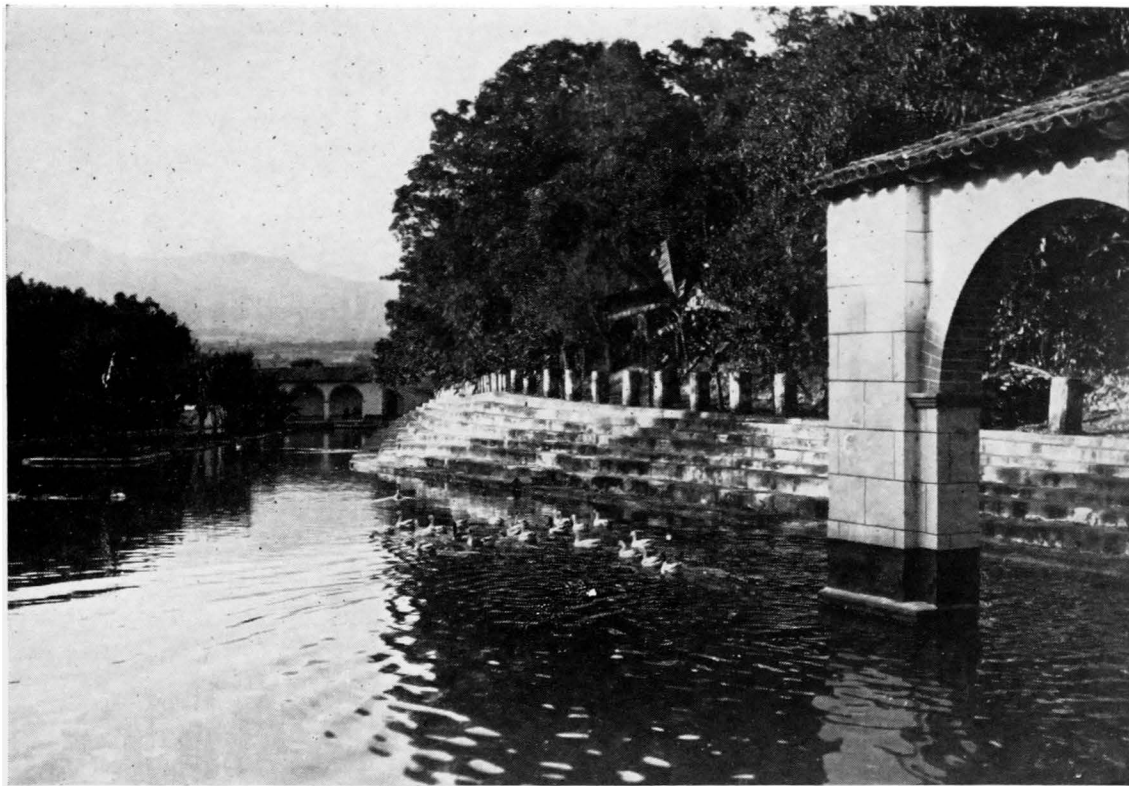
General Lazaro Cardenas, President of the Republic of Mexico, took office with the promise to carry out the principles of the Revolutionary Party. The Six Year Plan is a program that has been adopted by the Party and will be the outstanding feature of the young leader's policy throughout his six year term. Immediately upon taking over the reins of the government he started revolving the wheels of the Six Year Plan.

Probably one of the best stories to manifest the character of the President, is to tell of an incident taking place at the time of his inauguration. The President has his office separate from his official residence. This is unlike the United States where both the office and residence of the President is under the White House roof. In Mexico the President's desk is in the National Palace





Mazatlan is One of the Most Picturesque Cities on the Pacific Coast. If You Come Into the City by Air You Will Never Forget the View it Offers.



The Beautiful Borda Gardens in Cuernavaca Down the Mountain From Mexico City.

and the government maintains the beautiful and historic Chapultepec Castle for his home. At the time of his inauguration, the Chapultepec residence was cleared and made ready for the new President. Several days went by and the servants reported to the department that as yet no one had moved in. The department men who have charge of the Castle told the servants no doubt the new President would be very busy at first but would soon find time to establish his new official residence. The servants returned and with the passing of several weeks still found that they had not been honored by the presence of the new President. Again they reported the matter to the proper officials. This time the officials thought it best they look into the matter and see just why the President had not made his home upon the hill in the beautiful Castle where everything awaited him. A committee was selected to wait upon the President. After they explained their mission he said to them, "That's right boys, I guess that's what the Castle is for, but the more I think about it the more I think that place is too swell for me, because I never was used to anything like it, so you men go ahead and turn the Castle into a museum, or something for the public, and I will find myself something down town which will be simple and more homelike for me."

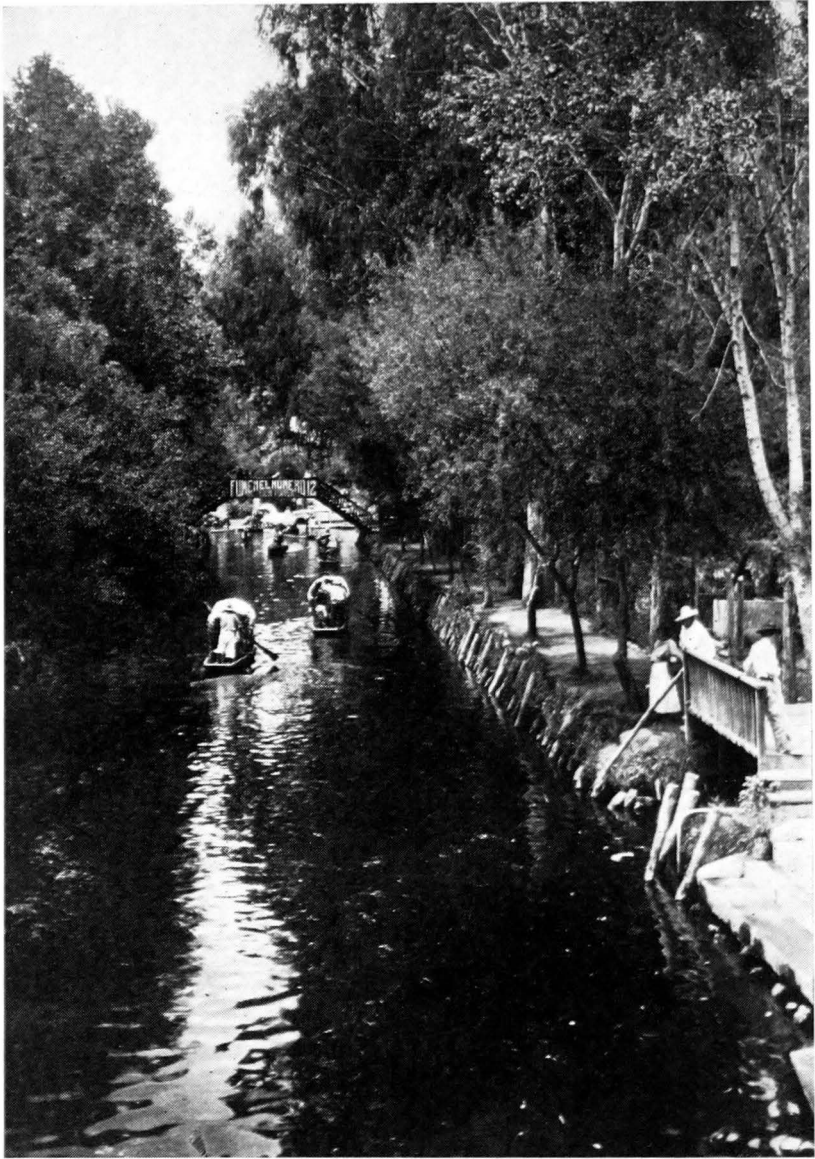
General Cardenas devoted his life to the national movement which brought about the present freedom of the Mexican people. During the Revolution he fought side by side with the other humble citizens. The members of his army, like other armies of the Revolutionary forces, could hardly be classed as soldiers as most of them left their homes to join up with the organization which they thought would bring about freedom for their class and a possibility of more opportunities for their descendants. These men and boys were not equipped like regular soldiers but most of them had to buy their own equipment and their armies often went without proper food.

One of the very young boys who entered this revolutionary campaign worked very hard, showed great ability and, in particular was outstanding in handling

men, yet retaining the respect of the soldiers under him. General Plutarco Elias Calles, head of the Mexican Revolution, took keen interest in this young revolutionist by the name of Cardenas. More responsibility was gradually placed upon him by orders coming from the chief. With proven ability, the rise of this Mexican Indian came with great rapidity. Later, when the Revolution was won and Senor Calles took the presidential seat, he called upon Mr. Cardenas to carry on his work in behalf of the people's party. No doubt because of his great ability and his loyalty he was appointed head of the Department of Interior.

Later, he received several outstanding commissions from the government including the Chief of the War Department. He served in this capacity until the time he received the nomination for the Presidency.

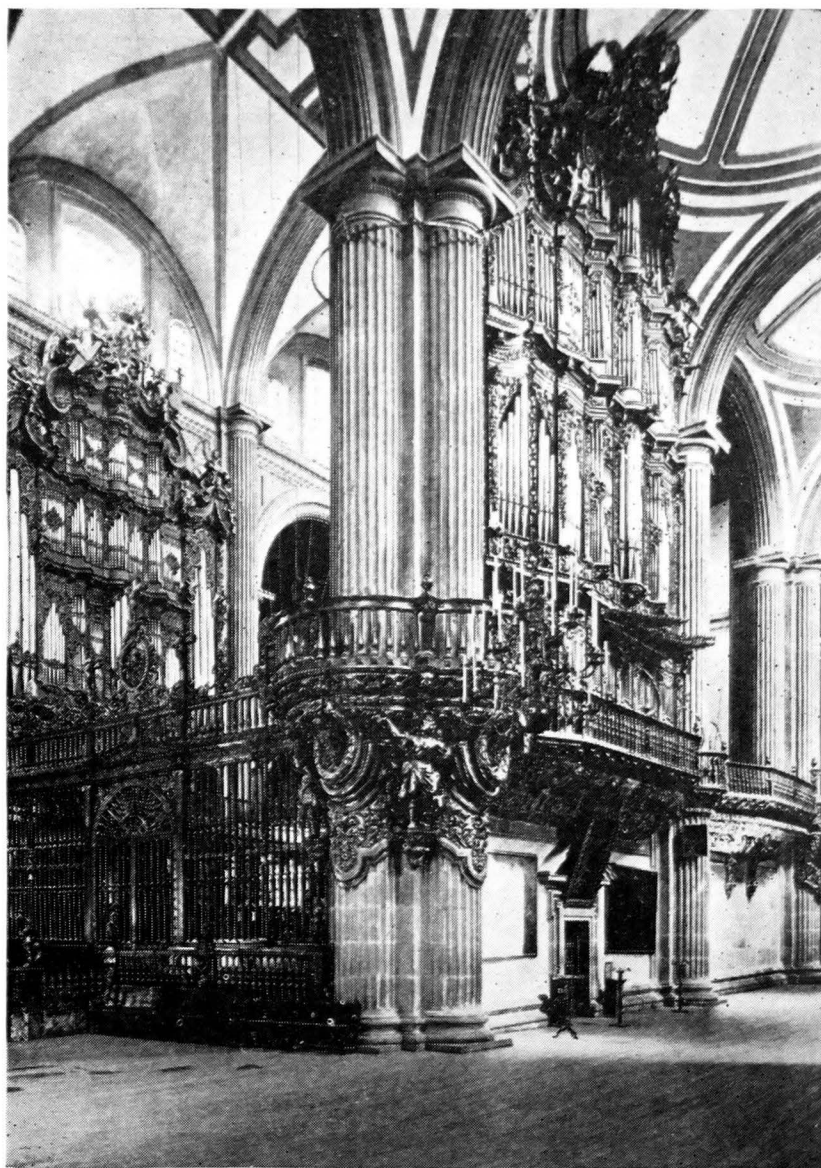
There is a story current among the citizens of Mexico assuring them that even with this humble citizen reaching great political heights which has now carried him to the National Capital, he still has the complete welfare of the humblest citizens at heart. This story refers to an incident they say took place in Cardenas' office. Up until the time citizens of Mexico held the power of their own country, the government heads had been very free with special privileges, and the natural resources of the country escaped without the people of the nation receiving any benefits. The long régime of Diaz broke all records with special governmental grants. President Diaz may have been very sincere but his "modern" methods proved very disastrous for that quiet living nation below the Rio Grande. He attempted to westernize the customs of the nation, even by force, but this failed completely. His program to open all ports of entry to foreign money interests was to make it possible for capital to come into Mexico from other countries to exploit their great resources. Until this time, Spain had held preference. In order to interest the money centers of the world, President Diaz found it necessary to offer extra special privileges as well as governmental protection. The results of these ventures are well known.



Transporting Vegetables Along the Viga Canal to Mexico City.

The story goes in Mexico, that representatives of a very large foreign oil company called upon the Secretary of Interior, then Señor Cardenas. The spokesman laid a prepared paper for signature upon the Secretary's desk and then continued to show upon a small map the certain concession which his company wished to have. The Secretary glanced over the prepared contract. As he was reading portions of it a member of the party stepped over to his desk and laid a check before Cardenas. The check was drawn by the oil company which wished the special privilege, and was in favor of the Secretary. The young Secretary became very angry, his blood boiled with the recollection of his humble boyhood days and the time of countless special privileges to the wealthy. He reached over for the contract and check, tearing them to bits as he walked towards the door. He opened the door and is reported as saying, "You fellows are dealing with the wrong man and with a new government. The day for special privileges are over and whenever your company wishes to negotiate upon a legitimate basis you are welcome to return—until then—good day gentlemen."

The President does not confine himself to his office in the historic National Capital but often takes trips to various parts of the nation, to study conditions and various projects with his own eyes. Upon such trips he often leaves his official cortege and slips away by himself to visit and mingle with the people. Such acts worried his traveling party, upon some of the first trips, but now they know there is little use to look for him, as he will return when he sees fit. So unlike many of the reports circulating in the States, about how the President and other high officials must be guarded to protect their lives, one will often see them in various public places if they visit about Mexico City to any extent. I have seen the President, alone, down town several times and I have seen him, many times, about the city, accompanied only by his secretary or driver. General Rodriguez, ex-president, was the same way and never had a body-guard unless upon some State occasion, to abide with military regulations. While president, and during his



An Organ Which Ranks as One of the Best in the World is Located in the Cathedral in Mexico City.

residence in the Capital, he would visit the Regis hotel daily to take a health bath. When time permitted, he would linger in the lobby or on the street and talk with friends. His appearance about the hotel was always looked forward to as he was always very cordial to his many friends.

During the summer and fall of 1935 there was much literature as well as writings and radio talks released against the Mexican administration. Most of this propaganda seemed to be based upon the claim, that the Mexican government was obstructing religious teachings. Quoting a deputy of one of the state Knights of Columbus organizations, I think, covers much of the criticism heard in the States. He said, "The Mexican government is making a deliberate effort to destroy Christianity in Mexico. Their officials are encouraging Communistic and Socialistic doctrines in their country and are using their propaganda to spread these ideas into the United States. There is abundant evidence to prove that they are waging anti-religious persecution through the destruction of church property, banishment of clergy, closing of educational and charitable institutions."

I have made personal observations when traveling about Mexico and had come to my own conclusions but, added to this, I wished to have the view of the President, General Cardenas. For the first time I report his remarks. This is the message that he sent to me by one of his highest ranking military officers, "The ideology which our people search in religious and social matters, is the right which allows all conscious men to act for the true benefit of all social classes. Never did the Mexican government try to put obstacles to the free religious faith, but when some group have made opposition to the law and tried to create difficulties to the state and disturb the order, all acts of rebelliousness were prevented from being carried on with all energy. The country of Mexico is a sincere friend of all well intentioned men who, with the serenity and an ample judgment, study its problems, and opens its doors, in order that it should be known, and inform their respective countries that Mexico is a nation





A Group of Tarascan Indians With Their Handmade Dug-out Boats. These Boats May Look Clumsy but These Native Indians Can Handle Them With the Grace of an Olympic Oarsman.

situated in civilization and which looks for a better improvement of its citizens.”

In order to show the close interest the present President holds for his country and its people I shall give here excerpts from an address he gave before the delegates at the Queretaro convention. This address was made after receiving his nomination for the presidency of the Mexican Republic by the National Revolutionary Party. I shall attempt to give a literal translation of portions of the General's address.

“In accepting the nomination from the National Revolutionary Party as candidate for the presidency of Mexico, I consider it my duty to outline with precision, for the benefits of all citizens of this country, my thoughts and my intentions at the very time when a new historical period begins in our social, political, and economical movements. For the fulfillment of this new era, the very fundamental basis of our lives have been changed.

“The revolution, and the institutions which emanated therefrom, are works of the succeeding generations, which in 1906 initiated democratic principles, which in 1910 wrested the powers from a thirty-year dictatorship, which in 1913 re-established a national sovereignty and introduced social reforms, and which in 1928 implanted an institutional regime, as a result of which we are here this day. And in having arrived at this achievement, I wish to declare categorically—and to merit public indorsement—that I consider myself united to all those older contenders of the revolution who with all their ability have contributed and continue to contribute toward the building of a new social state and a regime of salvation.

“An intimate comprehension of social evolution prompts us to encourage revolutionary action among the masses, to take advantage of that enthusiasm, that dynamic energy of those who have manifested in the past, and will manifest in the future, new tendencies of benefit to society. And in this way will be indicated to us the road to be taken by our nationality. We must indorse the generous impulse of the youth, and prepare them to



The Fountain of Don Quixote in Chapultepec Park in Mexico City Within a Short Distance of the Castle, the White House of Mexico. Tourists Always Linger at This Spot.

take our places in directing the future destinies of our Republic.

"It is necessary, also, that the state guard our national enthusiasm, because it is the state's duty to control the education of Mexico's masses. We must introduce such reforms as are necessary for the general good, politically, socially, and economically. And we must direct the destinies of our country in such a way that the fusion, caused through immigration of foreigners, is not harmful to our people. Original principles of the constitution of Mexico must be abided by in order that the ends in social re-organization contained therein may be realized. Under no conditions can the revolution accept digressions from those paths which were cut to render Mexico a country of institutions.

"Technical and social orientation must contribute to our financial organization, which permits and fulfills our revolutionary aspirations and the realization of the governmental program. We must encourage ambitions of the Mexican women to help, shoulder to shoulder with the men, in achieving our revolutionary aims, so long as these new efforts are directed through the logical and reasonable channels. This we must do to avail ourselves of the powers and virtues latent in our women, all the more that they are becoming fully conscious of our social necessities and the problems of our social re-organization.

"In this time of the world crisis, it is necessary for Mexico to better her international relations with other countries on the basis of strong and generous ties, for we are not dealing exclusively with the peoples of our own blood or races, and often not even with peoples with whom we have economic or commercial relations, because with regard to such peoples we will always be capable of having definite attitudes which come within the sphere of our national integrity, and we will never be obliged to falsify the spirit of our social evolution."

President Cardenas spoke to a group of press correspondents at an open interview and voiced himself in these words, "The Mexican Revolutionary Government

does not try, nor does it desire to attack the religious conscience of Mexico. The excesses that have occurred are evils inherent to all political activities. But they can and will be remedied."

## CHAPTER XV

### MANANA IS THE WORD

Time is seldom taken into consideration by the bulk of the people in the lower part of the North American Continent. Often the territory located below the Rio Grande River is referred to as the "Land of Manana." The word manana seems to be the prevailing word among the natives of Mexico—it means tomorrow. No doubt the climatic conditions have much to do with the easy manner in which the Mexican folks take the routine of every day life. By this I do not mean to infer they cannot work if they so wish. The Mexican man can be a very hard worker when so inclined but, if he has work to do he would much prefer taking it on contract rather than have to work at it, based on hour or day labor. If he enters into a contract he can go about the work as he feels, sometimes they rush right through with it for an early completion, but more often they take it in easy strides. When they work you can be assured the work will be done well. Upon labor jobs where the man enters into a contract you will most always find the entire family takes part in the work.

If it is agricultural work, the entire family will arise early in the morning, while it is cool, and start upon their duties. As the middle of the day approaches and the sun's rays are coming directly upon them they will all find a shady place, if it is possible, and start a camp fire and have their lunch. After lunch the entire family will seek a shady spot and enjoy their daily siesta. Their only exertion during this hot part of the day is to roll over so as to stay within the shade. As the sun nears the horizon the entire group will become active again, and resume their work for several hours before returning to



A Clay-pot Maker Carrying His Merchandise to the City to Sell or Barter off for Other Merchandise. Sometimes They Travel This Way for Many Miles, Taking Days to Reach the City. They Always Remain in Town Until the Last Pot or Piece of Merchandise is Sold.

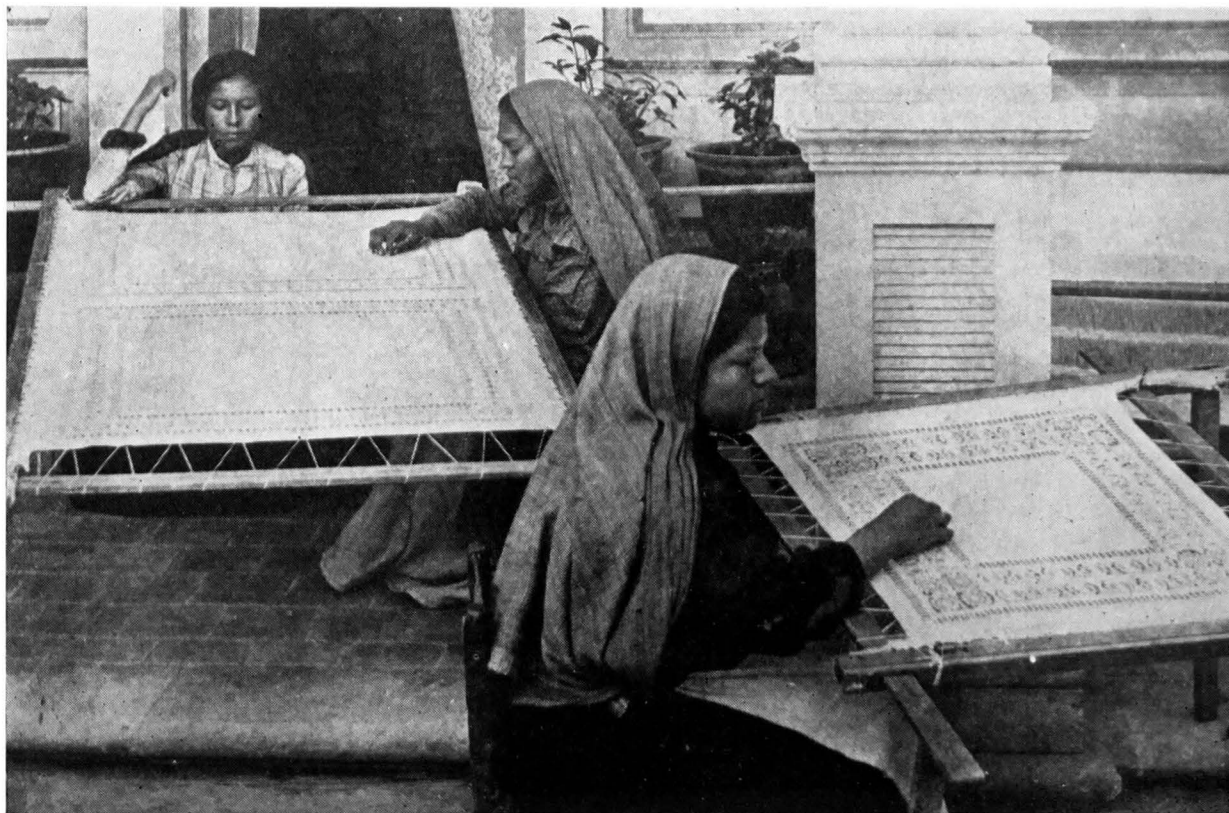
their homes. I have seen hundreds of Mexicans out in a field at the same time.

There seems to be a general rule among the folks of Mexico far different from that taught to us with such great force in our early school days. As I recall, it went something like this, "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today." In Mexico that motto would seem to be, "Never do today what you can do manana." It does seem they have little worry over being in a hurry as time means very little to the average citizen. One of the unsolved mysteries in my many visits through Mexico is as to how the country gets along as well as it does with the ever present atmosphere of slow motion. In the rural sections, one can see requirements are few, thus making the need very small for them to carry on the existence they maintain as did their ancestors before them. The cities show progress such as would compare with the most progressive city in the States. There has been a slight increase in their pace since the new program stirred their interests throughout the Republic, but I sincerely think there will be no great change in rural Mexico, at least, for many generations. To make any great changes would bring about the same results as when the Diaz régime attempted to westernize the natives. Their exertions are part of the race and Mexico could not be Mexico, without this easy going type of life.

Regardless of where one may travel, he must admit that with this slow stride of life they remain probably one of the most peaceable and home loving races on earth.

Upon one trip near the west coast, we wished to take some motion pictures of the agricultural sections. We wished to get back into the remote mountain sections where there would be no signs of modern methods. One does not have to travel far in any direction to be free from modern machinery. After traveling some distance up the mountain road, we arrived at a small plateau. Here in this small valley, which was many thousands of feet above sea level, was a very fertile area of land, surrounded by mountains whose peaks reached skyward





The Women of Mexico in Most Sections Are Experts in Fine Lace Work.

into the floating white clouds. This little farming section was irrigated by water from the mountain streams, and no doubt had been farmed by the Indian peons for many hundreds of years. Their crop mostly consisted of corn as it does today.

Going up this mountain trail, we met dozens of men and women enroute to the town from which we had just departed. Some of the natives rode on tiny burros, so small the rider's feet almost dragged on the ground. These little creatures seem to be able to carry very heavy loads. Often, beside a heavy load, the peon will find some excuse to climb on top for his own transportation. Many of the people were carrying articles with them to barter off in the town for supplies they needed. It is surprising the great amount of merchandise these men and women can carry in baskets, balanced upon their heads. They will travel for many miles in this manner. In the cities, such sights are common and sometimes, one will see a youth who has purchased a bicycle, and makes his delivery by carrying a large basket upon his head as he ducks traffic going on his way down the street.

After explaining our wishes to several of the farmers, we were able to take our motion pictures. At no time were they any too sure as to what the movie camera might do. Here they were working in the fields. In this one field there were five or six teams of oxen plowing. They used home-made plows, and the wagons which stood at the edge of the field were also home-made. These wagons were quite large and had but two high wooden wheels, and appeared much like the wagons used by the early settlers in the Northwest which were called Red River carts. The farmer does not have any harness upon the oxen other than the yoke which reaches between the heads of the two animals. This yoke is a small piece of timber resting upon the heads of the oxen and is held fast by ropes which tie it to their horns. Odd as it might seem, the full load is pulled by the oxen's heads and not by his shoulders. The tongue of the plow is fastened to the center of the yoke. Plowing is very slow

by this method but they did not seem to mind, nor did they seem to care how long they stopped to watch us take our motion picture scenes.

While they were taking the scenes of the farmers going about their plowing, I walked along beside one of them. When the scenes were projected it showed where I would have to halt my step frequently, so that I would keep in line with the man at the plow's handle. It was evident too, that the farmer was going in "high gear" as he was calling loudly to his oxen and prodding them with a long slender stick which he always carried. We asked how long it would take them to plow the field they were working on. They did not know but said they would plant it to corn if they finished in time for the coming season, and if they did not succeed they surely would have it finished by the time the next season came around. That seems to be the spirit in most sections of the farming country. No worries. One of our men asked how long they had been plowing and it was evident that they had no sense of the time already taken or the time it would take to finish it. The answer from the talkative one was an expression that meant "several days." If they did not finish today they would manana, and manana takes in much time and it evidently never comes.

Before our departure, the cameraman offered one of the men some tailor made cigarettes. He examined them and was somewhat skeptical. The cameraman then had the farmer place one in his mouth so that he might hold a match for him. He did not wish to take any chances and insisted upon holding it in his hand while the match's blaze was applied. As most cigarette smokers know, this does not work to the best satisfaction. Finally, the peon was not going to be outdone and reached in his tattered clothes and pulled out one of his own ready made cigarettes and placed it in his mouth and lit it and puffed away, as he poked his trusty ox team and started down the furrow. These ready made cigarettes they use, are often made for them by their wives. Delicate corn leaves are selected and the tobacco is rolled in them. They are not the neatest but are favorite cigarettes among many

of the humble class. Some of these corn leaf covered cigarettes made by the natives resemble small American hot tamales.

As we visited another section of that same valley we inspected a small irrigation project. The farmer had but a few acres; he explained it produced enough so he and his family of eight children, all under ten years, might have a comfortable living. He said his parents had "squatted" on this land, which was once a part of a large tract belonging to a wealthy syndicate, and he had hopes of being able to get it for himself under the new government's Agrarian movement. Instead of arranging some modern method to irrigate his few acres from the mountain stream which had its course through one corner of his land, he used about the oldest system known to man. As one of our party stated, "It would almost be easier to dip it out by hand with a pail than to use his method," explained the impression that it made upon the rest of us. Here, in this so called modern age of the world, this man was using foot power to lift the water from the river up to the field's level, so that it might follow crudely made ruts to other parts of the field, giving moisture to the corn and what few vegetables he had upon his "homestead." Every part of the "invention" was purely hand made and contained no parts that would necessitate a trip to town.

This farmer had constructed a large crudely made wheel. It was so arranged that in revolving it would dip into the stream and pails attached would elevate the water upwards. As the wheel revolved it would spill the water over into a ditch through which it flowed over the field. The strange part about this irrigation machinery was, that this man had placed wooden pegs on the opposite side of the wheel from the pails, so that he might be able to walk or step upon the pegs in ladder fashion, thus the power that revolved the wheel and elevated the water. The Mexicans in many sections still use ancient methods and take every advantage of what nature offers them to sustain life. The Mexican holds the characteristics of the Indians and never wastes what nature



A Method Used by Many Mexican Villages in Their City Water Department. Notice the Gear Wheel Made From Wood Pegs. The Author Visited a Small Rural Farm and Found a Similar "Pump" Used for Irrigation Where Man Furnished the Power Instead of Burro.

offers, merely taking what is necessary. This applies to everything from wood, to wild game.

Such ancient customs make travel in Mexico a mecca for the tourist who wishes to go back to the old customs they so often read about and felt were no longer in existence. A great surprise awaits one upon traveling into the heart of Mexico where he will find scenery, customs, climate and a welcome he never thought existed upon the same continent with the hustle and bustle of the United States.

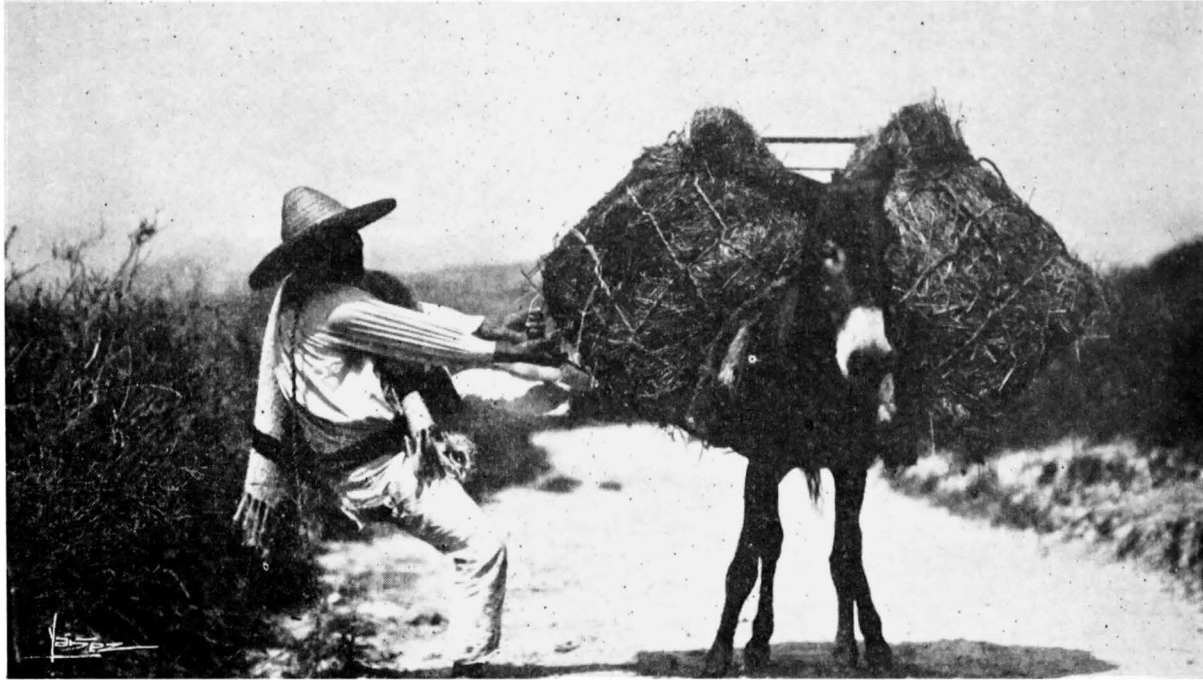
Not only will one find the hand of welcome awaiting him in Mexico, but he finds the natives are great in showing their feelings of sorrow at your departure. If some visitor, or popular local person, entrains from the city there will be a great crowd at the station to say farewell. Often there are many there who are not concerned, directly, but wish to take part in the ceremonies, too. They go to the depot dressed in their best Sunday clothes, if they have any, and the crowd will consist of everyone from the poorest peons in sun bleached cotton clothes, large hat, sandals and serape, to distinguished looking men in their charro costumes. These charro costumes compare in brilliance only to the colorful matador uniforms. These costumes are used for extra fancy dress and the gallant young swains often wear such clothes when they ride their horses through the parks, and when attending the Sunday afternoon bull fight. The costumes are very beautiful. They are usually a two piece costume, the jacket and trousers are made of highly colored velvet or thin leather. The tight fitting trousers and the jackets display much braid work as well as many silver or gold buttons. Of course to have such a suit, the Mexican would not feel his costume complete without an expensive, wide sombrero which contained colors to match his charro costume.

Besides the people in great numbers out to bid the traveler farewell, there will be the trusty burros which always appear wherever you might find the Mexican peon. They are inseparable, it seems. Every household has one, at least, and they are responsible for most of the family

transportation. No crowd would be complete without seeing the boys pulling the family's pet goat around with a long rope. He will be present to take his part in the farewell regardless of who is going or where. Boys are very much alike wherever one travels.

The mail men in the towns are very faithful and you may be assured your mail delivery will be made each day; as to the exact time, is another story. I have watched them many times and will say there is no class of employees in Mexico more courteous than these letter carriers. They are in no great rush as in many countries, but often visit with the folks when making their daily rounds. As a rule, they do not drop the mail in the resident's mail box but either ring the door bell or use the metal knocker. With the patio type homes, the residents are often quite some distance from the door. He waits for them and when they come they open the top half of the door and accept the mail and remain to talk for a short time then the mailman, with a tip of his hat, is off again. The door closes and the home is sealed up from the gaze of the public. The doors upon most of the homes in the cities and towns are in two parts and it is possible to open the top half while the lower part remains fastened. Evidently just another Spanish custom or it may be used to keep the young and beautiful señoritas in, such as the General described the custom of the barred windows.

No one can truthfully say the Mexicans are not hard workers, when they wish. The ones following a skilled trade make expert workmen. The common laborers will prove very faithful to their employer. They are not a large race physically, but to see the great loads they carry upon their backs would almost seem unreal. No matter where you travel in the country, you will see small men going about in a dog trot, carrying large objects. They tie a rope around the large objects and then attach the rope to a strap which they place around their head and over their forehead. It is then necessary for the other laborers to lift the load into position so that



The Load is Always Balanced for the Sure Footed Burro.



he can get his right balance. They go in a quick step stride as they claim it makes their load weigh less.

Loads that are sometimes several times the weight and height of the man often are seen upon the streets. I recall being in Tampico and having lunch in an open building near the sidewalk. As it is the custom to take much time during your meal, we occupied our chairs and called for our courses slowly, to give the people about us the impression that we were not strangers. During the time we were sitting at the table, we noticed a small Mexican make many trips past our building carrying large loads and their weight was supported by a strap about his head. The first trip, he came by with his odd quick short steps carrying a bed spring. The second trip he had eight kitchen type chairs tied together. The third trip he had a large round table which appeared as if made of oak. He was carrying this with the same system by having the top of the table resting against his back. The sight of his passing held our interest and it puzzled us to know as to what he might be carrying upon the following trip. Just as we were about to leave the room, the human dray line came rushing by once more. This time, he had a larger load than ever and it appeared much heavier than the ones he had carried past during our dinner. As he passed down the street near the edge of the sidewalk, we could recognize his burden as some kind of a large chiffonier. It was evidently very heavy, but we noticed he had not even taken the time to remove the drawers. Upon inquiry, it was found that he was the delivery boy for one of the furniture stores in a nearby block, and was making deliveries to some newlyweds who were starting housekeeping down the block.

Many of the laborers do not care to hold a steady job but would rather work for a time, until they can save a few extra pesos and then "retire." When the budget again is at low ebb, they start out again to seek another job. Several of the business men who employ a number of common laborers told me that they found it most satisfactory to have two crews, so that new help would not have to be trained so often. He allows one group of

men a "vacation," while the other group carry on the work. As soon as he sees the workers showing signs of fatigue he calls back the others to carry on.

If by any chance, the Mexicans work for a long period and have no way of spending their salary checks, they will plan a great holiday either to travel or to browse about town spending their money. They do not spend large amounts at one time but seem to prefer buying inexpensive trinkets and foods with enough in reserve for a choice bull fight ticket. I feel that Mexico will never be troubled with the hoarding of money by the majority of its citizens, as each one does his part in keeping what little he earns in circulation.

Like other races of the world, the Mexicans have their men who prefer using their heads to save work. The percentage of laborers among the masses would be small, as their preference seems to be to place work off until manana and, when manana comes, and it is not absolutely necessary, they still postpone it to manana. In the cities and larger hamlets there will be a number who will take the time to build a small frame work and enclose it with glass so that it may be partly dustproof. They then construct portable legs for it and at this stage are ready to set up in business. They will bargain with some lady to make them candy so that they may sell it for her, on a commission basis. With such a business enterprise it is very easy for them to move with the shade as well as with the traffic. In the morning, it is possible to see these independent "businessmen" going down the street balancing their glass cases upon their heads and carrying the legs and their camp stools under their arms as they seek their favorite shady corner. When the profits start to come in they often add tobacco and cigarettes to their stock. Some of these men develop into regular sidewalk merchants and will carry everything from shoestrings to gadgets which interest the tourist.

The boys display much more energy than their elders and create many ways to make a few centovas for themselves and, in many cases, I know where their income aids in keeping up the family corn and bean supply. These



A Charro and Charra.

two products are the basis of most dishes prepared by the peon families. The boys will construct a small box to carry necessary equipment to polish shoes. They construct it so that it can be used for a shoe shining stand and yet be carried along with them by a strap that goes over their shoulders. Probably nowhere will one find so many highly polished shoes as seen upon the streets of the Mexican cities. These boys shine shoes for a price that would be less than two cents in United States money.

In cities that bid for English speaking tourists one will find little Mexican boys who are wise enough to learn a few words in English so that they can create a favorable impression on tourists. Such is often the case and they receive handsome tips. It seems rather difficult for the boys to sound their "S's" and they will call out "Chine your Choes for nickel." If the customer does not show interest he will make a second sales talk by going up and smiling and say, "Me brush 'em off for a penny." He generally makes a sale, with a tip greater than his standard price. Five cents in Mexican money is less than two pennies in the States but the Mexican lad can purchase more for his five cents than our boys can in the States with a nickel.

There are quite a number of professional beggars in all parts of Mexico and there is no question but what they do a great deal of harm to Mexico, as the tourists, no doubt, form poor opinions of that country when pestered by these folks. They know their best results are derived from those places where travelers frequent. The natives seldom pay any attention to them. When the trains stop at the various depots it will soon be visited, on both sides, by these folks who present a terrible appearance. Many of them are very aged and capitalize upon their looks in winning sympathy. Being that the tourist sees many of them in the main tourist lanes of the country, no doubt many of them carry back the impression there is a large proportion of the population in this condition. Few, no doubt, learn they are professional beggars and often live with greater comfort than their humble neighbors.

Traveling about the country I noticed almost at all times there were beggars at the front entrance of the churches, as a rule one sitting at each side of the door. They would all seem to mumble in a low voice as if they were in great pain. Upon one particular morning I came out and noticed one of them had a lot of money before him which the early church attendants had dropped upon a dirty white sheet. He lay there in a position which would give the impression that he was a cripple. I happened to notice a scar on his face. Later that day, this same man was about our hotel, dressed in good style and appeared in good physical condition, but I recognized the scar. We soon had him in conversation and before much time had passed, he explained his "racket" or profession. He explained he found that by being by a church that his income was much greater than elsewhere, because it was evident folks entering or leaving the church, were in a more sympathetic mood and gave more freely. He explained that seventy-five per cent of his offerings came from women. One of the guests of the hotel asked why there were but two at the entrance of the church and with this question he readily remarked, "That has to be fixed up with the priest and you know it would not be good business to have too much competition."

I cannot understand why the Mexican officials do not take steps to prohibit these professional beggars who, no doubt, do more harm to their country than all the highly colored literature can favorably accomplish, which the advertisers send out to tourist centers of the world.

To speak of the easy going customs of the Mexicans, I can not pass the opportunity of telling of a bookkeeping system one of the small hotels used where I stayed. First, I might mention that many of the hotels have an arrangement in front of the clerk's desk so that the guest will have a special box. This rack containing the many room boxes will be convenient so the guest may have access to his key or mail at any time. This would save the clerk from getting up from his chair. This particular hotel had what I thought to be the world's most simple bookkeeping system. It had a large blackboard

upon the wall in the lobby. As you registered, your name was placed upon the board giving your room number. Each night the amount of your room was placed up in view and after each meal the amount was added, and the figure shown, was the total of your bill at that particular time. As you checked out it took the manager but a moment to glance at the board to find your bill. Upon the payment of each bill the name and figures were washed off, leaving the space for a new guest. I recall, one of the members of our party complained the amount was excessive, when it came time for us to check out. After some figuring, they came to a compromise and mutually agreed a mistake was made when the number of the hotel room had been added to the amount.

It must be said that the women of Mexico do not put off until the manana, like their husbands. They are all very hard workers and do much to keep the home intact. If the man goes out to gather wood for the noon meal, he will gather just the necessary number of sticks which he feels will cook the lunch and never brings any extra ones for the evening meal or for the next day. If the lady must go to locate the wood she will return with a large bundle upon her back that compares well with the amount often packed upon the burro. The women have, and will play, a very important part in the progress of Mexico. The ladies are very crafty and they are expert needle workers and often prepare extra fine laces which are sold to the higher class of women who have need for such fine work. Some show their skill at making pottery and bring it to town to exchange for household needs or take a place in the market to sell to the shoppers. The Spanish shawls which are worn by the social set, are as a rule, made by the poorer class of women who have the time and need the money. There is much time spent upon these famous shawls and some of the very best require as long as three years in the making.

The colorful serapes also are hand made and come from certain parts of Mexico where the native women possess the skill to make them. The greater part of this supply comes from remote Indian tribes back in the moun-



Tzintzuntzan Bell Tower in the Trees, in the State of Michoacan.

tains. In such places as San Luis Potosi, Guadalajara, Durango, Saltillo, Aguascalientes, or Chilpancingo, one can purchase them direct from the natives who make them. They are constructed or woven upon crude looms. The white linen threads are placed tightly upon the loom and then the colored wool threads are interlaced crosswise through the linen threads. The highly colored effect is created by the varied use of the wool yarn. In baskets about the loom, one will see where each basket holds a different shade of wool yarn. The operation is very slow and it takes months to make one of these serapes which contains the usual designs. It is necessary that the operator place one cross thread in at a time. After this is in place it must be pulled down so that it will fit very tightly against the previous thread. The wool yarn is so tightly placed that it is impossible to see the linen threads which go lengthwise except at the end of the finished serape where they form part of the garment. The natives still use methods of making dyes handed down from the original Indian tribes who inhabited the continent before the white man made his first visit. It is said it is impossible for the commercial companies to duplicate some of these secret dyes made by the Indians. These finished serapes do not bring anywhere near their actual value and the makers receive but a few pennies for each hour they spend over the loom, not counting the material. Time is no factor in the land of manana.

If one visits the public markets, and he surely must upon the first opportunity, he will find that the women take the most active part. This is always a busy place in the mornings and the evenings. The average Mexican homes, in the cities, purchase their household needs each day. This custom is showing a decrease in recent years because of the invasion of the electric ice boxes. You will find almost everything that can be bought in Mexico at one of these markets. One who comes from a foreign country will be shocked at the low prices that prevail in these markets when he compares the prices in his own money. To illustrate, I might mention that one can buy extra large pineapples for less than five cents, bananas



and oranges ten cents per dozen, and one time I thought I would purchase some carnations for my room and I laid down a twenty centavo piece, which is about six cents in United States money, and the lady handed me an armful.

So, often a traveler will visit Mexico and explain to his traveling friends that if it were possible for some one, of great active ability to enter Mexico and use northern methods of speed, he would soon be able to retire, from the great amount of business that he would receive, because of his hustle-bustle ways. This has been tried out many times, in the past, and it always fails. Such hustle-bustle ways do not fit in with the regular routine of affairs and they will not create any interest among the natives, in fact they are scorned. It would be as easy to mix kerosene and water as to attempt to change the established conventionalism of the Mexican people.

Regardless of the slow, easy going ways of the natives of Mexico, one must admit that they possess great faith in life and believe that the span of life was to be enjoyed and not, at all times, be taken up in labor. Climatic conditions make it possible for them to view these things from a different angle than their brothers upon other parts of the continent. It is evident that the native Mexicans have long looked upon life as something to be enjoyed as time goes by, and not to be spent in accumulating riches that cannot be carried away with them when life does part from the body. In proof of their age old feelings I shall offer an old poem that has been expressly translated.

“See you the mighty King his power to wield,  
The minister directs affairs of state.  
The soldier lifts his famed, war scarred shield.  
The sparkling diamond crosses of the great.  
The merchants act upon life’s sustaining stage.  
The gold and riches of the millionaire.  
The studious look and knowledge of the sage.  
The glowing beauty of the fair maiden.  
Yet, all glory, wealth, power, beauty and lust.

The relatives we love and friends we trust.  
When death comes and journey ends,  
Everything must—  
Turn into shadows, ashes, wind, and dust.”  
(Author unknown.)

## CHAPTER XVI

### CLIMATE AND PRODUCTION

During the many years that Mexico was held under the iron hand of Spain there was little consideration given to the great possibilities which the country might hold for the production of agricultural produce. Most attention during this period was devoted to the rich supply of gold and silver with some attention given to cattle ranching. Recent years have brought many changes in agriculture and the present administration is very active in furthering experimental work and its development.

Climate takes a very important role in the agriculture of Mexico. Probably in no other country will one see a greater variety in crops in such a small area. This may be attributed to changes in altitudes, making it possible to grow a different type crop in several valleys within a short distance but at a different altitude. There is an area that extends from Mexico City to the Gulf which grows more varied crops than any other like area I can recall. The possibilities are unlimited for this territory. Everything from tropical fruit to the crops that are found in temperate zones are to be found here. Bananas and pineapples as well as other tropical plants will be found in the lowlands along the Gulf, and as one travels inland and up the mountains they will find a variation in crops which will even include corn. The crow-line distance from Mexico City to the Gulf is but 175 miles and this territory includes valleys that will vary from over 7,000 feet in elevation to sea level.

To understand the climate and the varied agricultural production of Mexico, one must make a study of the altitudes of the districts of the nation. It might be interesting to note that the Tropic of Cancer divides the country in almost two equal parts, geographically. It would be



A Typical Native Pulque Gatherer. The Pulque Liquid is the Recognized National Drink of Kural Mexico.

very natural for one to think the lower half would be very hot, but in Mexico this is not the case, as much of the territory below the dividing line has a high altitude. Odd as it might seem the belt above the tropical line is hotter than the lower part. No doubt many of the readers who have stopped at a state boundary line or a border line between two countries, have seen how people enjoy stopping and standing astride the boundary line so that they might say they were standing in two different states or two countries. It is often this way when travelers first cross the Tropic of Cancer. I recall one trip as we crossed it by train. Across the aisle a proud mother was explaining to her two children that they would soon cross the geographical line known as the Tropic of Cancer, and for them to pay particular attention so when they returned to school in the States, they would be able to tell the other students of their experience. The father evidently was not any too well versed regarding this theoretical line and, no doubt had not heard of it, since his school days. He was reading what there was told about it in a railroad folder. Just then the porter came through the car and announced that we were about to cross the line. The children became very excited and even the dad showed interest. Just then the mother pointed out the window and said "There it is children, see the sign that points in that direction." The children showed great disappointment and the boy replied to his mother, "Thought we would see something, there's no line there not even a high fence." The father shared the disappointment of the children and as he got up to go to the smoking room he mumbled, "Ah! there was nothing to that."

If that man had been with me upon one certain trip when I crossed the same line he would have admitted that there might be something there after all. We were in an airplane and sailing along about 160 miles per hour. It was ideal flying weather and the other three passengers were reading in comfort with a portion of their time devoted to the rugged scenery below. I had my portable typewriter upon my knees and was attempting to write

with one eye and two fingers and keep the other eye on the scenery. All at once, the ship started to wobble, my typewriter fell between my knees and I guess we all held fast to the seats. The pilot seemed to be wrestling with the controls and then, after pulling the nose of the ship almost straight up, he leveled it off and everything was smooth again. Nothing was said by our pilot and he acted as if nothing had happened. The suspense was too great for an old maid school teacher who had a seat near the pilot and she leaned over and asked, "Mr. Pilot, would you tell me what caused that terrible bump a while ago?" The pilot turned and in a voice that could be heard above the perpetual roar of the motors explained, "Oh yes, folks, I forgot to tell you, that we just crossed the Tropic of Cancer." He smiled and everybody but the school teacher enjoyed the joke. She twisted around in her seat and consoled herself by saying, "Who ever thought it would be so rough over it?"

The hot country of Mexico begins at sea level and extends to an altitude of three thousand feet. The average yearly temperature of this tierra caliente territory is officially given to be between eighty and eighty-eight degrees. This area embraces almost all the coast line districts and adjacent inland territory which might be classed as lowlands. About the only difference between the lowlands of the north shore lines and those of the south, is that in the north area they are a little cooler during the winter months.

There is another very productive area that is found between 3,000 feet altitude and 6,500 feet. This is referred to as the temperate country, or in the district, it is called tierra templada. The temperature ranges within an average of seventy-three to seventy-seven degrees. This part of the country, no doubt, is the most enjoyable as there is less variation and the weather is ideal. The immunity from heavy frosts and extreme humidity makes this district one of the most popular upon the continent. I recall that the change of seasons is so slight that one may see the new green leaves coming upon the trees before the ones of the previous season have lost their color. The

popular cities in this clime, that may well be classed as everlasting spring, include Guadalajara, Cuernavaca, Oaxaca, Orizaba, and Cuautla. The climate at Guadalajara might be described as June with a touch of September. There are several health resorts and the city boasts of having the best climate in Mexico. Of course there are other wide awake commercial clubs that have such claims for their cities, too.

They have a territory which they call cold and to the northern person the average temperature of sixty degrees would be placed in a different category. This Mexican cold territory is listed as the territory found between the elevations of 6,500 feet and 12,500 feet. In many parts of this district one will occasionally find snow. Unless at a high altitude, the snows melt rapidly and furnish water for the many valleys in the lower districts. It is often interesting to see where there will be heavy plant growth upon the south side of the mountains and then as you fly over them, notice snow on the northern side.

Not only does the variation of climate give the agriculturalist certain problems but it has caused the airmen many worries and much study. Flying over most parts of Mexico is called "blind flying." This does not mean that the pilots and passengers cannot always see where they are flying or view the scenery below, but it does mean that all the commercial and army flying is done with airships that contain the very latest equipment for flying blind. It makes no difference to the commercial lines if it is night or their course is blanketed by dense fog, their equipment will carry them through. All pilots are trained for this type of flying. Such territory as found in Mexico might find the pilot taking off from an air field at sea level, and landing a few hours later upon a field that might be over seven thousand feet above sea level. Such is the case, when one flies into the National Capital from the coast cities or the lowlands. Flying from Tampico, on the Gulf coast, to Mexico City one will have to pass over mountains of a greater altitude than Mexico City. If the weather is bad they must fly at an altitude



Milking a Rubber Tree in Southern Mexico.



which will bring them on a safe route over the mountain peaks they cannot see. The meeting of the warmer air of the lowlands with that coming from the cooler mountain areas often creates a foggy condition. Before the commercial airlines accept a new ship for their passenger and mail service in Mexico they place them through rigid tests, and their powerful motors must be able to carry the capacity load weight to heights which are much greater than the mountain peaks they might have to pass over, in case of bad weather. Like the airlines in the States the Pan-American ships have their own radio men and carry two way communication with the various airports. The ships are also equipped to "fly the beam," which is a system by which the pilot can tell at all times if he is flying on his true course. The Pan-American flying equipment which is used in Mexico is of the latest type and always maintained in the best condition. A passenger, flying between Tampico and Brownsville, covered the topic very well when he said, "There ain't any better."

To illustrate the progress that Mexico has made in commercial aviation, one could not omit telling about the "flying fish boats." Being that there is ideal fishing along the Gulf, a company organized a system several years ago to transport the fish to the border by airplane, and then import them into the United States. From the border, they would go to the markets of the inland cities. The company's schedule called for the planes to load up with fish, at the fishing camp on the beach, up the Gulf from Tampico. They would then take off for the border and make connections with the evening train that pulled northward from Brownsville. It was either the high operating cost of the airships or the low price for the fish that later dissolved the fish-by-plane enterprise. It so happened that several of the pilots of this fish flight enterprise went on to much greater heights including one pilot that "almost" made a successful round-the-world flight. The commercial lines in Mexico all use pilots from the United States. Practically all other departments are operated by native help. The Mexican government is very anxious for the large commercial lines to give

their native sons an opportunity to prove their ability at the controls. Unless they do this, it is assumed that laws will be passed in order to compel the companies to allow Mexicans to fly at the controls if their qualifications meet the necessary requirements that foreign pilots pass.

A little space must be given to some of the agricultural and mineral products of Mexico. Such description may not meet with interest by all readers, but is included especially to benefit students and those who might be directly or indirectly interested in matters of this character.

**Corn**—This is the chief crop of Mexico as far as the average Mexican is concerned. It supplies the main article of their diet. As stated in other chapters corn was found upon the continent when the invaders first came. Indian corn is found under cultivation in every state of the Mexican Republic. Such states as Oaxaca, Mexico, Puebla, Guanajuato, Vera Cruz, and Jalisco taking the lead, with several others following closely in production. With the new agricultural interest which the present administration is taking, no doubt, agricultural production will show a decided betterment in the next few years. They are not only aiding their native peons to locate "homesteads" but are developing irrigation projects in all sections of the nation. While upon the topic of Indian corn, it must be mentioned that in Mexico's early history it was known as maize. It is such an outstanding part of the peon's food that during dry years they have had to import great quantities of corn from the States.

**Beans**—The frijol, or Mexican bean, must be mentioned at this place because of its holding a position close to corn in the needs of almost every family of the nation. Like corn, beans are grown commercially in every State. Honors for high production at this time go to the state of Vera Cruz. Many states are producing within a mighty few bushels of the Vera Cruz mark at this time. If the country can grow a surplus over their own needs, they can find a ready market in foreign markets. Other Latin countries favor this type of food very much, especially Spain, and even the island of Cuba. To a visitor and to one not acquainted with the various kinds of beans,



A Mine Near Durango. Notice the Small Huts on the Hillside for the Miners' Homes,

they would have to admit that a trip in Mexico will show them more kinds of beans and more dishes from them than they ever thought existed. You often will find many different varieties served at the same meal.

**Tobacco**—This product grew upon many portions of this continent as well as in South America, before a young man by the name of Columbus made his well known visit. It was known to the Indians then, and now is called tobacco. This plant is cultivated in most all sections of Mexico and experts say that it is possible to raise as high a quality in parts of Mexico, as can be raised anywhere. Mexico has a number of manufacturing plants using their home grown tobacco although they depend principally upon export rather than the manufactured article.

**Coffee**—This product thrives well in Mexico but they cannot claim it as being theirs before the coming of the white man. Records show that it was brought from the West Indies in 1790, but it was thirty years later before they showed marked interest in its proper cultivation. Coffee takes much work and proper attention for its propagation. It shows best production at an elevation of between 1,500 and 2,000 feet and not in the lowlands as many think. It requires a hot but moist climate and the ground selected must be properly drained but watered often. Like grapefruit or oranges, coffee cannot stand frosts and must be sheltered from cool winds. I was much surprised that coffee could not stand the rays of an extreme sun but must be sheltered. After hearing this, I often wondered if it was for this reason that one finds so many Mexicans serving coffee in restaurants, that tasted as if it had been sheltered from the cook stove blaze! Coffee plantations of great size will be found in that great State of Vera Cruz which I mentioned as being the champion grower of other products.

**Barley**—There are a few sections where a good grade of barley can be grown but the production figures are very low and they even fall far behind the total bushels of wheat. There are several large breweries in Mexico, and the demand for barley makes it possible for these certain barley growing sections to have a revenue that

might not otherwise exist. Barley, as a food has little place in Mexican dishes. The northern part of Coahuila, much of Tlaxcala, and most sections in Hidalgo and Puebla make up the sections best fitted for barley raising.

Rice—Mexico does not class rice among the leaders, but rice is grown quite successfully and is much favored as a food by the natives. No one can ever say they toured Mexico without sometime or other being served a dish of hot cooked dry rice with a poached egg on top. The outstanding rice growing territories will be found in the states of Colima and Guerrero. The state of Tabasco offers much towards the total production.

Sugar cane—The Spaniards took an interest in raising sugar cane and, even the famous Cortez, became so interested that he erected a mill which still stands near the city of Cuernavaca. The mill can still be operated and was controlled for many generations by the descendants of the famous invader. It can be visited by the tourists to that historic city. It is here where the higher class residents of Mexico go to spend their week-ends. The climate is much warmer and the evenings more tropical than will be found at Mexico City. Cuernavaca is but a short motor ride from the Capital City but its lower altitude gives it a different climate. This is the reason many of the outstanding men of Mexico City have homes located there. This, no doubt, was the attraction for Cortez and thus the ancient sugar mill. Much of the entire Gulf area is adapted to the raising of sugar cane. The rainfall along the Gulf and in the foot hills are especially adapted to growing cane. The Mexicans will often state that if they were as sure of everything as they are of their sugar cane, all would be well. No other crop has proven more of a "natural" for Mexico than sugar cane raising. Some territories use irrigation for their cane and this includes the state of Morelos which ranks as one of the leading producing states. Five of the important sugar cane states are as follows, Morelos, Vera Cruz, Puebla, Sinaloa, and Jalisco, and another dozen states should be listed along with them. I find that the land of the elevated areas produces a smaller crop than those in



All Ready to Take the Leading Part in the 'Dance of the Plumes,' a Native Dance.

the lowlands. The higher lands produce between twenty-five and forty-five tons per acre and the growers in the lower land districts explained to me that their average often reaches sixty tons per acre. Few places use so-called modern machinery, and from my travels, I would say that this original method of theirs is far more suited to Mexico than if they were to use modern machinery like some of the foreign machine makers suggest. It is very interesting to visit many of these districts where they will be bringing the cane in, using high two wheel hand-made carts drawn by oxen. Sometimes one will see many of these ox teams trudging down the road, one behind the other. They use two teams upon the large loads. The cane will be stacked as high as it will stay on the cart. The trails are always winding, and the sway of the carts and their loads can be seen a great distance. Like carrying a spare tire upon your automobile, they too, carry a spare, but their spare is an extra ox that trails behind the load of cane.

Chicle—Everywhere you travel in Mexico you will find boys and men selling gum upon the streets. It is very inexpensive as a package of ten sticks can be purchased for less than two cents in United States money. Probably the low price is attributed to the fact that chicle is among the main productions of their country. The liquid comes from a tree called *achras-sapota*. This tree grows wild in the northern part of South America, in Central America, and in many of the southern Mexican states. The greater part of Mexican chicle is taken from the trees in Jalisco, Puebla, Vera Cruz, Yucatan, Tabasco, and as far into the interior as San Luis Potosi. The chicle tree is found at an altitude of between three thousand and six thousand feet and it produces after reaching its eighth year and will live to be twenty-five years old, if properly taken care of. I was told that the average life, however, is about sixteen years.

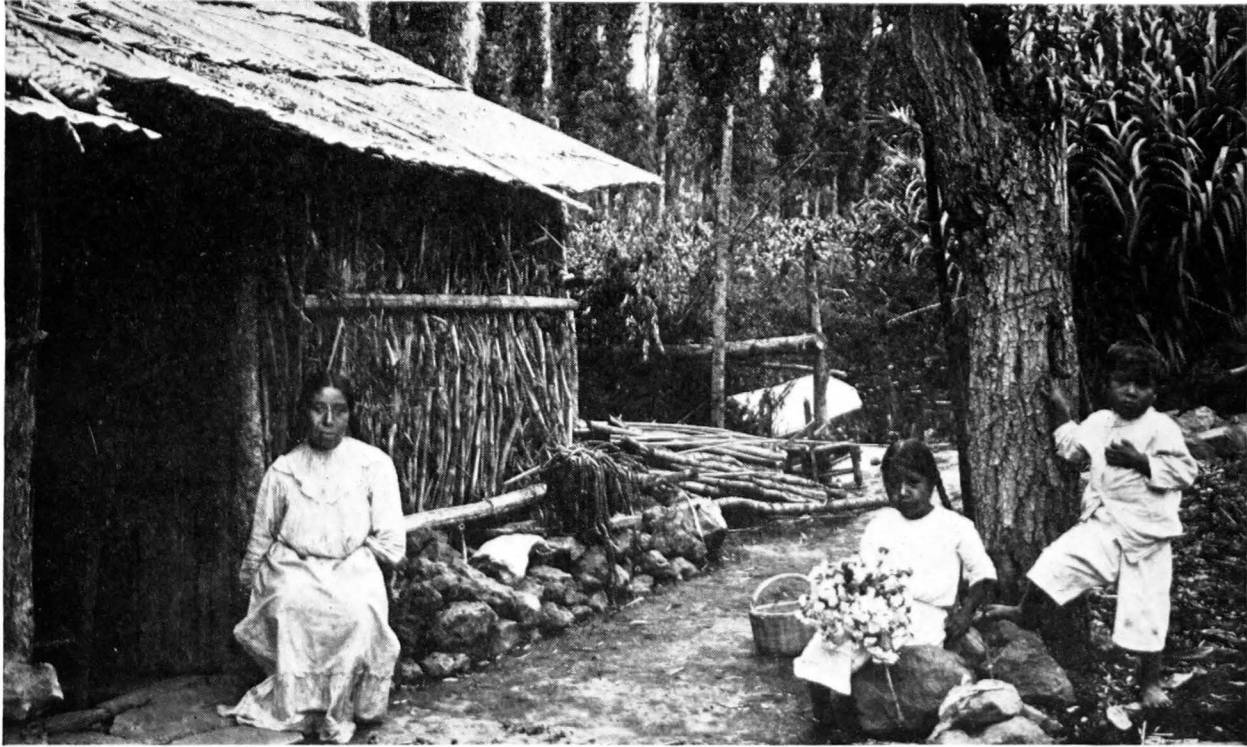
The natives who follow chicle growing and become experts in extracting the fluid from the trees are called "chicleros," and their duties, I would say from watching, would be to make an incision about the tree's trunk

so that the sap will run downward and into a cup which is placed there especially for that purpose. The method looks very similar as to the procedure followed in the rubber industry. The methods used by the men as well as their customs are very interesting. The "chicleros" take their long machete and start for the tree and in climbing they use a rope system of their own. As they reach their position they tie the rope about their waist and the tree and brace themselves with their bare feet while they make the incision.

Cotton—Here we have another crop that was well on its way to prominence before even the Aztecs held power over the famous Mexican valley that surrounds the nation's headquarters. The old Indian tribes were found expert at the spinning wheel even when the first Spanish gold seekers arrived. Cotton can be grown in small areas in all sections of Mexico. During the seasons of 1934 and 1935 the Mexicans received a very good price for their cotton. Upon inquiry as to their high prices to the growers, I was told that credit was due to the fact that because of the low production of cotton in the States, the foreign market buyers came to their ports for it. The Mexican cotton seems to have a longer fiber than most of the cotton produced in the southern United States. Under average conditions Mexico can use their own entire crop and, some years thousands of bales are imported. When this happens, they select a quality of cotton to meet certain conditions for special mills something that their own cotton fails to do. To see the great amount of cotton clothes worn by the natives one can realize it would require a very large crop to meet local demands.

Vanilla—The Spaniards were very quick to grasp the possibilities of the aromatic pod and started to cultivate it for export. This magic territory of Vera Cruz holds the spotlight for vanilla production. Even as far back as the much talked about Aztecs they were using vanilla as a spice and to flavor certain dishes and drinks. Low swampy land seems to be ideal for the plant, and after planting, it takes about forty months before it starts to yield, and then under average conditions it will produce





To Foreigners Some of Their Humble Homes Look Odd But They Are "Home Sweet Home" to the Natives and Comfortable.

to an age of around fifteen years. The production varies from one to two dozen pods upon each vine. At one time Vera Cruz was the sole source of supply in the world trade for vanilla.

Rubber—The rubber tree grows wild in almost every southern state of Mexico. The natives have found that under better care and proper cultivation incomes can be greatly increased. It is evident that in years past, the natives have taken milk from the trees, boiled it into rubber and then carried it to market without any further consideration for the care of the trees. No doubt, this has caused the destruction of many valuable trees. The trees will yield as early as seven years, but experts claim it is best to wait until they are at least ten years old before tapping them and extracting the milk. The natives take this milk and boil it down into a thick pulp and their next step is to form it into balls. After they have stored up enough for a load, they start off with it on their burros for the city, to find a buyer.

Henequen—One of Mexico's chief exports is the fibre taken from the Mexican cactus plants. This fibre product is exported to many foreign markets and there manufactured into cordage of various kinds. Mexico raises many varieties of plants that produce fibre, all being upon the cactus type. The Henequen comes from a cactus that can be grown in many parts of Mexico. It is sometimes referred to as sisal grass, but this name should not fool you as it is nothing more than the fibre of the cactus plant which you often see in the hot houses and known as the century plant. The early Indians, especially the Mayas, used this plant for many things. They found food, drink, and clothing in it. They would make a fibre from it that would make clothing and paper. Even now, it is possible for the traveler to see where some native has made a roof from the leaves of the plant. The leaves are long and have a curve and the natives find the leaves a good substitute for tile and make a very cool roof. The Mayas used this plant to make a drink and the national drink of the native peon comes from the plant to this day. The early Indians called the juice "octli."

The present day name is "pulque" and it is very popular. Because of the demand for the plant commercially, they cultivate it in many states. The states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi and Oaxaca, appear to me, as being the greatest producers. The immense fields are a sight that one will never forget. One's first experience with the plant will soon show him that he must be very careful, as each long leaf has a needle-like thorn at the end which is several inches long. It is so sharp that it will cut deep and one may not realize he is cut until he sees the blood and the wound starts to pain. These plants under cultivation sometimes attain the height of a man's head when riding upon a cow pony. When they extract the liquid, they make an incision in the base of the plant which soon fills up. They then either dip it out and place it in a goatskin bag or suck it into a large gourd by having a hole at the top, so that by sucking it there will be a vacuum that draws the pulque in at the lower end. When you take several drinks of this cactus juice it soon begins to tickle the throat in the same manner as if you were swallowing a raw cactus, thorns and all. It might be said that the following plants also take part in the fibre industry, ixtle, zapupe, escoba, pita, jute and flax.

Cacao—When Cortez wrote back to Charles V he referred to the cacao bean in such a fashion, "He who has drunk his cup of chocolate travels a whole day without taking other food." With that statement about the drink made from the native bean one might give credit to Cortez for being the first high powered publicity man upon this continent. Little wonder he came to the continent with less than 500 men and outsmarted a possible 20 million people. The states of Jalisco, Chiapas, and Tabasco have supplied much of the cacao to the foreign markets.

Fruit—With the tropical climate and the variation of products that Mexico has, one could compose books upon their fruits and fruit lands. Without question Mexico's fruit production is in its infancy. Certain elevations prove ideal for such fruits as apples, and pears. Straw-



The Cortez Palace in the Popular Resort City of Cuernavaca. As Today, Cortez Like Other Leaders Maintained Headquarters in Mexico City But Also Had a Home in Cuernavaca Where it is More Tropical,

berries grow wild and I always look forward to trips through Mexico with pleasure as it is possible at all times of the year, to find strawberry pie which seems to follow a well known trade slogan in the States, "The more you eat the more you want."

Oranges and grapefruit are grown in every state of Mexico. Even with the competition of many countries, the Mexicans are finding the yearly demand for their oranges increasing. I have never tasted any sweeter oranges than can be found in Mexico. Their outside appearance does not have such an appeal as those grown in California or Florida.

Bananas grow wild in Mexico and if you visit that state of paradise that I have had to mention so many times, Vera Cruz, you will find there are more ways to prepare bananas than you ever thought possible, dishes that are mighty delicious, too. No doubt it is because of the high prices one pays in most parts of the States that keep us from acquiring these Mexican native dishes.

Pineapples grow to a great size and like bananas, the natives of the country can prepare much of their meal from them. They cultivate the plant but it requires little attention during growth. In many parts I found them planting corn among the pineapples and by cultivating one crop you also gave care to the other. It appeared that other than reducing the size of the corn crop the owner obtains two good crops. The traveler will find large areas devoted to pineapples in all the southern states of Mexico.

Limes grow wild and after their trees are cultivated the quality of fruit becomes more uniform and the outside acquires a better market appearance. The limes are gaining very rapidly and probably no fruit in Mexico has received so large an increase in foreign demand as it has. The fruit grows in sizes ranging from one inch to that of a lemon. The medium size is in the greatest demand by importers from foreign countries. They are used by the natives and it is surprising the great change that a few drops of lime juice will add to various dishes. The natives make much use of them as they grow wild

and cost them nothing but the time to pick them. They are many times more sour than a lemon. I have seen the natives take a slice of rutabaga and rub a piece of lime over it and then eat it. I tried it and admitted it created a new taste and was very good. There are but few fruits and vegetables they do not season with lime in the areas where this tiny but powerful fruit grows wild. I suggest you make this experiment some time when in want of a new taste.

Timber—Like in mining, there is a very important national resource in Mexico's timber. In the hot country along the lowlands of the coast one will find great mahogany trees as well as many varieties previously mentioned that are used for commercial purposes, such as rubber, chicle and dyes. There are six different species of white and red oaks. The type referred to as "roble" is in a class of its own as it is claimed by wood experts that no other specie takes so high a finish. There are also six classes of Mexican pine. Men who have made a study of the many species of wood advise me that there are at least two dozen kinds of hard woods throughout Mexico. Nature was very kind to Mexico in giving her many varieties of trees and, the person who thinks there are none but the crooked mesquite trees, have a surprise awaiting them when they see trees that will dress timbers fifty to one hundred feet long without knots.

Mining—Books have been written about the great mineral resources that are found in the mountains that cover much of Mexico. During the iron rule of their invaders the mines of Mexico were worked for several hundred years and every effort was made to extract as much gold and silver from them as possible. Yet, with all this, the mining industry of Mexico is still in its infancy as far as present resources are concerned. To locate the possible mineral resources as well as the proven fields would be only to refer you to the mountain districts of the nation. Apparently most of this area contains riches. The outstanding mineral resources are silver, gold, copper, lead, iron, zinc, quicksilver, tin, antimony, graphite, manganese, petroleum, asphalt and coal. Oil

is found in many parts of Mexico with the most famous fields being near Tampico. As one travels about the country they will see wildcat wells being drilled. Mexico has rigid rules governing her oil as well as her minerals, and the administration advises foreign money centres that all leases are legitimate and the day of special privileges is over. Mexico wishes to have her resources developed but not as they were under the régime of Diaz.

## CHAPTER XVII

### AN OLD SPANISH CUSTOM

The art of making love may be found in every country but in Mexico they have a custom used to this day that came from early Spanish teachings. The young men and women of Mexico do not have the close association in social life as they do in the States. Seldom are the boys and girls ever together and, rare is it the case, that a young man and young woman, who are in love, enjoy the freedom of being together, alone, before they are married. Petting parties and other modern ideas such as parked automobiles have not, as yet, invaded Mexico.

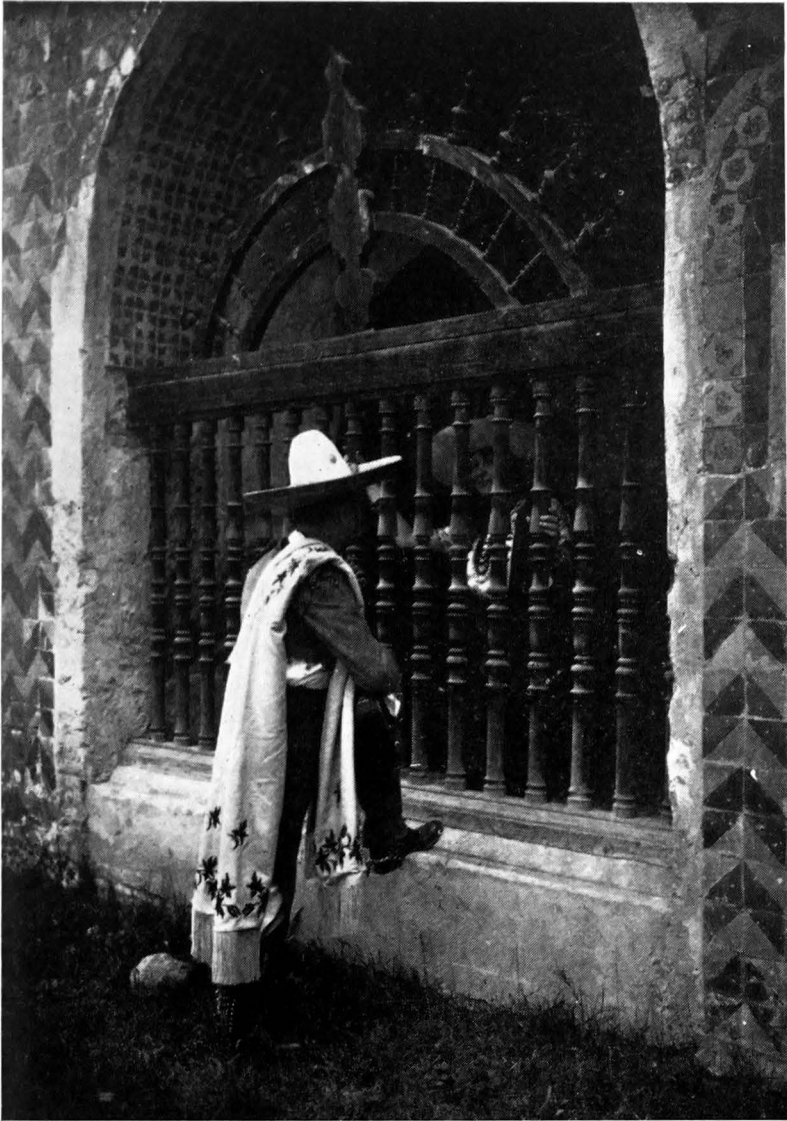
The Indians in the remote sections may still use their own type of courtship, but the Spanish teachings have left their imprints upon the larger part of the social life found in most sections of the nation. During the early days of rule under the dictatorship of Spain, which was indirectly the desires of the priests, jesuits and friars, the cost of marriage for the humble Indian was very high. They required that the natives give up the system of "vows" used by their ancestors and be married by a priest in the Catholic church. The costs and requirements may not appear so large to one in more comfortable circumstances, but to the repressed natives it meant they had to bring "gifts" to the church before a proper marriage ceremony might take place, as well as during the time they were being "prepared." The amount of the gifts was made known by the priest. It was explained by one old mountain peon that this amount depended upon the ability of the young man to be married and the amount the priest thought he could produce under passionate desire for a home and mate of his own. My peon friend said that many of the Indians, during the early conquest days, would look around and if he



found a suitable looking Indian maid that met his requirements he would propose to the young maiden, and if she showed interest he would then inform the girl's father and they would soon be off to establish a new home.

There was a gentleman from Indiana with me and, as this aged peon explained some of the love making tactics of the peon Indians in the back woods, the man from Indiana spoke up and said, "Well if it was that easy to get a bride, I don't blame them for 'bootlegging' on the priest's expensive ceremonies." Even with the great expense of a church marriage the most humble peon woman liked to have a church wedding, partly for the show, and also because many of them thought they were not tied tightly enough unless the priest married them, even though they might have a city official perform the ceremony. Regardless of the method used in tying the matrimonial knot, there seems to be few homes that do not stay intact. The Indiana gentleman could not pass up the opportunity to ask the mountaineer as to the results of such home making as described, in the remote sections, among the Indians. The old timer chuckled and replied, "Well I guess the system ain't so bad as me and the old woman have been livin' together since we were kids and first got in love."

The young man will visit the parks and city plazas during the times that he expects the young Mexican maidens out with their mothers or chaperons. Sunday afternoons these young señoritas will, no doubt, be found with their families as they drive about the park. The ride may be in their family automobile, but in most cases it is in a highly polished, open vehicle drawn by beautiful horses and driven by a uniformed driver. Upon these drives you will always find the girls accompanied by an elderly person. While the girls are riding about the park you will also notice the young romantic men present. They too, drive about much like the girls, with the hope of gaining a close view as they meet or pass by. The boys desire to create a good impression and many of them dress in expensive charro suits and ride about upon a



An Old Spanish Custom. The General Explained, "the Bars Were to Keep the Beautiful Daughter in and the Boy Friend out."

beautiful horse. If the young man happens to see a girl who stirs his heart and creates a high blood pressure which is diagnosed in every country on earth as love sickness, he must then attempt to find out who she is and, if there is any chance of meeting her people. This may later lead, after much difficulty to seeing the girl at closer quarters.

During the evening hours, the girls will come to the city plazas and, to the accompaniment of a string orchestra or the city's military or police band, will start the evening's march about the square. This activity would be too strenuous for the chaperons so they congregate on the park benches and, no doubt, reminiscent of the days that they, too, walked about this very same plaza. The plaza always contains a bandstand in the center of the square so that the music will carry out over the park with equal volume. Not only will the romantic youth gather at the plaza but the elders will gather on the benches through the park, under the tropical foliage, and listen to the music and watch the endless parade of Mexican youth pass by.

Before long, there is an endless parade around the entire square with the girls walking in pairs and sometimes four and five abreast. No sooner has the chain of señoritas started than one will note the appearance of the young men. They will be dressed in their very best clothes and soon form a line similar to that of the girls. It must be remembered that the young men circle the plaza in the opposite direction from which the girls take. This evening affair will be found in small towns as well as in the large cities and the most outstanding families of the city will be represented in this Parade of Youth. Here is an opportunity that will give the traveler an excellent opportunity to study human nature in Mexico. There will be many types of clothes and one will see a variation from the native costumes to the most modern English or Hollywood boulevard models. You will also see the very best manhood and womanhood of Mexico, the very people who will hold the destinies of Mexico in their hands before the passing of many seasons.



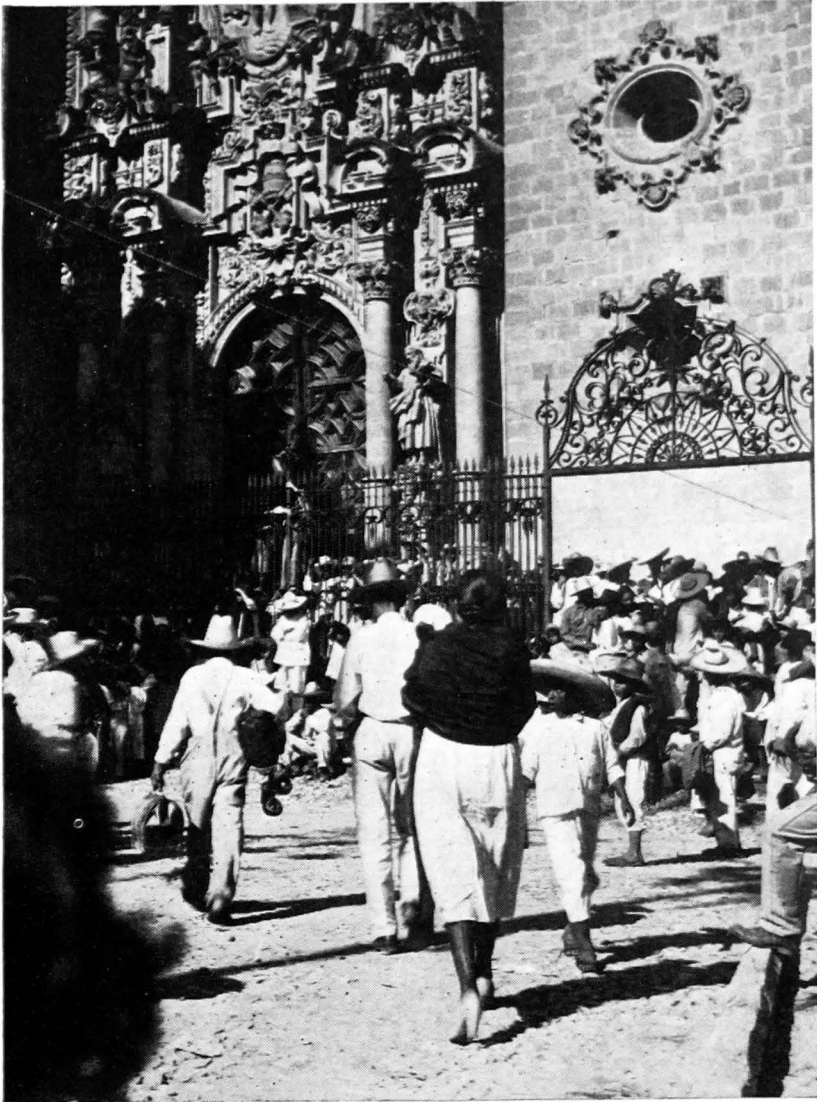
"Bells and Belles in Mexico." A Senorita in Typical Dress of Oaxaca.

Not only will one be interested in going to the parks in the evening to study "local color" but it serves an excellent opportunity in finding for oneself, if the many reports are true, as to the beauty of the young Mexican women. Webster says that the word beauty is "Those qualities that are most pleasing to the eye; a beautiful woman." Taking that explanation into consideration one must judge the beautiful women through the "eyes" of their native men. Beautiful women in various countries hold different qualifications as to beauty. It is evident that the masculine population in some countries look upon the stout type as the most beautiful, while in others they admire the slender Spanish type. That subject calls for far more ability than the writer claims to possess, but my mentioning it, is to bring out the point, that a foreigner in Mexico must give some consideration to the merits upon which the Mexican young men classify beauty.

It has been my experience and pleasure to visit almost every town or city that has an evening plaza parade. Like other travelers, I took the opportunity to witness the main event of the evening which would mean loitering about the main plaza. To explain my view as to the range of beauty found in these parades in the larger cities, I shall use the words of an American whom I met in Monterrey during one of these visits to the plaza. This American was a retired jewelryman and had spent years in travel. The Baron, as we will call him, had heard much regarding the beautiful *senoritas* to be found in the historic and romantic city of Monterrey. In his own words the Baron was an excellent judge of beautiful women and this was amplified by the fact that he had marched to the altar several times. After making a close study from a park bench the distinguished looking, grey-haired Baron insisted that we join the parade. The bell in the high church tower nearby chimed out to notify all that it was ten o'clock. The parade came to an end and as we walked to our hotel the Baron said, "Never in all my life did I see such a beautiful group of young women congregated in one place." His words were simi-



The Young Generation Often Follows in the Foot Steps of Father. This Young Couple Represents the Mexico of Today in Many Parts of the Nation. In the Background the Large Fish Nets Are Being Dried After the Day's Catch.



A Fiesta Crowd in Front of the Church in Taxco.

lar to those expressed by many other travelers who visit the larger cities. A few moments passed and the Baron continued, "Few people would ever think that it was possible to see such well dressed folks in Mexico." He waited several seconds and, shaking his head, continued, "Yes sir, you cannot view more modern clothes and styles anywhere in the United States and I'll throw Paris in, too."

In case the young man advances in the romantic stages of life and happens to see a señorita whom he believes would make him an ideal partner for life, he must next take steps to woo the young maiden. If by any chance he does not know her name or address he must follow her and the chaperon home. Later, it may be possible for him to learn her name from her servants. The next stage is to display his admiration for the maiden. To show this, he visits her neighborhood at the same time each day. This duty must be carried out regardless of weather, for if she finds that he does not care to call only in fair weather, he will not be an ideal husband. The Romeo might call for many weeks before he has the opportunity to even see her. If she will only come to the window and give him a smile he renews his faith and continues to carry out his part of the courtship. Upon such daily visits, it is possible that he will serenade her, and if this meets with her approval she may come to the balcony and drop a rose to her new admirer. This gesture gives him every reason to believe that he is progressing as well as can be expected. Weeks and months may pass before the love maker even gets to talk with his lady friend, and when this happens it will first prove very brief as the time between her appearance and exit at the barred window will only allow enough time for him to tell her how wonderful or how beautiful she is. With steady visits to the street outside her house, and with mutual feelings, the time of their visits at the window may lengthen but she uses salesmanship and keeps the conversations short so that her admirer will look forward for another one upon the following day.

With the progress of both time and love, the young





This Street Scene is Typical of Many Mexican Villages With its Narrow Sidewalk and Street. It is Evident the Time is Mid-day as the Sun Has Sent the Natives for Shade.

lovers may agree to marry, that is, providing the father will give his consent. Up until this time the young man has made no acquaintance with the father and, as far as the father is concerned, he might not even know such a Romeo exists. The impression that the young Mexican makes upon the señor will have much to do with the consent necessary.

They say no matter in what country, boys will be boys, and sometimes this includes very old boys too. Being that the Baron was making a study of the Spanish love making methods, he became so interested he was going to try his luck. The Baron, of course, could not play a musical instrument, at least, in such a way as to capture the heart of a Mexican lady, so he hired a three piece string orchestra to accompany him and furnish the usual music. In some way the Baron got his houses mixed up and after placing his music makers, found, later on that he was under the wrong balcony. Such mistakes do not produce the desired result but this proved to be the last time the Baron took part in the Mexican love problems. Just about the time the musicians were giving forth their best efforts and the Baron was set in his most languishing pose, the door leading to the balcony opened. No doubt the Baron felt he was making great progress. This idea soon changed, as a man appeared upon the balcony and dropped a pail of water upon the group. A group of young boys attempted to console the departing "wet Romeos" that they should not pay any attention to the incident because the fellow that lived there was a crabby old bachelor.

After the girl consents, the young man at once attempts to gain the interest of his most outstanding friends in the city. The larger the group, and the more influential they are in the community, the better impression it is going to make for the love sick boy. This group of men must call upon the father of the young woman. With great formality the man of the house welcomes his distinguished guests. Having talked of current affairs the spokesman of the group tells the father of their mission.



The Native Dress is Different in Various Sections of the Nation.

The father is told of the standing the young man has in the city, and of his family connections, and that the desire of this young man is to make the man's daughter his wife.

The father serves refreshments to his guests and before their departure tells the group he will take the matter into consideration. Weeks pass and the father invites the former guests to his home. Upon their return they spend the usual time in conversation upon affairs of state and nation as well as the weather. Just before departure, the gentleman of the household will give his answer regarding the probable marriage of his daughter. If it is satisfactory, the committee will call upon the young man and tell him the date which the father set for him to call at the house to meet the family.

The gallant young Mexican calls at the house and meets the entire family for the first time. You may be assured that he becomes very well acquainted with them as time progresses as upon every call thereafter the family will be present. It is the custom that the suitor present gifts to the various members of the family as well as to his beloved sweetheart. If, by any chance, they appear out in the public or go for a ride, the members of the family are sure to accompany them. Their appearance in public is rare. The Baron said he did not blame them for not going out if they had to take the entire family.

The wedding date is set and the formal announcement is made in the church many Sundays prior to the wedding. The young Mexican calls upon the mother of the bride-to-be and states the amount that may be spent upon the bride's trousseau and this amount is produced by the groom. The amount is in line with his financial standing in the community. Sometimes they have two wedding ceremonies, one at the church followed by a large festival and one conducted by the city officials, often headed by the Honorable Mayor. Sometimes the occasion arises when the groom invites some gentleman friend to stand with him at the various ceremonies. This is considered to be a very high honor. During past years it has happened to be my honor to act in that capacity. Recently I

found that should anything happen to the husband, old traditions have it, that the "honored wedding guest" must see to the welfare of the widow and the children. It is said one is never too old to learn and, in my case from this time on, my role in future weddings below the Rio Grande will be as a spectator only.

This Spanish custom of winning a bride takes much effort and patience as well as time. The wedding bells ring . . . and for the very first time the gay young romantic hombre and the beautiful smiling señorita can say, "We are alone!"

## CHAPTER XVIII

### QUAINT CUSTOMS

Traveling through Mexico many foreigners carry impressions home that might term the customs of the peons as "very quaint." I have heard many travelers with vast experience relate that they would always look upon many of their contacts with the Mexican customs with those of other oddities of their travels. As we have mentioned before, the peons have customs which hold their own individuality and retain something for the visitor that no other country has. Mexico will need no high priced publicity experts to cry her wonders to foreign travelers after true reports are circulated to the tourist centers of the world by the travelers who have taken advantage of Mexican travel. The tourists of both Canada and the United States will soon suddenly awaken to the great possibilities that are held in store for them right upon their own continent, and with a completely foreign atmosphere.

In many sections of the country there seems to be a class distinction among the peons. One merchant pointed out to me that the lowest or the third class are the ones who do nothing, the middle or second class consists of the common laborers, while the first class includes the peons who work for themselves or possess a trade. I recall an expressed observation which a traveler from Berlin made one time in the city of Chihuahua. The conversation was in regard to the peons and whom they were. He remarked, "From what I see here in northern Mexico I would say that the peons are the ones who use their backs and not their heads." In most parts of the country the laboring men receive \$1.50 Mexican, per day.

Wherever you go, you will see the little burro and he seems to be holding his own even with the increased

methods of transportation. He is a mighty proud fellow, if a burro can be proud, and he will take his space upon the street and not even consider yielding it to one of the most modern brightly colored motor trucks. To see the burro used as a water truck offers amusement to all tourists, old and young. The waterman will take his burro and place a large barrel on each side of the animal, and bring water down from some mountain spring to sell to the residents. He will stop at each house and attempt a water sale. Sometimes he will use the same pail and dip into the barrel and give the burro a drink of the "cool" spring water that has long lost the coolness of the mountain spring. It is hard to imagine how these tiny burros can manage these two mammoth barrels. Many of the homes have a large sun baked vase that is made in the shape of a bottle. These vases will hold about two pails of water and are hung, often in the patio, where the sun will not strike them but yet they will be in a draft. Odd as it might seem, the water will retain a very comfortable drinking temperature regardless of what the heat of the day may be. Very few homes are without their water vases.

It is often mentioned that the type of comedy which is preferred by the Mexican is of a different nature from what the average American finds a hearty laugh in. Upon visiting their stage shows, it is soon seen that there is something about the degree of comedy that is much different from that found upon the legitimate stage in the States. Although it is true that the motion pictures exhibited in Mexico are mostly made in the States, when the comedy reel is projected they believe in making their enjoyment known hilariously. It will be found that the after dinner speaker from English countries finds it rather difficult to inject comedy into a group of Mexican diners, in Spanish, even though he may have the ability to present his favorite stories which the diners back home always laugh at.

There was one incident which happened where the Mexicans were mutual in exhibiting their sense of humor. It happened several years ago at a celebration in the



The Earthen Water Jug is Hung in the Patio Shade. The Temperature May Be Very Hot but the Drinking Water in the Jug Will Always be Cool.





Typical Dress of the Tehuana.

interior of Mexico. Upon this day, there was a number of features to occupy the entire afternoon and the grand finale of the day was to be a bull fight. Several events took place with success. The last event to take place before the bull fight was a short race between two young men. One of the men was a Mexican athlete and the other athlete was from the United States. This foreign track star had spent much time throughout Mexico, in aiding them with their athletic programs which were being introduced through the nation. Such sprinting events were being held to interest the citizens in various kinds of athletic sports. This day all the special events were being carried on inside of the spacious bull arena which allowed ample space as well as seating capacity. The running event was called and the two young men took their positions on the starting line. The crowd was tense with excitement awaiting the starter's gun as well as the finish, to see if their native son could beat the fairer complexioned man from the north. The official starter raised his hand into the air and was about to fire a blank cartridge which would start the race. As to the results I shall quote the American,—

“Just as I was about to take my position at the starting line, I heard a loud noise. I knew it could not have been the starter's gun so I turned just in time to see the bull gate crash open and to hear someone yell, ‘watch out.’ The next instant, I saw the bull come tearing out through the gate and directly towards me. He was pawing dirt as he came and I still maintain this white bull was bigger than any Jumbo elephant Barnum ever had. I got a different angle of bulls than I ever had before. Somehow, they look mighty different when you are in the ring with one, than when sitting comfortably in the high seats. They say that when a bull comes out into the ring he makes for the first moving object he sees. I might not have been moving when he first came out, but I'll tell the world I sure was within a fraction of a second. I didn't need any starter's gun to take off, either, although it did seem at first as if my feet were frozen tightly to the ground. I guess it will be my record quick

start. I thought I heard him snorting behind me and every stride that I took, I expected to feel the bull's horns. There was no time to look around nor was there any time to figure out some way to side step the bull. My first and only inclination was to reach the protection fence that is located around the inner circle of the ring. This fence is at least six feet high. As to what became of the other runner and the official starter I don't know, as I had all I could do, in fact more, as I had not promised to sprint against any wild bull. The fence was nearing but time seemed to be passing in slow motion. As I neared the fence, I could not see the openings so often used by the toreadors, and there was no time to slacken my speed to find the small opening. The next thing I knew, I was up in the air, clearing the fence and, as I came down, the thick plank fence rocked with the powerful thud of the bull's head. That was one race I had won and I shall never forget it. And what do you know about it, that crowd up in the seats still think that it was all a part of the scheduled show?"

This was one time that the Mexicans saw an unscheduled stunt or race which appeared very amusing from the seats above and would be enjoyed in any man's land. They laughed and cheered and wanted more. Even the bull fight proved to be tame for them on that particular day.

No matter what part of Mexico you visit, you will always hear them refer to their National Capital City as just Mexico. Being that the city is high in the mountains they also refer to it as "up at Mexico" or "going up to Mexico." This expression is used regardless of the direction. The city of Mexico is located within the District Federal which is located in the State of Mexico as well as the county of Mexico. Several of the states have capitals of the same name. Another thing, a great percentage of the Mexican population do not appreciate the fact that the people of the United States monopolize the word "American" by referring to an American being solely a citizen of the United States. The Mexicans feel that Canada and Mexico are as much entitled to the word



Two Young Women of South Mexico.

as the States, as they feel all people of the continent come under that category. No doubt, with Mexico's high percentage of original Americans of Indian blood, they can well claim the term, if they wish. In Mexico as in Canada they mostly refer to the United States as the "States."

It is truly odd, how various nationalities adopt special terms and slang phrases to meet certain conditions. The expression "okay" seemed to capture all ages in the United States, from the toddling youngster to the distinguished business man. As you go about Mexico you will find the term has slipped across the border and is used to convey the same meaning. Tourists look astonished when they hear some child unwind a rapid string of Spanish and to end it with a typical "okay."

Much space in this book has gone to the mentioning of their leading products as well as their chief foods. We hear much of "The tall corn of Iowa," but some of the valleys of Mexico will make Iowa, Illinois, and Nebraska take second place for height or production. Another very interesting thing is the fact that some of these valleys, especially about Mexico City, have been farmed with Indian corn for so many years that no one can tell the beginning. At certain altitudes, the soil will produce three crops a year for the farmer, if he wishes to rush things along. This is seldom the case because necessity does not require it.

The Mexican children like dogs, but I find there are very few of them in any section of the country. The only reason I find for their absence is that the average family would not wish the responsibility of feeding them. One must take into consideration that the type of food used upon most peon tables would furnish little of the sustenance that dogs require. There will be found many dogs which are full bloods. Going down the street in one of the low land cities I noticed a police dog in a yard. Being one of my favorite breeds, I stopped, and soon found that the extreme heat of the low lands annoyed the dog. At that time it was curled upon the rubber lawn hose in order to gather what possible coolness



A River and a Romantic Young Mexican. We Cannot Help but Wonder What is on the Other Side of the River.

the water in the hose gave off. His owner had purchased him, for his young son, from a dog store in the nearby mountain city. The father made some kind of a compromise with the boy so that the dog might be returned to a higher and cooler climate. Speaking of dogs in Mexico, I will say I have seen more hairless Mexican dogs in the arms of women at a California open air band concert than I have all together in my trips through the Mexican Republic.

There seems to be many odd customs one remembers above others as he looks back over some certain side trip. I recall sitting out on the balcony of my hotel room and watching the various happenings up and down the street. A short distance away they were digging a ditch in the street. There were workmen below, in the ditch, throwing the dirt up on the street at the edge of the ditch. Evidently the foreman wished to place the dirt pile over to the other side of the street. Other workmen then filled baskets, lifted them to their shoulders and then with a second lift they placed it upon their heads. After it was upon their heads they would walk across the street which would be no more than thirty feet, stop, lift the basket down to one shoulder, and then lift it down to the pile where it was dumped. I could not help but notice the great amount of work they were going through in order to move the dirt this short distance.

Many of the rural peons came into town past my room as the road from a nearby valley connected with the street which passed in front of the hotel. These peasants brought their produce to peddle at the market or to trade for other merchandise. Some passed with large cargoes upon the family burro. Often the woman and man both came when they had quite a bit to barter off. If by chance there was still room upon the burro for anyone to ride it would always be the man who held the seat of transportation. Maybe, one of the ladies at the hotel defined it when she stated, "Well, I'd much rather walk than have to ride one of those dirty little jackasses and let my feet drag on ground."

During my stay, where I retained a front room with

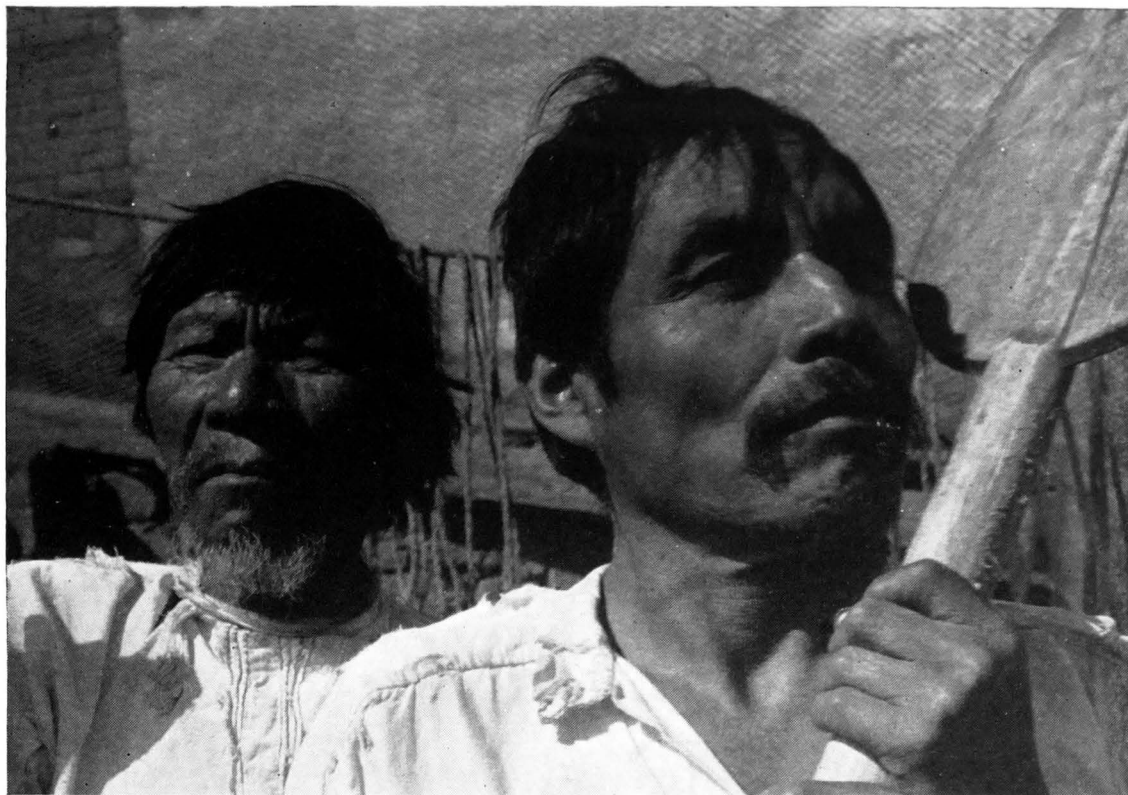


The Mexican Large Homes are Built "Around" the Backyard Making the Home Very Private. Often Large Open Archways Lead From One Section of the House to Another.



balcony, I saw several funerals pass. Each one was very long and the people, as well as the mourners, were walking behind the hearse. Seldom do you see a funeral in Mexico where the women attend. The women call at the home of the mourners and bestow their condolences and then retire to their own homes. Often, it is said, that to create an impression about the town, they hire mourners to follow the hearse. From what I can find, this is untrue in Mexico, but some say that it is a fact in Spain. It is the custom that all former friends of the deceased attend the funeral. The custom calls for eighteen months of mourning, with the first twelve months refraining from all social or public affairs, and during this time they wear black clothing. The remaining six months, the mourners generally confine their colors to black and white.

The families take great interest in keeping their cemetery plot in beautiful shape. Often one will notice where present family members maintain the graves of their ancestors dating back many hundreds of years. Almost every Sunday some member of the family will carry fresh flowers to the graves which hold many generations of their kin. Many of the graves are in vaults above the ground. There are stories about the Mexican grave yards which would almost make anyone believe that each grave yard consists solely of a huge bone yard. There is one grave yard which I visited in the town of H. Matamoros that had the bone pile in the corner of the grave yard. It was explained to me by one of the grave diggers that space was leased for a period of five years. The lease called for payment in advance, in case at later periods if the rent is not paid they remove the casket, most of them being metal, and stand it by the grave for a certain period of time. If the rent is not paid within that "period of grace" they dump the bones on the bone pile and lease the space again to some other customer. It was evident that many of the rentals had passed the due date as the bone pile was rather large and the blank-faced grave yard attendant remarked dryly, "Makes more work for me when they don't pay their grave rent



Tarascan Fishermen Along Lake Patzcuaro in Mexico.

as whenever the corner fills up with bones they make me lug them away."

This is an exception and most of the grave yards through Mexico give forth a restful appearance, if such a word will explain the neatness, the foliage, and the many freshly cut flowers.

Across from my balcony on the other side of the street I could see a number of sidewalk merchants. They never appear to offer any sales talk but sit upon their folding camp stools and if anybody stops and insists on making a purchase they will get up and hand over the merchandise. In many cases it appeared as if they would rather have the customer wait on himself. One of the salesmen has a large glass case containing candy. This candy sells for one centova a piece and a selection can be had from varieties made from grapefruit, cactus, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and burnt brown sugar with peanuts. The natives have a method in which they can sugarize these cheap products and make a very delicious tasting candy.

In the shade along the inner edge of the side walk, I could see one of Mexico's original outside public stenographers. This sight can be seen upon the streets of most any Mexican city or town. The man had a small folding table with an old Oliver typewriter on top. He was there to accommodate the public should they wish a letter written in proper style and in tyre. From a distance, it was apparent he used the same Hunt and Peck system, as I do.

The visitor's first experience at the hotels in the smaller cities will be surprising when he finds that many such hotels have men employed as "chambermaids." As a rule, when they come to your room, there will be a small crew of two or three. They rush through their duties and then stop for a while and visit among themselves before going on to the next room. They are very trustworthy and show a keen interest in the comfort of the guest, and a small tip will maintain fresh flowers in the room as well as a bountiful dish of assorted native fruit.

Looking down from the balcony into the hotel patio entrance below, I could see and study the expressions of

the people as they met. I noticed here they used a custom which evidently is Spanish. Upon meeting, the men, if very close friends, will first shake hands and then throw their arms about each other. They do not hug but as they hold their arms around their friend they give him a number of gentle taps. It is not rare to see some of the men, if relatives or very close friends, kiss each other upon the cheek. The manner in which they do it does not appear in the least sissyfied. If a man meets a lady, even though a very dear friend, he must be contented in making a low bow, and if she allows, he may gently kiss her hand. After learning of this, a friend named Doc Gunderson in California, said to me, "Why couldn't they have that custom the other way around?"

Many of the typical Mexican hotels have very large rooms with high ceilings. A number of hotels have been recently constructed along tourist lanes in Mexico upon the types found in the United States. These hotels remind you of staying in some great eastern city and are devoid of all local color. When seeing Mexico, I suggest that you locate the typical Mexican patio hotels and you will enjoy your stay much more. When in Mexico why not attempt to see its true color and customs? These patio type hotels have their rooms opening on to the patio as well as being outside rooms. They are built much like the large homes. You will find hotel rates at the regular Mexican first class hotels very reasonable. Many of the cities such as Monterrey and Mexico City have very comfortable rooms with bath for as low as four pesos a day and if you remain longer they will quote you rates. Do not be afraid to ask the rates before you register. If you think the rates are too high tell the clerk and, as a rule, a "compromise" will be made. It may be true that the traveler in Mexico might have to watch for certain prices that are for tourists only, as they do along tourist lanes in many countries. This, especially, holds good along the tourist lanes which the average tourists mostly frequent. From experience, I will say up to date, if a tourist to Mexico from the United States, is to be fleeced, nine chances in ten it will be by



Mexican Sweethearts in the Doorway of a Typical Home.  
You Can be Assured the Mother or Chaperon is Nearby.

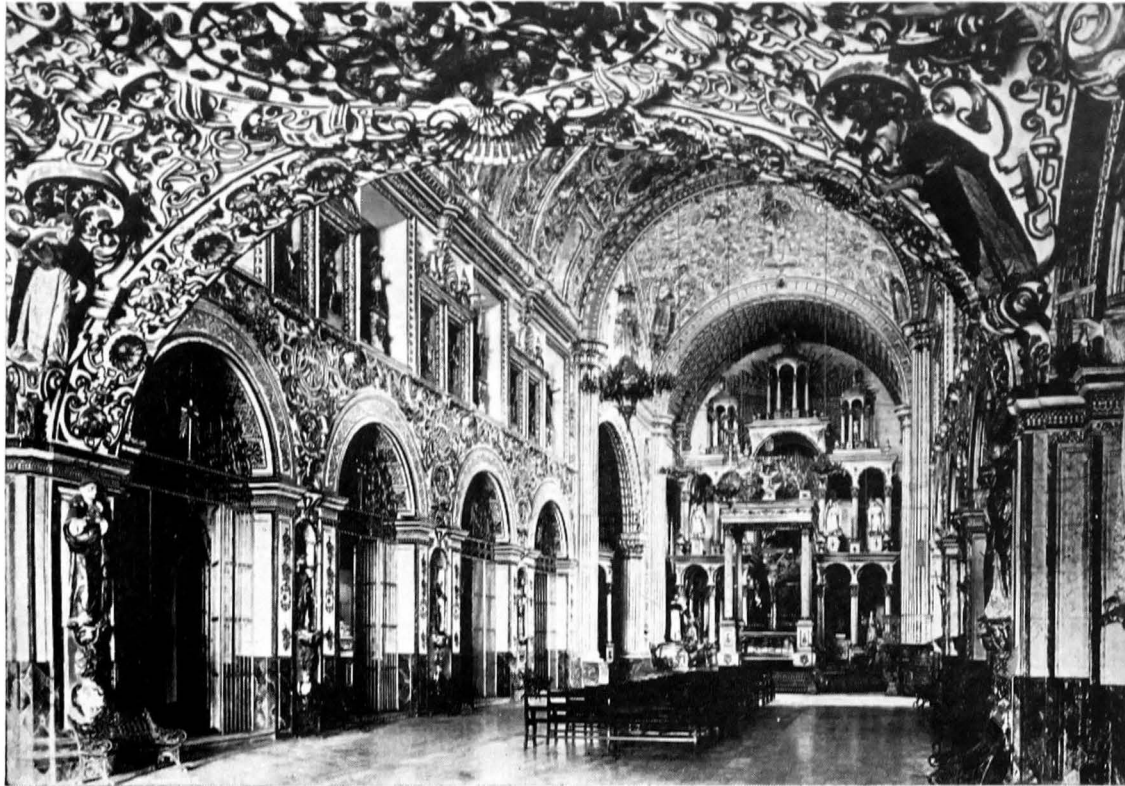
some English speaking person from the States who has ventured down into Mexico and takes advantage of being "one from the States." Hotels, curio shops, eating places, and saloons which are operated by Americans, most often charge twice the price that the Mexicans do for the same things. When traveling in Mexico do not place too much confidence in those who speak English, especially those who approach you and wish to be at your service. If you wish a guide, ask your hotel manager and upon his approval you are assured of a guide who will be honest.

If you eat at typical Mexican places you will see that they very seldom use butter. They break their rolls into pieces and sometimes dip them in their coffee or various dishes but seldom spread butter over them. It is very odd that in such a warm climate one craves foods heavily spiced. One would think that such peppery foods would agree best with the folks of the cold north lands. Even though the Mexicans do not care for butter, they look upon greasy foods as being most preferable and lard is considered a delicacy. I have had several people who maintain large homes and have many servants, tell me that even though their employees prove very loyal they will often find some of them taking liberties with the lard containers. Sometimes the regular help will bribe the kitchen maids. They explain that many crave lard or fats such as some do sweets in other places.

From my balcony I had full view of the church which, apparently, was the busiest place in the town. Regardless of the time of day one could see people going in and out. Early each morning the many bells in the towering belfry would ring out in such loud tones that regardless of the sound sleeping ability of the guests, in the nearby hotels, they will be awakened. Even if one might look upon Mexico as a land of manana he will find that it is an early rising nation. No doubt it is because of the coolness of the early hours that causes this activity. You may be assured that during the middle of the day the activity is nil, again become suddenly busy in the early evening and on into the night. There is a custom in Mexico

which I could observe very clearly from my balcony. This custom shows the respect that the men have for their church. As they pass upon the street before the church they will raise their hats from their heads as they pass the entrance. I have also seen them do it as they pass riding in an automobile. The early masses of Sunday bring about much activity in the street before the church. Sidewalk peddlers will gather about. One Sunday morning I heard much activity upon the street even before the bell boys tolled the church bells. I got up from bed and found that at this early hour there were several dozen men and women arranging flower displays along the street and near the gates which lead into the church yard. It is a custom for many of the early morning church goers to purchase one of these small bouquets either to carry into the church to place before one of their favorite Saints or to bring back to their homes. The price of such bouquets is small and they are sold by humble natives. These bouquets consist of many green leaves as well as flowers. Such sights and to view such masses of people flocking to and from the churches might bring the tourist to the conclusion that all the stories about closed churches in Mexico might have little foundation.

It is often the case one will see a very fine residence and next to it will be a very humble thatch-covered shack. All this goes to make up unique sights. Many times one will see large homes in the heart of the business section. Such was the case near our hotel. One morning a group of us were sitting on the balcony and our attention was called to a high stone fence which was being repaired in front of a residence a short distance down the street. The workmen were cementing a row of bottles along the top of it. One of the group spoke up and suggested that it must be some new advertising scheme. A few days later and after the cement had evidently set around the bottles, we were again out on the balcony and noticed the workmen again very busy over on the fence. It was then that the mystery was solved. One of the workmen had a hammer and was breaking off the top half of the bottles which left a sharp ragged top.



The Interior of the Church of Santo Domingo in the City of Oaxaca. At One Time the Church was the Largest Business Organization Within Mexico and no Costs Were Spared In the Erection and Decoration of Their Churches.



One could understand that it would be impossible for anyone to climb over this fence. Personally I would rather take a chance on going through a cactus fence than I would in attempting to scale this stone fence with the broken glass top.

Speaking of fences, it is very common to travel through the cattle country and see where the large ranches and the railroads have built their cattle corrals out of stone. Some of these old ranch corrals have stood for hundreds of years and show little evidence of wear. One can not help but think of their builders and the great amount of confidence which they had in the future of their cattle country.

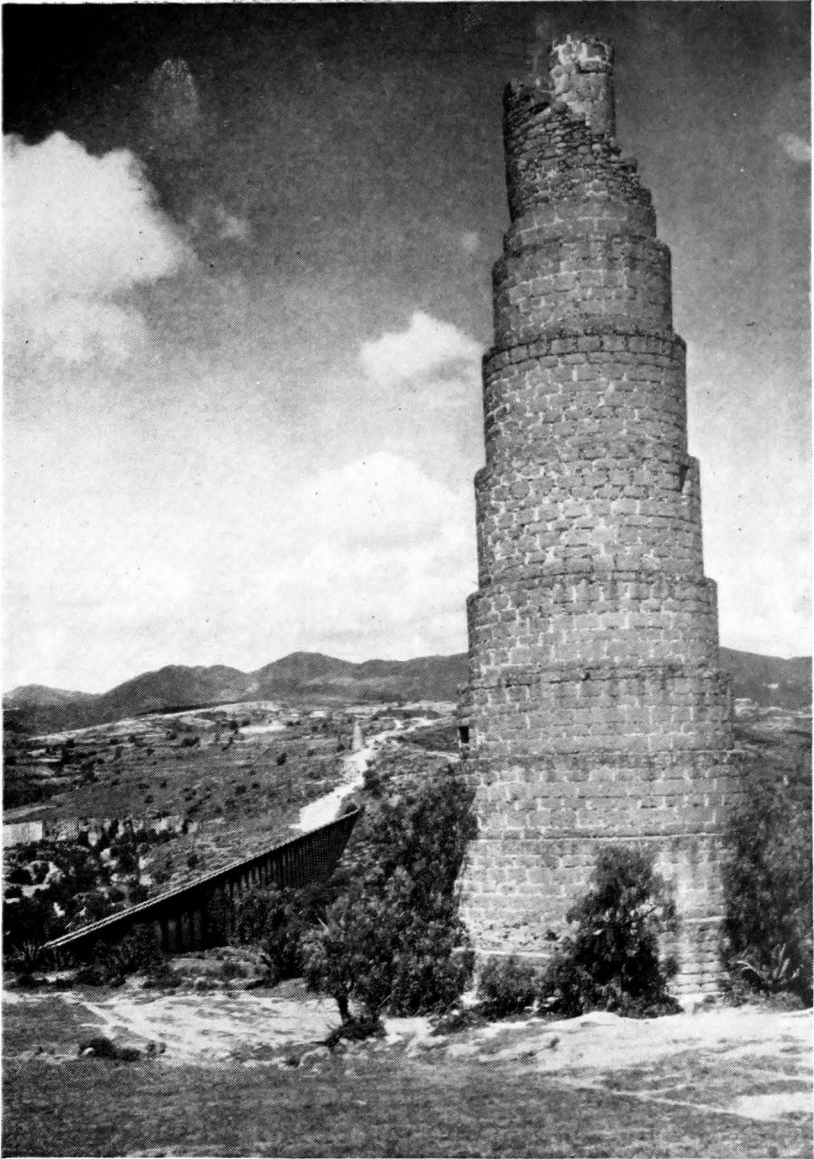
There seems to be a heartfelt welcome by the Mexican families for their house guests. It might be true that invitations to their homes are not lavishly given and that they do not ask everybody, "Come out and see us," but when they do issue an invitation it comes from the heart. It is a high honor to receive such an invitation and if it ever happens that you are so honored, I suggest that you make every effort to accept it. It will be very interesting from the hospitality stand point and another is that in case you pass up the opportunity you can be assured that you will never receive another invitation. There is a custom that the guest may have a bouquet of flowers sent to his host's home to show his appreciation for the hospitality bestowed upon him during his stay even though it may be but for one evening or a week-end. During one of my first journeys into Mexico I enjoyed such an honor by spending a week-end at the home of one of Mexico's outstanding citizens. As I returned to town I wished to carry out the flower custom which I had heard about. I called at the flower shop and selected a bouquet which I thought was extremely beautiful. The flowers were somewhat rare and of a peculiar yellow shade. The clerk showed little interest in selling me the yellow flowers and insisted upon a different color. The flowers were to be sent to the residence at once. Within a few hours I met a Mexican friend and happened to mention the flower incident and related the beauty of the

yellow flowers which I had purchased. His face suddenly showed there was something wrong and he asked, "You mean that you sent a bouquet of yellow flowers to your host's home?"

After seeing his expression and hearing the tone of his voice, I said with a lesser degree of pride, "Yes, they should be there now." And from that point there was plenty of excitement as my Mexican friend related the fact to me that there is a feeling that when you send flowers to a girl friend in Mexico or to a home, that should they be yellow the meaning has an ill effect. Wishing to know what the meaning was I asked the young man to explain. He answered, "Here in Mexico yellow flowers mean terrible things and I don't know how to express it unless I say that it is like what you Americanos mean when you express yourself by giving somebody the razzberry."

That explanation was sufficient so I grabbed my friend by the arm and we jumped in a cab and started toward my former host's house. There was small chance that we might beat the flowers there. If not, I would do my very best to explain and to impress the fact that being a foreigner, I was ignorant of many of the traditional Spanish customs. Upon our arrival we found that we took second place to the flowers. My visit to the elegant home was less sedate than my previous call but my apologies were accepted and a hearty laugh was enjoyed by all. My friend remarked enroute to town, "That's one time it helped you out in being a foreigner." That was one more custom which I shall never forget.

In this same chapter we mentioned a young man who visited Mexico, to aid their promotion of amateur athletics, and he has had many odd experiences such as the incident in the bull ring. He related several and I recall his telling about an incident which brought out a custom they have in Mexico to watch and to protect their large public events. There are no thrills for the youngsters in looking through knot holes as at large events they call out the local soldiers to patrol the grounds and keep the "crashers" out. An ice manufacturer from eastern



Aqueducts of "Los Remedios." Many of These Aqueducts are Still in Daily Use Although Built Hundreds of years Ago. The Upkeep is Small and Citizens Have no Outstanding Bond Issues to Worry About.

United States was in Mexico checking over the possibilities in his particular field. His name was Benedict, and he had learned this man from the States was to take part in a running event to be featured in the local bull arena. Benedict had heard so much Spanish that he looked upon the American as one he could talk to in English. They rode in the same cab from the hotel to the bull ring. The runner had on his sprint clothes, covered with his sweat suit, but carried his spiked shoes. So that they might be together the American athlete suggested that Benedict carry the spiked shoes and it would be possible for them both to pass through the matador's gate as the gate-keeper would think that Benedict was the runner's manager or trainer. Not being able to speak Spanish, Benedict approved of the idea which would make it possible for them to be together, and not from the gate price that it might save. Just as they approached the gate, several dark complexioned soldiers passed directly in front of them with bayonets attached to their guns which glistened in the rays of the tropical hot sun. When Benedict saw the "army" he handed the shoes to the runner and as he reached down in his pocket to get his Mexican money, he said to the athlete, "Believe me, I am going to pay my way in, as I don't want to get up to that gate and have any argument over a trainer's pass with all this army marching around." It seems to be true that most everybody has to pay to see such events and it is possible that if such methods were used at some of our small town baseball games in the States it would be easier to maintain the expenses of the teams.

To promote athletics they have had to mix it with other Mexican sports so that the interest would gradually grow upon the citizens. This same athlete from the States, mentioned another incident in his experiences which should find interest here. It was at one of the usual fiestas and to bring out a crowd they asked this sprinter who was the guest of the nation if he would allow them to advertise that he would run against a horse. The American told them that he had taken part in many kinds of athletic sports but as yet no horse had offered him

competition. He consented and forgot the special feature until the day of the event. During this time they had held contests among the army cavalry to find the officer who could ride his horse the fastest over a short distance. This contest created wide interest and after this selection the interest settled down to which could run the fastest—man or horse. The afternoon arrived and the largest crowd ever assembled in that city turned out to watch the event. Let us allow the runner to explain his new experience,—

“When I arrived in the Mexican border city I found that the event had drawn Mexicans from both sides of the border. The seats were full and upon this day I was to place my speed against that of a horse. The event was held before some kind of a combination grandstand which served as both a bull fighting arena and a dog racing track. The gate receipts went to defray actual expenses and the balance to a local hospital. After they marched the horse out on the track I decided that if he bucked over in my lane it might be possible I would have to take advantage of this same hospital. The mayor of the city opened the affair and about him special reserved boxes held the chosen beauties of the city.

“The mounted officer insisted upon wearing spurs as well as carrying a quirt, and my protests were of no avail and to delay the sprint might create a feeling I was afraid to run the horse. To my surprise, I learned that a large portion of the crowd was in favor of the man to win, while others backed up their contentions with small bets on the horse. To be sure, it is a very peculiar feeling to line up with a horse. A man might have some chance for a short distance, if the rider would refrain from using the whip and spurs, as this no doubt would give the horse cause to run much faster than his regular stride. We took the mark and the starter counted to three and fired the gun. I started, but as I did, I noticed the horse take a lunge as the pistol was fired. Down the lane I started and in full stride. About half way, the horseman started to use the spurs and the horse gained on me but at the



A Lady of Chiapas and Her Typical Native Dress.

same time started to run somewhat sideways, like a little terrier dog, and forced me into the fence.

"The patrons in the large grandstand who favored the 'man' over the horse protested that the army officer crowded me on purpose. Of course, this was not the case and being that I was not hurt much, from hitting the fence, we decided that there should be another start to please the crowd. I asked that they refrain from using the pistol, as it started the horse off with a lurch and I suggested they just say 'salto' instead. But the pistol it was, so I decided that I would 'jump the gun' and start when they said three and not wait the report of the gun. But it so happened that they fired the pistol as they called out three. I decided that I would outsmart the rider by using my regular stride most of the distance and then catch him off guard, and make a final dash which might carry me to the tape first. We were running 'neck and neck', if such an expression can be used here, down the lanes and about ten meters from the finish I gave my best speed. The officer noticed my advance and at once started to use the whip and spurs profusely. The results were, that no decision was made as to the final results, which created great activity among the enthusiastic backers of the runners. Each claimed victory and some to the extent that they carried their arguments into fights which terminated below the grandstand.

"Personally, I was glad to give the honors to the horse, as I would not wish to run the race again under the same conditions. Without question, the horse "won by a nose" but I was running along its side opposite its front feet as we crossed the finish line. Several days later I happened in Brownsville and noticed that a sports writer, Hal Eustace, carried an eye witness account of the event in his sports column. Quoting Eustace, 'As yet the race between man and horse is unsolved. Both the horse and the runner gave their best. It will be necessary to call the contest a tie as there was nothing said by the judges as to what part of the horse the runner had to beat.' So if you wish to find an undivided opinion just ask any group of Mexican sportsmen as to which can run the

fastest, man or horse. Personally, I lost all interest in such contests that day in the Mexican border city."

There are many radio stations in Mexico and they have many along the international border which reach to all parts of the continent. These powerful ones along the border have generally been erected by some foreign interests which wish to carry their advertising chiefly to the radio audiences of the United States. The government has revoked the licenses of several border stations and no doubt as they learn the damage that some of these stations accomplish by their tactics they will take action to control or cancel others. These border stations could be used in such a way that the country could receive favorable advertising. Other stations in the interior, feature high class programs and allow but brief advertising announcements. The number of radios in Mexico is still very small in comparison to their population. The percentage of city dwellers owning radios ranks very high and it is possible to hear some of the sets in tune with American stations. Many tourists are surprised to find so few radios are used in the rural sections because of the reputation held of the Mexicans' being natural musicians. No doubt, it is because of the cost as well as radio being somewhat new. Fads do not circulate about the country with such rapidity as they do in some of the other countries. It might be mentioned that the American negroes are considered natural musicians and it is stated that fewer than one per cent of them own radios.

In recent years, I have carried a pocket type radio. It is very handy to carry in my suit case and to connect up in the rooms that have electric current. The radio is rather small but will give plenty volume for the average room. During the unpacking routine in one of the Mexican hotels I unpacked my tiny radio. It drew the attention of several small boys out in the patio, and soon my room had many uninvited guests including the boys and the men "chambermaids." One of the boys was surprised that I was able to get music out of my bed. He thought that because I attached my aerial wire to the



bed spring that the music came from the bed. It just so happened that I had one of the American chain programs in tune. Announcer Everett Mitchell was just signing off with his famous nationally known phrase, "And lots of good luck ev-ery bo-dy." The kids smiled and started to leave the room. As they passed across the patio I heard one of them call out in English with a tinge of Spanish, "Lots of luck everybody."

Upon many trips by train from Nuevo Lardo to Mexico City I have noticed two characters who have held their "job" down rather well. I first noticed them many years ago and as to how long since they set up in their present business, I could not learn. I asked them one time and they answered, "Yes Sir-re boss, we've all been here on to a good long time." They are two darkies who were born in the Old South. Just why and how they got so far into the Mexican interior is a question. It might have come from being "misunderstood."

These two husky darkies appear in tattered clothes and with toes showing, at the platform as the daily trans-continental train comes in and stops for water. They always are located at the same place near where the Pullman section stops. As I look back the setting of each sight is the same. There is apt to be many travelers from the States getting off the Pullmans who take the usual stretch during the stop. These darkies have a story something like this, "Wouldn't you help a couple old darky souls that are stranded here and wanta get back to old Virginie?" This story often wins them several pesos. But with the passing of years they do not seem to get any nearer to their "Old Virginie."

English speaking motion picture fans will find their favorite stars featured in many of the cities. There are several motion picture companies in production at this time in Mexico City. The draw back in making Spanish pictures is that the number of outlets for release is very small and that often makes it impossible to place any great amount of money in their productions. They import the American films with the English background and insert titles upon the picture in Spanish to convey

the words, such as were done in the silent picture days. Some of the picture houses become very slack in the quality of the sound, as their patrons do not depend upon this to carry out the suggestions of the picture. The sound pictures did not please the Mexican movie fans. The silent type was of more interest to them as the only change needed was the cutting of the English titles and the insertion of the Spanish ones.

The Mexican towns are not without their brush men. It is possible to see them make their way through the streets carrying all sorts of brooms and brushes. The brooms are often made from wild broom grass and bound together in very crude shapes. Some are made from feathers and it was evident that these feather brooms were to dust delicate things as well as furniture. One odd broom appeared to be at least ten feet long. Upon inquiry, we found that they sold these to the houses which had high ceilings, and were used to gather cobwebs. Mexico may have their brush peddlers in the rural towns and hamlets, but from observation, I would say that in such locations the silk stocking peddlers would have very poor business. The great majority of the rural peons have little worry over "runs" in their hosiery.

## CHAPTER XIX

### FACTS AND FABLES

A group of travelers who had come from many sections of the world were sitting in the famous Maya suite, in the cosmopolitan Regis hotel in Mexico City. They were relating some of their experiences as well as describing peculiar sights they had seen.

The Maya rooms are decorated to such an extent that one might feel that he was back in the historic days when the Mayas ruled the lower continent. This suite is often placed at the disposal of distinguished visitors to the Mexican Capital. It was here that they were relating their experiences. During a lull, a voice came from Monkey-face, who had in some way established a seat in the corner of the room during the evening; he said "Maybe you fellows have seen many interesting things, but I'll bet you never saw September Morn!"

The men became very interested in the subject and admitted that they had never seen September Morn but if such a thing existed in Mexico City, they would be interested in furthering their experiences. Monkey-face then spoke up and said, "You fellows come on with me and I'll show it to you." Everybody followed Monkey-face to his cabs and realized there was a joker in the deal, somewhere, because he referred to September Morn as "it" instead of she.

The cars went through the business section and after going through many narrow one-way streets, they found themselves in one of the residential districts. The lead car stopped and they all soon gathered about Monkey-face, awaiting the next move. He turned and pointed to a house across the street and said, "There it is, boys!"

Monkey-face was right, as here was a life size replica of that famous painting in the window of a residence, in

fact it was a window of stained glass and the effect of the electric light within the house gave it the touch of an artist's brush. It was a beautiful home and in a leading residential section. Monkey-face had won, and had also created some extra business for his cabs. Being that seeing is believing, the travelers now had one more yarn to add to their list, since their midnight ride.

There is much hunting and fishing in Mexico and it is the paradise of the sportsman. The natives do not take advantage of the abundant wild life which nature has provided for them. By this, I wish to pay respect to the sportsmanship of the Mexican as they do not kill the edible wild game for the sport of "killing" but merely use it as it is needed for food. However, there are some wild animals which they favor killing as they prey upon the beneficial game. If a foreigner should wish to arrange a hunting trip into the lair of the wild beasts which prey upon game, they will often serve in the capacity of guide. Such a trip would almost be futile without a native guide.

Before an Indian accepts a position as your personal guide, he wishes to place you through one test. He will have you stand still and then he will pace off a certain distance. Stopping there, the guide then takes his knife from his belt and slices off a small strip of bark from a tree. This will leave a white spot. The Indian will then return and ask you to use the mark to test your marksmanship. The Indian guide feels that if he is going to rustle up dangerous game before you, he wishes to have the assurance that your marksmanship may protect him in case of necessity. If you can hit the mark you have your guide, if not, you will have to look other places for another mountain Indian, as your guide has already resigned.

Some years ago, there was a tall elongated youth who had graduated from his State University with a law degree. Wishing to possess a post-graduate certificate he checked over the eastern schools. It was evident this midwestern youth thought that a certificate from Columbia University in New York would look the best



**CALENDARIO AZTECA O PIEDRA DEL SOL**

EN EL MES DE DICIEMBRE DEL AÑO DE 1790  
AL PRACTICARSE LA NIVELACION PARA EL NUEVO  
EMPEDRAMIENTO DE LA PLAZA MAYOR DE ESTA CAPITAL  
FUE DESCUBIERTO ESTE MONOLITO Y CONSERVADO  
DESPUES AL PIE DE LA TORRE OCCIDENTAL DE LA  
CATEDRAL POR EL LADO QUE VE AL PONIENTE  
DE CUYO LUGAR SE TRASLADO A ESTE MUSEO  
NACIONAL EN ABRIL DE 1930

**The Famous Aztec Calendar Stone. Now Exhibited in the National Museum in Mexico City.**

upon his law office wall. This aspiring young attorney, whom we will name Bill Lang, finally graduated with honors and was ready to go back and begin his career. As he walked towards the station, he passed a large sign that advertised a special excursion rate to Havana, Cuba. Bill looked at his savings and found that he had enough to either purchase a ticket back home or take advantage of the special Cuba trip. He flipped a coin with the result that he sent a collect message to his dad advising him that he would return home via Cuba.

When Bill arrived at Havana, he found there was plenty excitement upon the island. There seemed to be several minor revolutions going on, and after standing on the sidelines he found there was little there for a young attorney. Down at the dock, he found a cattleboat sailing for the lower part of the continent. He soon found himself aboard acting as chambermaid to the cows, working his way to Vera Cruz.

According to Bill Lang, it is no worse to be broke in Vera Cruz than it is in any other foreign port. Now, that he was in Mexico, he thought he would visit some of the interior cities and possibly hire out to some American company doing business in Mexico. In those days, it was quite an undertaking for a man to "hitch hike" in Mexico, especially when one could not speak Spanish. But it did not take long before Bill could express himself in words that had a mixture of Indian, Spanish, and English.

The Revolution was in progress in many sections of Mexico and it seemed that the young American was just getting out of one jam when he would find himself in another. During his travels, he learned much of what was taking place in Mexico, and the methods used by big business organizations to take advantage of the common citizens. Before reaching his object, Mexico City, Bill found that he had been taken prisoner again, and this time his own explanation could not get him out of jail. He found that he had been arrested as a spy. At that time there was but one ultimate end for a spy, this was a march to the nearest adobe wall. The general called

and conversed with the prisoner many times, after learning of the many suggestions which his prisoner had made. It later proved that the general had experimented with many of the suggestions and their results proved very satisfactory to him.

The tall dark complexioned lad from the central part of the United States showed no outward emotions as to his coming end. For several mornings, he had witnessed fellow prisoners marched out from the make-shift prison, later to hear the reports of a firing squad. Finally the morning came which he had expected. The ranking officer of the military prison called "before breakfast" and told him that he had received orders that Bill must be shot at sunrise. Somehow, it served as a relief to the high tension of waiting which had almost sapped his vitality. Within a short time, the guard appeared at the gate with a squad of men. The large padlock was unlocked, the chains clattered as they hit the ground. With a quick step, which was very much forced, the young law graduate stepped from the prison corral and took his place before the soldiers.

It seemed to be a long walk. Men, women, and children stood still and gazed as he passed by them, in front of the firing squad. The youth thought that he would never be able to continue as his knees were almost ready to buckle beneath him, yet he swung his arms and smiled at the people who looked so dazed along his route. Just then a deep voice called out the command to halt. The soldiers stopped and clicked the heels of their tattered shoes together as they came to attention. An officer walked from the crowd and stopped before the prisoner.

"You are a free man, you have made suggestions which have accomplished great things for the common citizens of our great country; we consider you our friend and though you have your freedom we invite you to stay and help us," were the quickly spoken words of the general.

The young man let out a long sigh that relieved the high tension which he had been under, then grabbed the hand of the officer and expressed his appreciation.

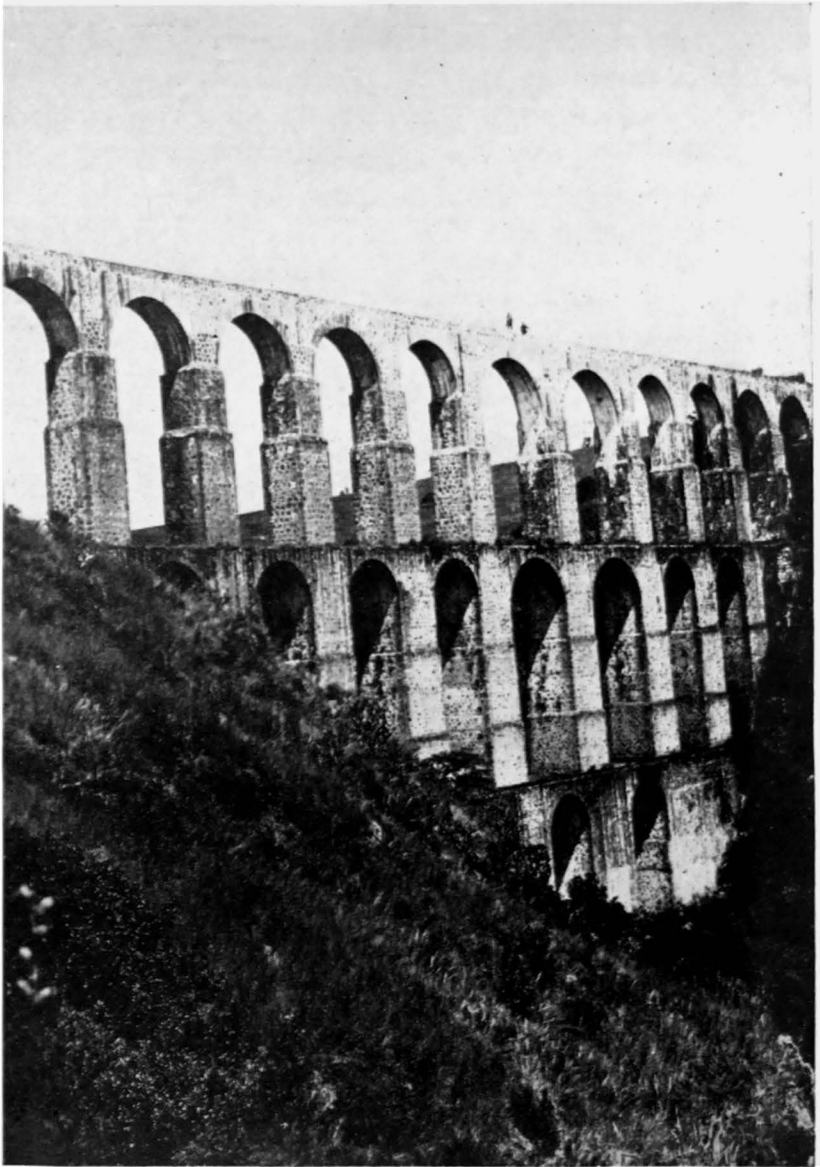
Right then, the young man decided that he would dedicate his life and legal ability to the welfare of the common people.

Upon returning to the States, the boy lawyer started upon his career in his home state and always kept in mind the welfare of the common people. He fought for them, even to the extent of hardships upon his family as well as to himself. By following such a course, he has often been the enemy of large corporations. This youthful man, who dedicated his life to the cause of the common people, was later voted into the governor's chair of his native state by that same class of people.

I had heard this story in Mexico and though I had talked many times with this attorney he had never mentioned his Mexican travels. Upon my first contact with him after learning about it, I asked him to relate his Mexican experience. He would not deny the story I had heard in Mexico, or confirm it, but he did remark that there was one certain day in Mexico when a certain little Mexican town took on a sudden bright atmosphere. And after a brief pause that no doubt carried his mind back to that critical hour of his life, he told me on one certain day in Mexico he could even see beauty in the most tumble down adobe shack and that he almost felt like running up and hugging the dirty little burro which he had been using to pack his luggage. He stopped abruptly, showing evidence that he did not care to mention his experience, then changed the subject to the fight that the common folks of Mexico had made, and won, for their rights. Few people in Bill Lang's native state know that his fight for the cause of the common people originated early one morning in a dirty little revolutionary hamlet in the mountains of southern Mexico.

Credit must be given to the builders of conquest days, because, with the passing of many hundreds of years, it is possible still to travel upon roads and over bridges which were built by the first Spanish immigrants. The Spaniards found that the natives were farther advanced with the construction of stone dams and bridges than





The Aqueduct of the "Three Arches" Located Near Zacatecas. When Cortez Arrived he Found the Natives Having an Aqueduct System on This Continent Which Excelled his Homeland in Every Degree. Most of These Ancient Water Carriers Still Serve the Same Communities Though Generations Have Died Since Their Construction.

the people back in their native Spain. Upon their arrival here, they continued the work of the Indians and constructed large bridges, reservoirs, dams, and aqueducts. The Spaniards took advantage of the Indian labor and erected stone aqueducts for many of their towns. They were used to convey the mountain water down to the cities. Several of these ancient aqueducts are still in use and form a picturesque sight as you view them from a distance and see how they wend their way down through the mountain valleys to the city below. Unlike many of our water systems in the United States, the old aqueducts have no outstanding bond issues and their upkeep is nil.

The policemen in Mexico hold the high respect of the citizens and it is evident that the word of a city patrolman is respected as highly as it is in Canada. When he gives a command it appears very effective. It is considered a high honor to become a member of the Mexico City police department. The officers appear very neat and it is believed they might pass as models for some physical training advertisement. The age limit of the police force in the National Capital is between twenty-two and thirty-five years. The mental and physical examinations for entry are very rigid. Many are college graduates and can speak several foreign languages. The department has a very novel way to denote this to the stranger. Upon the officer's left sleeve is placed a miniature flag representing the country in the language of which he is conversant.

Each passenger train carries a guard of soldiers and it does seem that the most timid travelers find great comfort in this regulation. There are twelve men with a non-commissioned officer and they cover a certain division much like the regular train crew. They are indirectly attached to the regular army, but when so stationed are known as railroad police soldiers. They have their regular station in the front passenger coach and do not associate with the passengers.

Scares come to the tourists, no doubt, from the many press stories about banditry in Mexico. There is a very small amount of law breaking in Mexico at the present

time. Travelers must take into consideration that they can now travel in the Mexico of Today, and that conditions do not exist as they did during the revolution. Seldom do you hear of a robbery or kidnapping in Mexico. Whenever something happens in Mexico, though small, it seems that if it is something unlawful it makes front page copy in the States. You may be surprised to hear that the Mexican papers feature many of the American crimes. During the summer of 1935 I happened to be with three air officers of the Mexican Air Corps. We were walking down the midway of a typical carnival in a city in the United States. One of the trio of Mexican officers could speak English. They were enjoying the carnival spirit about them as well as the loud barking of the side show barkers. As we journeyed down the midway, one of the Mexicans noticed a large sign with the name "Dillinger" over a side show entrance. The officers stopped to ask the reason for the name of the infamous Americano bandit upon the tent. I explained that it was the father of the dead outlaw who was being featured in the side show. They all had read of Dillinger and wished to see the father of the outlaw who had occupied so much space in the Mexican papers. After seeing the father and hearing him speak, they explained it would be interesting for them to tell their Mexican friends back home that they had seen a member of the famous Dillinger family.

During the years of the Chicago World Fair, I made a number of trips through Mexico, and it was a common occurrence to talk to many of the Mexican families who desired to witness the wonderful sights at the great fair, and to learn that they were afraid to go because it was being held in Chicago. It was evident they had read much about the many shootings, and the gangland orgies, which had occurred in that city, and felt it would be unsafe to visit the World's Fair. Publicity can do harm as well as good.

Next to the word "manana" one will hear the word "adios" as they travel about the country. It seems it fits in most any place. The word really is a farewell



One of the Native Typical Ways of Dressing.

expression, but not only do they use it on departing but upon meeting as well. You can shake hands and instead of saying goodbye you use the expression "adios", and if, by chance, you are walking down the street and meet an acquaintance you can give a graceful bow, or tip your hat, and respond with a smile and say "adios." It seems to have as many expressions in the Mexican tongue as the word "aloha" does on the islands of Hawaii.

Many of the fruit shippers maintain large crews of natives in making baskets. It is cheaper for them to contract for the baskets than it is to construct wood crates to hold the fruit. The basket makers will cut the wild grass and soon have it in the form of a basket. It is very amusing to watch the men and women as they go about their work. There are many stages where they use their toes to hold the grass in place, as they perform certain movements with their hands. Seldom does a basket maker construct the basket without making the cover to fit that particular basket. I asked one of the men why they did not make up a group of baskets and then devote time to the covers. He then explained that if they made up a group of covers, all the same size, they might not fit the baskets, as each basket might be built a little different, although they hold about the same quantity of fruit. In different sections of the country one will notice different types of baskets. This is because of the different kinds of basket grass as well as a different method the local natives use. The United States government places a 50 percent custom charge upon these Mexican-made baskets. If the charges were based upon the actual valuation, the import tax would be small, but as it is, there is no chance that American companies might ship these baskets in for commercial use, as the price would be higher than our own wooden crates. If you wish to allow plenty time, it is possible for you to have one of the natives make you a basket with your initials constructed in the basket with highly colored straw or grass.

During one of my trips way back into the rural section of lower Mexico I was told a very interesting story about

a certain valley and, some day I shall attempt to find if such a valley exists. Just where this mystery valley is supposed to be, I shall not say. If you were to follow the story through, you might find it was only a dream by my old Mexican Indian guide. This old native had been with me many times, and his days were numbered in the role of being an active guide. He realized this, and told me upon one certain trip that he was going to settle down and take a small tract of land in one of the lower mountain valleys and refrain from any more active guide trips.

During the last trip which he made with my party, he said he wished to have a talk with me alone, before the trip was over. One evening, I was sitting by the camp fire, enjoying the mountain breeze and watching the fleet white mountain clouds drift past the beautiful Mexican moon. It does seem in most parts of Mexico the moon almost hinges on the top of some of the mountain peaks. The rest of the party had taken their bed rolls and retired for the evening. Everything was very quiet and other than the crackle of the fire, or the rustle of a bush caused by some animal in the distance, the mountainside had settled itself down to a quiet slumber. I heard a slight cough, like one clearing his throat or wishing to attract attention, I turned and with a sudden surprise I saw my old guide sitting directly across from me by the fire.

My guide appeared as if he wished to talk, so I asked him what it was that he had previously mentioned regarding the private talk. That was all that was needed to start the old guide in a conversation which kept us beside the camp fire until dawn started to streak across the sky between two distant mountains. His conversation would almost have made a complete background for a book, even though it might have to be fiction, but he, personally, vouched for its truth.

During the earlier part of his career as a guide, he was making a trip alone across the country. Just how many years ago, he could not tell, other than to tell me that many leaves had fallen, and his muscles were of greater

strength. As he traveled this new route he came upon a valley located in one of the most remote mountain sections that he had ever visited. He said there were no paths or indications of any travel leading into the mystery valley. It was by chance that he came upon the valley as he attempted a short cut across a range of mountains. The old guide stated that other than the general description he gave me of the mountains he had no other words or description that might lead one to the valley.

It had been his ambition to some day return to the mystery valley, and see if it still held the charm as it seemed to hold for him upon his former visit. The old guide asked if I would arrange the details if he would lead me to the location. I was so thrilled with the possible experience, and the great possibilities it might lead to that I gave my word to the old man I would form a party upon the following year. This made him very happy but the venture never materialized, as our dear, old, faithful guide, passed on, during the next fall of autumn leaves.

This valley showed great productiveness, as the guide said that everywhere he went he saw fruits and varieties of grains which he had never seen before. From the guide's description, the mystery valley must have been one huge cornucopia. The men, he said, were all about six feet tall and the women all looked beautiful and to express the beautiful young Indian girls, he said, "Nowhere in Mexico do they have such pretty young girls."

It seemed that upon finding himself in the valley of such different customs and language, he kept himself under cover during the day, with the exception of being in a position where he could watch them. Their language had no Spanish and the guide thought it must be a pure dialect which came from early pre-conquest Indian culture. He was positive this small race of people had retained their little world away from all other races and knew nothing of the outside world.

My old Indian guide showed embarrassment when he tried to explain to me that the men and women, as well as the boys and girls went in swimming together each

afternoon in the cool mountain stream, none wearing any clothing. Everybody seemed happy, he said, and there was little showing among the adults to denote their age. They were one great happy family according to this eye witness.

It was impossible for him to express the size of the valley or give any idea of the number of people he saw. To describe the size of the mystery valley, he said, "Just like most any mountain valley," and to express his impression as to the population, he would answer, "Just many many men, and women, and children everywhere." The farming was done upon a community plan the guide thought, and he explained that he had no words which could express how beautiful they had their buildings and community places in the town. His description of mystery valley would hold the average audience spell bound. At first, I thought his tale was some fantastic dream after an evening of too much pulque, but after hearing many mystery tales connected with Mexico's history, I would not say but what the old guide had really seen his mystery valley,—denuded swimmers and all.

One of the army officers told me an interesting experience regarding the vitality of his Indian soldiers. History books relate that it was but a few hours after the landing of Cortez when Montezuma had the news up in his mountain Capital. Indian runners carried the word to Montezuma, and the same method was used to spread the word to the other tribes throughout the entire south part of the continent. Even to this day the native Indians are great cross-country runners and during their service in the army they prove to have outstanding ability in covering many miles each day with little food.

This army officer came from a family whose ancestors took a part in all of Mexico's army life. He told me during training it was possible to put the Indian soldiers through terrific routine, and that they seemed to possess the power to quickly regain their vitality. If they were placed upon a long march, or to act in capacity of a foot courier they would not break down from the weight of food, but carry along a small jar of food



that resembled white paste or salve. After many hours of exertion, the Indian would take a small nibble of this paste and it would form the necessary nourishment which the average meal would contain. The story interested me and I wished to know of what this paste consisted. It was evident it was a concentration of some native foods which contained many varieties of vitamins. To my surprise, the officer stated that even with all his experience, he did not know what the paste was, and as far as he knew, it was a secret with certain tribes. I had heard about the small ration of rice a Chinese soldier could exist upon, but when it comes to volume, this particular type of soldier in Mexico will even take the honors from China.

There is a specie of cactus called the "Tunas cactus." It grows in abundance in an area about the city of San Luis Potosi. This cactus plant has a red fruit which grows upon the end of its leaves which appear something like small red tomatoes at a distance. The natives pick this fruit and carry it to their homes where they prepare it into a highly concentrated food. Many tourists call it candy, and upon eating it, find that it has a very pleasing taste but, due to the extreme concentration they find a small piece will be sufficient. The natives boil the fruit for many hours, in fact for many days. I was told by one elderly woman the process does not call for the addition of any other material, but by long hours of boiling, it will turn to a very heavy paste. It is then placed under heavy pressure and ready for the market. The finished product resembles cheese, but is many times heavier. Two of the usual packages will compare well with the average brick, both in size and in weight. Most of the product is consumed within the city, and about the only "Tunas" candy that gets away from this immediate district, is by the tourists who may purchase it from the native peddlars along the track as the train stops.

There is little refrigeration used among the common peons. Since they like meat, they must have some way to store it until it can be used. In many sections, the natives depend upon the ancient method of making

jerked meat. After butchering the animal, they will cut the meat in strips and hang it out in the tropical sun to dry. This seems to prove very satisfactory as the extremely hot rays of the sun soon cure it. Many of the Indians of the United States prefer this method, whenever they are given the opportunity. It is no uncommon sight to be traveling through the country and see strips of meat hanging on the fence awaiting the natural treatment of the sun. Such meat is hung up in the open at most Mexican markets. Sometimes it is covered by a screened case to keep the flies from it. Many of the pioneers of the northwestern United States still recall their early days when they, too, had to depend upon jerked meat.

Taxes in Mexico are very moderate, and even with the administration of the present national program, the



The Author Goes Native in his Dress but, "He Can't Fool Us"!

property owners seem to be well satisfied. I inquired from an American who owned a number of houses in Mexico City. This gentleman was an oil well driller and had spent most of the last twenty years in that country. He had married a Mexican woman and had several very fine children. He had built a home along the most modern lines which included a hot water system piped to all his houses located within the same block. With this system of heating he found his houses always had renters. Most homes in Mexico City have either fireplaces or small portable heaters. The taxes he paid upon his home, where his family resides, were very moderate, and far below the amount paid on an average home in any small eastern city of the United States. As to the taxes upon the other houses, he explained that they have a system where you pay a tax in proportion to the revenue derived from one's building. The per cent claimed for property tax was far below the most moderate figure that might be found within a great area of the United States national capital city. Home owning is encouraged by the cities, states, and federal government in Mexico. No doubt, there are plenty of property owners in other parts of the world, who, would be happy to be able to pay their taxes upon a per cent of their building's income, especially in the last few years.

Pancho Villa gained a very bad reputation in the United States as well as many foreign countries. He was a very shrewd leader, although he had but a few hours of schooling. With an army of freedom seeking peons he was able to carry out manœuvres which should win the praises of any leader of the masses. He was against the large land owners and corporations and wished to free the peons of the type of slavery which existed throughout most parts of his nation. He was an able leader, as no doubt General John Pershing will agree, and he kept his various armies intact under very difficult circumstances. Villa may hold a reputation, with many, of being a bandit, but there are parts of Mexico where you had better "smile" when you say it. He is a hero to many. Not

long ago I was presented with a quirt which was carried by Villa during much of his history-making career. I naturally value such a souvenir very highly. It was presented to me by a man who was very close to Pancho during his entire "bandit days."

This former aide to Villa feels that as generations pass, his former officer will be classed as one of Mexico's greatest men and given much credit for the freedom which the peons now enjoy. I had asked this officer if it was true Villa had a sweetheart who accompanied him through his battles. The officer's answer was in words similar to these, "They have done the great Pancho much wrong by their terrible stories. He was a great leader, and no other Mexican could ever have carried out the campaigns with such poorly equipped peons against the large hacienda owners. Villa did not harm the small rancho owners, and he did not feel it was wrong to take cattle and other food from the haciendas, as they had gathered their riches by the sweat of the peons' brows through many generations."

I had to interrupt, as my time was limited, and I wished to hear about the story regarding the sweetheart that some report Villa as carrying with him through his rebellion travels, so I again mentioned the señorita. Then he continued again.

"As to Villa's affairs with many sweethearts, the stories are all untrue. He was a great man and loved his family. Yes, my friend, there was one great woman leader with us. She was a beautiful woman and held great power over the army. She would insist upon being out in front of her soldiers and to lead them into action. No one knew her name other than the 'Brave Woman,' but of course my chief and I knew. But, my friend, she was no sweetheart of Villa, she was much smarter than Villa. She had what you call 'brains.' Maybe you will be interested to know she still lives, older but, just as wise and beautiful as when she led her peons. I shall take my friend to see her some day if it will please him."

My time had ended and I had to rush away. Yes, I was very sorry, as when I told this officer that I would

be back to get more of the story, and to meet the former Brave Woman, I really meant what I said.

It is thought that many of the most uncultured Indian tribes of the early era upon the continent, told the time of the year by the discoloring of the leaves, and the time of day by the length of shadows upon certain crude instruments similar to the sun dial. Such tribes as the Mayas, Aztecs, and Toltecs, had a system which students of that art of today can trace back, which described the weather of that particular era. The Aztec tribe had an immense stone which was designated as their official calendar. Upon this round flat stone one can see the carvings which can be deciphered at this modern day. This famous Aztec calendar is on exhibit in the National Museum in Mexico City. No traveler should leave the Mexican Capital without spending several days in this museum. Failing to visit the National Museum would be like visiting Washington, D. C., without going through the Smithsonian Institute.

Few people take into consideration, when examining the buildings of pre-conquest days, that the natives had no beasts of burden, and the heavy trucking was done upon the backs of Indians. It is explained, that is the reason, one can still go about Mexico and see the natives carrying such great burdens upon their backs.

While visiting the National Museum, you will have an opportunity to see the Sacrificial Stone. It is very heavy, but its size is rather small. It is covered with various Aztec inscriptions and has a groove in it which was placed there to carry the blood away. Thousands of Aztecs gave their lives upon this stone, and had their hearts extracted, to be dropped to the stone statues which represented the Aztec gods. It is said that in certain celebrations, many thousands would be marched before the Aztec ruler, and then to the sacrificial ceremonies. It will make you shudder and as you touch it, a feeling will come over you which words do not explain.

It would be impossible for me to ever forget one certain evening I spent in the southwest part of Mexico. It was here that I held a tiny human skull in the palm

of my hand. We were spending the night in a small village. The main character of the hamlet seemed to be the Indian chief of that section of the country. It was arranged we were to be his guests that evening. Our guide served as interpreter. After the exchange of many stories which seemed to be mutually enjoyed, our guide explained to the chief we had heard, that at one time, there existed a group of Indians, either in North America or South America, who had a method of embalming their captives, and shrinking their heads to one third of their natural size. The chief was then asked if he had ever heard of such a custom.

After seeing the poker-like face of the chief, I, at once thought that we were following the wrong lead. He then released some rapid-fire words in Indian dialect to our guide. He got up from his crouched position on the ground and entered the thatched hut. Our guide followed and as he neared the doorway he beckoned for us to come. We did. The hut was dimly lit with three candles, located before a crudely painted picture upon a tightly stretched hide. The picture resembled an Indian's head bedecked with colorful feathers, or some head dress painted in typical Indian colors. Later our guide explained it was the portrait of the chief's son, who lost his life in the Revolution. For which side we did not learn.

We stood up, in fact there were no chairs to sit upon, and the next move by the chief was watched by all. He had his back towards us, and he seemed to be taking something from a metal chest upon a high table. The cover dropped with a thud. The chief turned and walked towards me. He held a very unusual thing in his hands. As he handed it to me, I reached for it, not from a command from my brain, but evidently such as a person does when someone suddenly hands something to him. The next thing I knew, I had this miniature mummified head in my hands. The sight and feeling cannot be described. This head rested upright in my hands, and as it faced me in the blinking candle light, I could not help but tremble.

It was not a skull, bare of flesh, but a perfectly formed



They Seem to Learn Very Young in Mexico How to be Romantic and to Woo the Beautiful Senoritas.

head with jet black hair. It was probably four inches through the head. The head had been severed in such a manner that no marks were visible. I could not help noticing the close resemblance of the tiny head which I held in my hands, and the profile of the colored picture before the candles. The little head remained in my hands as I extended it out before me, so that the others might examine the object, too, but no one made any attempt to take it from me.

The guide relayed a message from the chief. It was explained that once upon a time a certain Indian tribe, which traveled about the lower part of this continent and the upper part of South America, had a custom of beheading their prisoners, and mummifying their heads. During the process of their type of mummification it would shrink the entire head in equal proportions. The young men of the tribe would seek to display the greatest number of these heads on sticks before their respective homes. The more heads displayed, the greater and braver he was considered. The guide also told us the chief explained that it was sometimes the custom of the Indians of that tribe to mummify their loved ones. The chief did not wish to answer any direct questions. I returned the head to him. He slowly and carefully placed the head back into the iron box. This time the cover did not slam, he allowed it to go down easy, as the tiny little head was now inside. I took one more glance at the painting behind the candles.

We walked out, then bade the chief good night. We walked slowly towards our rooms. No one spoke until we had covered quite a distance. I mentioned the resemblance between the picture and the tiny head, which I had held in my hands. They, too, had noticed it, and wondered if it was only in far distant days that certain Indian tribes had a way of preserving their dear ones, who had passed on to other "hunting grounds." Is it possible that such a thing is practised by the descendants of that old tribe in this modern day? The story must remain in this chapter of Facts and Fables, as it still must be classed among the many unsolved mysteries.



You, no doubt, have passed through these chapters without being bothered with long unpronounceable names but, to tell this story, I must include the names of two mountain peaks. Before you leave Mexico you will hear many stories about them. Legends have it that these two famous peaks are looked upon as man and wife. Mount Popocatepetl, or Popo for short, is known as the man. Beside this beautiful mountain, which appears at times like a gigantic ice cream cone, lies the White Woman, Mount Ixaccihuatl. You will hear varied stories but one native pointed to the White Woman and told me, "Way up there you can see the great lady, she lies there asleep, and as long as she just remains asleep and does not die, peace will always hover over Mexico." I looked, as he pointed, and I could see an outline of this mythical woman, showing that she was lying on her back. As I fastened my gaze upon her I could see an outline which would almost make any Hollywood model envious. Against the tropical blue sky one could see the outline of her head, her breast, as well as her slender waist line and feet.

"I'll admit one can see the outline of the woman," I told my friend, "but she looks as if she might be dead from this distance." This seemed to surprise the native and he replied, "No, señor, you must look again and you will see her breathe."

It might have been the heat waves from the tropic sun, or it may have been a temporary hypnotic spell caused by the eloquent description by this sincere native, but as I looked once more, I was astounded—I saw her breathing! Her bosom heaved with a fervor and passion that would put the modern day motion picture star in an amateur class. After this experience I can fully realize why so many superstitious natives feel that the great White Woman sleeps on.

As you, no doubt, have noticed, travelers delight in talking about oddities of their experiences, when they gather for a social visit. Probably one of the most famous stories is by Carveth Wells. It is very possible everyone has read or heard his story about fish that

climb trees. During one of my journeys to the tropical sections of Mexico I had an experience which I believe will allow me to enter the inner circle with these true tall-story tellers. It was my pleasure to be served a double decked toasted fish-pole sandwich. I can assure you that a fish pole sandwich has no equal.

In the tropics one will find bamboo trees, and as the young bamboo shoot first makes its appearance it is very tender and is sometimes prepared for food. The tender sprouts often taste and look like asparagus. As this shoot first rises above the ground, the growth is rapid and the tender stage remains but a very short time. In order to serve me this extremely odd dish, my host prepared some of these tender "fish pole" sprouts for a toasted sandwich. I doubt that your favorite cafe, has, as yet, included this special sandwich upon its menu. You will find it in the tropics.

Through past chapters much has been told about the historic and romantic old city of Monterrey. There was an incident I shall never forget. It took place upon the beautiful plaza in the center of the city. I motored in from Torreon to meet the Baron, and arrived in the early evening, just as the young men and women were gathering to start their usual evening parade around the plaza. The Baron was very much interested in these parades, and could never remain contented upon his hotel balcony, which was just across the street from the plaza, but insisted upon being present right in the heart of the activity. As usual there was a very large crowd that evening at the plaza.

During the evening we witnessed an advertising stunt that reminded us of Coney Island or the Pike in Long Beach, California. A man brought several large baskets, heavily loaded with small packages of gum, to the edge of the sidewalk where the boys and girls passed by as they carried on their regular walk about the square. The baskets were as large as clothes baskets and there were two small wafers of gum in each package. They were evidently sample packages. As the folks paraded around the plaza this gum man gave each one a free package.



A Street View of the Famous City of Guadalajara. In the Left Foreground One Can See the Glass Case of a Street Candy Merchant. They Move With the Shade. In the Street Background One Can View a Typical Native Taxi Stand.

They received a great thrill and all of them seemed to enjoy the treat. As they passed by our bench we could see them all chewing, boys and girls alike.

The church bell tolled out ten o'clock and the evening affair was soon over. But the next night the Baron asked me to accompany him once more to the plaza. The time for the parade came but except for a few other loiterers in the park no one showed up. The Baron could not figure out the delay, as not even a holiday, stops these regular evening plaza parades. Just then I noticed one of the tiny empty gum containers which was left from the "treat" on the evening before. I handed it to the Baron. He read the words upon the package and said, "Well! I guess we might as well go back to the room as there will be nothing doing here tonight." We started across the street to the Continental Hotel and about half way across the street the Baron remarked, "Funny, how some people will eat and chew stuff without reading the directions and know what it is all about." The evening was spoiled for the Baron as it was for the hundreds of young folks who usually parade the plaza.

The gum that the "high powered" publicity man had so freely given away upon the previous evening was a gum for medical purposes.

What would you think if the telephone rang and the voice on the other end of the wire quickly asked, "Say, how'd you like to make ninety-five thousand dollars?" Well, that is just what happened with me today. The voice on the other end of the line proved to be a friend of mine who owned a hotel. He then chuckled and said, "All right, come around for coffee at four o'clock this afternoon and you'll hear all about it." Needless to say out of curiosity I was present at coffee time to learn the joke.

The hotel proprietor handed me a letter and as I glanced at it I saw it was from Mexico City, and sure enough it gave the opportunity to make one-third of \$285,000.00, with little exertion. I shall pass on the

“opportunity” and give you the contents of the letter “just as it was” received by my friend.

“Mexico. D. F.,

Dear Sir:—

Due to a person who knows you and who has spoken very highly about you I have made up my mind to entrust a matter of such delicate nature to your good self, on which depends the future of my dear daughter as well as my existence. I am in Prison and sentenced for failure and I beg you to inform me, whether you are willing to help me save a sum of \$285,000.00 Dollars which I possess in Bank Bills inside of a trunk which is deposited at a Customhouse of North America. After I send you some undeniable evidence it is necessary for you to come over here and pay the expense incurred in connection with my prosecution so the embargo on my trunks can be lifted and thus be able to recover a trunk which contains a secret, and which cancels the baggage check that was given to me on checking my other trunk for North-America, and which is indispensable to withdraw the said trunk from where it is at the present. By way of compensation I would give you the *third part of the said sum*. Bearing that this letter should not reach you I shall not sign my own name until I receive your reply and shall then entrust to you all my secret.

For serious reasons which I will explain to you send me an air mail letter.

I beg you to please be absolutely discreet.

Due to the fact that I am in charge of the instructions of the inmates of this Prison I am able to write as I do with entire liberty.

For the time being I am only signing ‘L.’

I cannot receive your reply to this at the Prison but in case you accept my proposition you can send an air mail letter to a person of my confidence who will safely deliver it to me.

This is his address.

Arturo Garcia.  
'Hotel Uruguay'  
Ayuntamiento No. 168.  
Mexico, D. F."

Many years ago I received a similar "racket" letter from Madrid, Spain, but this was the first I had heard that the "prison letter" was being used upon this continent. The United States postal officials would go the limit to lay their hands upon anyone who used the United States mail to carry such swindle letters. During the time similar letters flooded this country from Spain, I was told that the United States officials found little, if any, cooperation with the Spanish officers to run down the culprits. Now that the racket has moved closer to prospective victims of the United States, with headquarters below the Rio Grande, it will be interesting to watch the postal officials of both Mexico and the United States, get in action to crush such shysters and racketeers. The United States government recently announced that great sums of money were annually extorted from the people of the States in such rackets, and the announcement carried a warning to all people to beware of any "get rich quick" propositions. If I were allowed to make one prophecy here, I would say that before this book is off the press, that President Cardenas of Mexico will have inaugurated a clean-up campaign to rid his country of men who prey upon the people of the United States with such rackets.\*

I have related the story about the tradition of how the natives were warned of the coming of the Spaniards, and about the light complexioned mystery man, who was

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\*Word has been received from Señor Luis Rodriguez, Secretario Particular to the Presidente de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, stating that the President, General Lazaro Cardenas, took a personal interest in the letter which the author reprints above and, then ordered the proper federal departments to apprehend everyone in Mexico connected with this "letter racket" and to carry on until it is completely wiped out.

supposed to have originated it. Wonders are in store for the students of early life who explore ancient ruins on the northern and southern continents. I shall tell another story which may prove interesting.

Down deep in some of the ancient ruins, they uncovered a large light grey colored slab of stone. It was so arranged, that it appeared as if it had been located against a wall. It was rather thin, but the characters upon it were about half life-like in size. Upon this stone is a character, which appears to have the clothing such as many Biblical characters wore. It appeared to be a loose flowing gown. Apparently the character was a man, and he was holding a baby in his arms as he knelt before a cross. I noticed that the engraving upon the stone showed the outline very clearly, even though the stone revealed the wear of time and ill handling. It is at present upon exhibition in the National Museum in Mexico City.

Is it possible, that in the days before Christ, they had a religion which may have used the cross as a holy symbol? There are just many questions which might arise when one gives the possibilities a thought, as to what might have happened upon this continent long before the so-called white men came here to settle and to "educate" the Indians.

Some time ago, Helen Stevens Fisher, of the National Farm and Home Hour of the National Broadcasting Company, interviewed me over their nation wide program with over sixty stations in tune. Mrs. Fisher asked me a number of questions pertaining to Mexico, and within a few days I was flooded with letters from both Canada and the United States. Never did I dream there would be so many listeners to the interview. It was necessary to dictate letters for weeks to get from under the many interesting letters. Almost every letter contained one or more questions regarding Mexico. It was apparent Mexico proved a very interesting subject. I was very happy, that not one letter accused me of being pro-sided. There were questions of every description which would almost cover any Mexican topic. Which

question, do you think, was asked the most? Well, to my surprise the most asked question was, "What makes the Mexican jumping bean jump?" And it was asked chiefly by the girls and women. Of course you can imagine, right off, the question which the boys and men asked the most times. Yes, you guessed it, it was, "Are the Spanish girls as beautiful as they are pictured?" The girls had their share of questions which sounded much like this, "Are the young men as romantic as they really show them in the movies?" One woman up in northern Canada, asked me to send her a Mexican hairless dog.

The jumping or the moving of the Mexican bean, is caused by the quick and sudden movement of a tiny worm inside the bean. The bean does not retain its "jump" but a short time, as this comes at a certain stage of growth of the insect, which is struggling for life within the bean. It is impossible for them to actually jump, but the very quick movement and roll give an illusion of a "jump."

I recall a story told me by an engineer several years ago. This engineer had been in Mexico as chief engineer for a large mining corporation. The company had erected dams across several small canyons, at or near, the base of a large one. The dams were so erected as to give ample water supply to their camp, and to hold the necessary reserve for a possible dry spell. There was a good sized Indian hamlet at the base of the canyon, where the canyon spread into a wide valley. It was many miles to a city, and in that particular territory distance was not computed in miles but in days of travel. A long rainy spell came, and the canyon was holding back a great amount of water behind the main dam which was just above the hamlet. It continued to rain and things were becoming critical for the engineer. If the water raised much higher, it might break the main dam and sweep the entire hamlet away, as well as ruin crops in the valley below.

There was but one chance, if the rain continued, and that was to find dynamite to blow up the smaller dams, so that it would allow the water to pass out through other canyons. He rushed to the hamlet to beg powder or



dynamite, as he had none at his camp. This was at a time when, if any native was found with a gun or ammunition, he would receive a severe penalty. The spokesman of the tribe, in the hamlet, made it very plain his people had no such thing as powder or dynamite, and knew of no place within many days' travel where it might be located. The engineer again told the chief of the great danger but met with no better results. The chief merely shook his shoulders and stated he would broadcast word through the streets so that his people might go to higher lands. The rain continued and the engineer returned to his camp very much worried.

The engineer had no more than returned, and was conferring with other foremen, when the tribe's chief rode up in front of the building, upon his favorite pinto pony. The engineer rushed out to see what word he carried. The chief pointed to one of the smaller dams above the camp, and then suggested that the engineer go up there at once, as he might find a way to save the homes and crops of his people. The Indian was very brief and rode back towards town.

The young engineer could not quite understand the chief's action, but decided to follow his directions, and after calling his aides made off for the first dam.

Upon his arrival, he did not see any one about, but his eyes caught something on the dam. He walked over and found it to be several cases of dynamite and a number of tins of black powder. The dam was blown up. The water passed into another canyon, and the homes, and crops were saved. No one knew where the explosive came from, and the engineer, after many years of silence said, "In fact, it was much like a gift from heaven and out of respect to the chief and his tribe, no one ever mentioned it."

High up in the mountains, away from Mexico City, one can find a very old group of buildings. Most of them are constructed of stone. There is a high stone fence about the large area. Within this wall there are several protecting walls, all made from stone. Through these walls one can locate holes left there for guns to offer

resistance and give protection. This mammoth construction is in a heavily wooded district. It is located at the edge of a very steep cliff, so that no attacks could come from that side. Within the powerful wall fences of stone, one can inspect the houses, the church, and the clearing which no doubt was used for gardens or in which to keep their animals. The word "mammoth" is the only word which will explain one's first sight of this place.

It is an old Monastery erected by the friars, nearly four hundred years ago. It was a trading post operated by the friars to gain what they could from the Indians. I was told that its erection in this out of the way location, served best to gather the gold and silver from the natives. If the walls, the floors, and the dungeon could only speak, there would be tales for many moons. A trip to this old Monastery will soon give "atmosphere" as to what might have taken place within its walls in conquest days. There are many stories handed down through the Indians, as to the terrible treatment received from the friars and the jesuits. Old Indians will tell about how the natives were placed in the dungeon if they would not carry out the wishes of the friars. The remedy that proved most effective to extract the gold hoardings from the Indians was to place them in the dungeon. Here they would be starved until life almost left their bodies. There were many ways in which the natives were cruelly tortured.

Regardless of what might be the truth, or what one's ideas may be, there is an excellent opportunity in visiting this place, to see the dungeons and torture chambers, which were so conveniently arranged in these old buildings. In this particular Monastery near Mexico City one can go down into the narrow hall shaped dungeons. Some are narrow, and some are so shallow it would be impossible to stand erect. They are damp, clammy, and jet black. Little time would be needed before one would go mad. There are stone openings to the floor above, which allowed the dropping of food down to the prisoners. Along the dungeon walls were rings that, no doubt, were used to chain the prisoners. If you have a weak heart, I suggest you do not make the trip through the portion

which is located below the ground level. Nevertheless, a trip to this very old Monastery will be of great interest. It will take but a few hours by motor from Mexico City. From the beautiful Reforma Boulevard, in Mexico City, to the dungeon of the old Monastery, will give you thrills as well as chills. By all means visit it!

There are, no doubt, times when home remedies come in very handy. I sincerely recall one such time. A group of us were far out from any city and I doubt if there was such a thing as a doctor within the scope of a day's travel. We wished for some remote views for our motion picture collection. We had found an ideal location. There were many varieties of cactus life, as well as everything else one might wish for typical rural Mexican pictures. We had decided to take some pictures among the cacti. Nowhere, had I seen such large cactus plants—and probably none so needle-like.

The gentleman arranging the views had the camera set, and asked me to walk past and among certain cactus plants, and make my way towards the camera. I went back to the position, from which I was to start, when he called to the cameraman for action. I started, and all went well, with the exception of having difficulty in ducking through the many cacti plants. I was almost through the routine he had shown me, and walking towards the camera, as he had directed, and as I neared the camera and the party, I noticed a strange expression on their faces. Just then the cameraman stopped, and the entire group rushed towards me. I was just beginning to wonder what I had done wrong when I felt something warm on my face. I raised my hand and it showed blood. I could not imagine what had happened as I had felt no injury. The other men were as startled as I, and I was amazed when I placed my hand to the side of my head and felt a bump the size of a hen's egg.

One of the boys rushed to the car for the first aid kit. We knew that this would not do any great amount of good, as we had no idea what caused it and why such a large bump formed so suddenly. There was but a small puncture of the skin but it continued to bleed very freely.

There was no use thinking of a doctor. The men insisted that I go down to the group of small thatched huts which could be seen in the distance.

Upon arriving there, we found there were but a few women and children about the place, as the others were away in the fields. I tried to show by my emotions, that I was not worried, but inwardly I was, as I thought my injury might not be from a cactus, but from some insect which had poisoned me, causing the large swelling.

One little old lady came over where we were, and after seeing the bloody condition I was in, beckoned me to follow her. I left the group and walked across the narrow street, which was covered with a silt as fine as flour. I followed her into the little shack which was her "Home Sweet Home." It was small but very clean. There were no chairs or boxes within the room, so she motioned for me to sit upon the floor. This made it more convenient as my new nurse was very small and very old. She patted me upon the shoulder, as much as to say, be patient and all will be well. The blood still trickled down my shoulder. The bump had continued to grow.

She left the room for a few minutes. While she was gone I could not help taking note of her home. The home consisted of only one room. There was no floor other than the hard dry earth. The roof was made of palm leaves. There was a large opening with a cowhide hung to one side for a door. There was no glass for the window, the pegs nearby held a bright colored serape which no doubt was a curtain when the weather was cool. Over in one corner was an open fire box which was used for a stove, and it reminded me of a blacksmith's forge. Over in the other corner was a box shaped bed. It did not look very comfortable but the linen was snow white. The table was very crude and held the cooking utensils.

It seemed ages, before my nurse returned, but I imagine it was only a few minutes. Every now and then one of the boys would stick his head through the door and see what she was doing for me. I felt very embarrassed sitting on the floor and having this small woman working over me. As she returned into the room she had her

hands full of some kind of mud, appearing as if she had been making mud pies. She pulled my head over and placed this mud over the wound. She held her hand over it so as to hold the mud tightly against my head. Later she withdrew her hand and the mud was left upon my head. About that time the mud started to draw as it dried, and it felt as if someone was pulling my head.

The next step was to remove the mud. She then washed the wound with some liquid, which smelled as if it was from her husband's favorite bottle. She then took what looked like some specie of a cacti leaf and sliced it. It appeared almost as juicy as a slice of watermelon. My nurse then took this watery slice and massaged the side of my head. After this was done, she again cleaned off my entire face and head with some milky liquid. She showed her pearly white teeth in a big smile, and I figured all must be well, and that she would soon be through. The last thing my nurse did was to go to the shaky table and return with a dish containing a dirty looking paste. She took it, and spread it over my wound, and rubbed it over the bump which had already showed a marked decrease in size.

She patted me again on the back, and made it known that it was all right, and that the bump would soon go away. Before getting up, I handed her a Mexican paper bill. She did not wish to take it. I had heard that many of the natives delighted to give aid to others and resented being paid for it. I was extremely happy, and as I got up I dropped the money into a pocket in her dress. At least, I thought she could buy a comfortable bed. She followed us to the car. The other man seemed as happy as I, and we started back towards the city giving up the idea of taking any more rural pictures.

As we motored back to the city, I could not help thinking of the great things that women accomplish in the homes. Regardless of what country one may be in, or how remotely located, the women always seem to have some home remedy which they can rely upon. Before arriving at our hotel late that night the bump upon my head had completely disappeared and there was no blood and

no pain. I was very happy and it pleased me much to think that this fine old lady would find the money in her pocket after my departure.

We arrived at our hotel, and I rushed up to the room to wash up, and to remove my blood stained clothing. I first removed my once white shirt and threw it over a nearby chair. As I did, I noticed something drop from the pocket. I picked it up! It was the folded bill that I had placed in the pocket of the little old lady's dress.

## CHAPTER XX

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

The National Revolutionary Party of Mexico has entered upon a program which will carry on present relations as well as promote good will between Mexico and foreign nations. The administration has selected men of outstanding ability to represent their country at the capitals of other nations. These representatives have been selected according to their ability and their loyalty to the administration.

Members of the government have told me they shall attempt to cultivate friendly relations with all nations on the face of the earth, without interfering with their interior functions, and without letting them interfere with those of Mexico. I was told they would carry out a policy of non-recognition of all foreign doctrines which tend to interfere with the national and international rights of Mexico.

You might say that the administration will be heartily in accord with a home neutrality program such as sponsored by the youthful and brilliant Senator Gerald P. Nye of the United States Senate. Mexico makes it known they strictly disapprove of any international wars, and will show interest only in warlike movements necessary for their own defense. They will offer their services in any way which may bring about a peaceful solution of difficulties arising between other nations; their interests, however, will be cordial, and disinterested as to other nations.

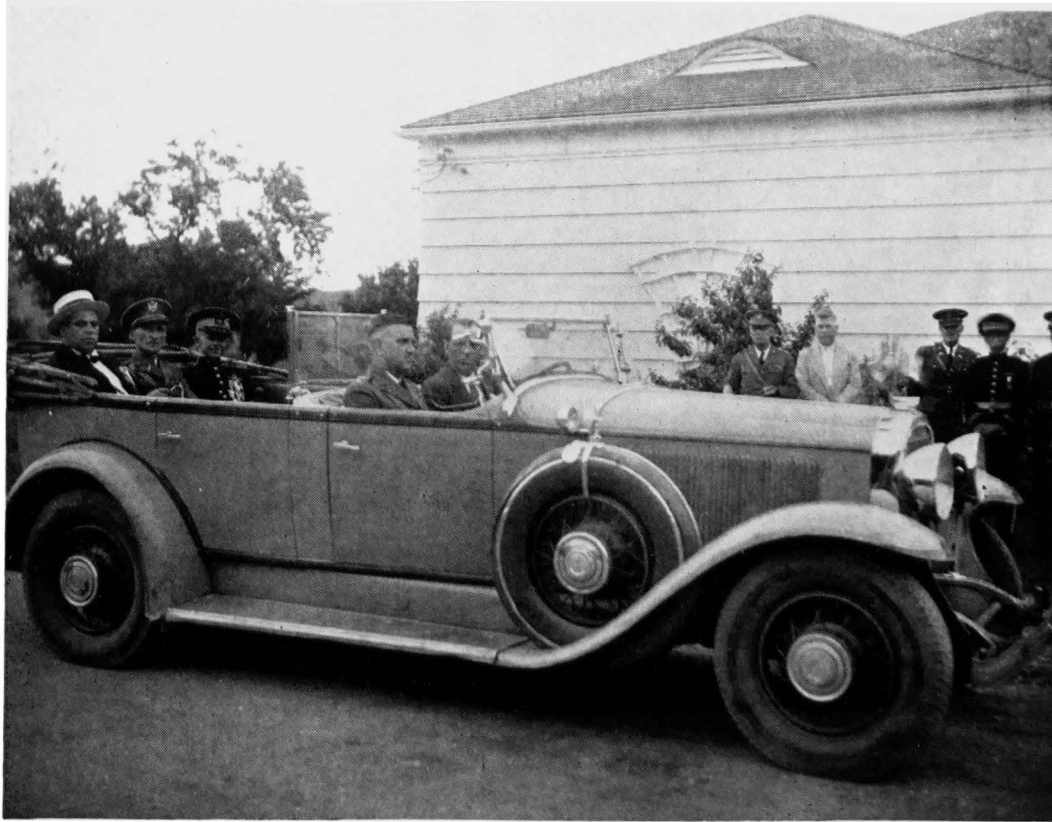
Mexico gives notice that all foreigners within their country will receive a guarantee of their safety, a guarantee within the provisions of their national laws. They wish it known that they will recognize legal elimination of difficulties with other governments.

Mexico is represented in the United States by one of the outstanding men in the diplomatic service. He is a gentleman who has made a great record within his own country before going into diplomatic work. His name is Dr. Francisco Castillo Najera. Dr. Najera established a remarkable record for himself during the Revolution and, being a doctor of medicine, he has accomplished untold benefits among his own people, especially leading a war upon tuberculosis. The ambassador has served his country in China, Belgium, Holland, Austria, France, as well as being minister to the league of nations. He accepted his post in Washington late in 1934. Dr. Najera is a very prominent member of the Pan-American Union and is looked upon as being one of the best authorities on conditions in either of the two western continents. His presence in the United States will do much to further existing good will between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Unlike many ambassadors, he packs away his diplomatic striped pants and when time permits, travels about the country and makes personal contacts with the people. That, no doubt, will do more for the promotion of good will than all the teas and banquets they can hold in diplomatic circles.

The United States has the Honorable Josephus Daniels as ambassador in Mexico City. Ambassador Daniels served at the head of the United States Navy under President Wilson. An up-and-coming, active individual from New York served as assistant under Mr. Daniels, when Secretary of the Navy. This gentleman was none other than Franklin Delano Roosevelt, later to become President. Upon taking the presidential chair he appointed his former "boss" to represent the United States in Mexico. This appointment, of course, did not come through their personal relationship of war days altogether as, no doubt, when President Roosevelt selected this southern gentleman, he knew he was selecting a man well qualified to take that post; a post which is one of the most important in the United States diplomatic circle.

When word came from the President that the Honorable Josephus Daniels was to accept the ambassadorship





In Automobile (rear seat) left: The Mexican Ambassador to the United States, Dr. Francisco Castillo Najera. Center: Colonel Irving Speed Wallace. Right: Colonel Roberto Fierro, Chief of the Mexican Air Corps. Left (front seat) Major Robert Kauch, U. S. Army Air Corps, Brooks Field, San Antonio, Texas. Clifford Reed at the Wheel. Mr. Reed Also had the Distinction of Driving President Roosevelt in the Same Car During a Recent Stop of the President in North Dakota.

to Mexico, great excitement prevailed throughout Mexico and especially at the National Capital. Because of a certain incident which happened at their seaport, Vera Cruz, back in the days when Daniels was head of the navy, the people resented his appointment. Soon people realized that he acted as Secretary of the Navy, and not as an individual, and found that he did not hold a "grudge" against them when he came to their Capital to represent the United States. It was believed by many that if he disliked the Mexican race, that he might return reports to his president which would not lead to the best international relations. The Mexicans of today wish to show the United States that they are a progressive and reliable nation. Mr. Daniels arrived at the Capital of Mexico and won the admiration of the Mexicans, and will go down as being one of the greatest ambassadors that Washington ever sent to Mexico. He will hold a ranking close to the very high standard established by the late Dwight Morrow.

It seems, during the visit of a group of teachers and students, from the States, the Ambassador made a remark, that it was apparent the present school system in Mexico showed the most progress towards the true fundamentals of education for the children, than had ever been attempted, or at least carried out.

Just what part of the talk seemed to create the protest by the Catholic church in the States, I do not know. I do know that the church asked the Ambassador to retract his statements or make an apology. Mr. Daniels told the press that he had nothing to apologize for. He was then asked to resign, not by the president, but by certain church groups. From that time Ambassador Daniels was the object in a fight carried on by the church. They asked state legislatures and the national congress to pass resolutions, calling for the resignation of Daniels, also to have the United States government intervene between the church and the Mexican government. During 1935 I happened to be in one of the state capitals in the United States. While there, the state legislature was in session. One of the leaders of the men's club of the

church, was in the city with the idea of asking the legislature to pass a resolution asking the United States government to take part in the religious situation in Mexico. This young man came to me and asked if I would refrain from taking any part or appearing before any committees in case he submitted the resolution to the legislators. I had just recently returned from Mexico and it was evident he thought that if I were called before a committee and reported conditions as I found them in Mexico it might interfere with his success. At this writing, Daniels still holds the post, and no doubt will, as long as he carries out the wishes of the present administration, and I venture to say, that if he is removed, it will be for the reason that President Roosevelt wishes his services in some very important European Embassy. Mexico and the citizens look upon Daniels as a friend.

It was my pleasure to have a very interesting visit with the Ambassador in his private office in the Embassy. The conversation was of many things. Upon the mention of the publicity regarding the incident, which so aroused the church, he told me that he was extremely sorry to hurt the feelings of any one, and that his work did not require him to take part, officially, in any religious controversies; and he expected to merely carry out the duties expected of him by the president and the United States government. Truly a great southern gentleman to visit with, and he impressed me as being kind, gentle, and thoughtful towards mankind generally.

That tall, slender chap from Little Falls, whom the Minnesotans claim as their native son,—Colonel Charles Lindbergh, is a favorite adopted son of the Mexican nation. They look upon the famous flyer not only as a great dare-devil flyer but as a friend. They all know that he met his bride for the first time in Mexico. At the time his first born son was kidnapped, reports came to Mexico that it was thought the kidnappers had flown to Mexico. The people of the rural hamlets as well as the cities became extremely interested, and wanted to do their part to weed out the criminal in case he might

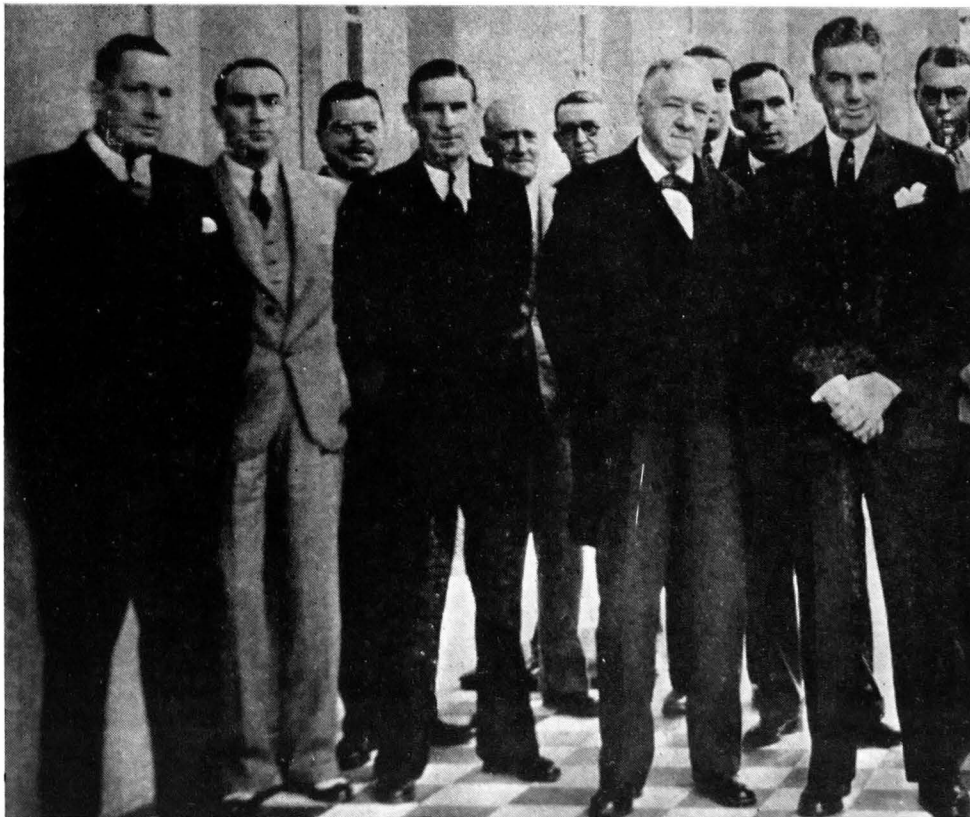
be within their country. They cried for leadership and for information which might start them out. If, by any chance, they had ever captured the criminal responsible for the kidnapping of their friend's son—there would have been no long drawn out trial.

Another gentleman who did much to create good will in Mexico was the late Will Rogers. They all liked him and it was apparent that he liked Mexico. He visited them many times and covered their nation by air. He often said the Mexican cowboys were the best ropers in the world.

Amelia Earhart Putnam aroused considerable interest in Mexico during the summer of 1935, when she made a flight from California to the Mexican National Capital, and returned to the States after a week's visit, with a non-stop flight from Mexico City to New York. Her flight, no doubt, created an interest which man might not be able to accomplish. This famous lady pilot, and holder of many outstanding records, won the interest of the Mexican women. Not only did she create an interest among the women for aviation, but for a desire to become better acquainted with the women of the United States. There is much room for the development of good will in Mexico, for the United States, as well as there is in the States for Mexico. If one travels in the remote sections he finds that certain bits of history, and happenings of recent generations have been handed down from father to son, and they have their own point of view as to some of the things which took place during the time the United States was reaching out and enlarging its domain. There is much room for the promotion of good will.

During July of 1935 the Mexican Air Corps carried out a good will flight which extended from Mexico City to Minot, North Dakota. The flight had the personal approval of the Mexican president. Colonel Roberto Fierro, federal air chief, headed the flight and also acted as the personal representative of the President, General Cardenas. The air chief was accompanied by three other flying officers.

A great welcoming celebration was held in the North



United States Ambassador Josephus Daniels Welcomes Earl Mack to Mexico City Where the Son of the Famous Connie Mack Presented a Group of All-star Baseball Players in Several Exhibition Games After the 1935 Season. Right to left (front row): Hon. Rex G. Tugwell Who Was a Distinguished Visitor in the Mexican Capital, Ambassador Daniels, Earl Mack, and Herb Hestor (extreme left) Special Representative for Earl Mack.

Dakota city, which brought people from many states as well as from the land across the Canadian border. It was a typical international affair, with the flags of the three nations very prominently displayed side by side. It was reported by one of the officials that over sixty thousand people visited the northern city to take part in the two day welcoming celebration in honor of the good will flyers. During the official welcoming celebration General Frayne Baker presented Colonel Fierro and his fellow officers with special medals for their outstanding good will flight.

The Mexican ambassador, Dr. Najera, went from his post at Washington, D. C., to be on hand as the famous Mexican air ace set his airship down on the airport in that little city near the Canadian line.

The United States government had Major Robert Kauch, Brooks field, San Antonio, Texas, head an aerial escort to the Mexican good will flyers during their entire flight while in the United States.

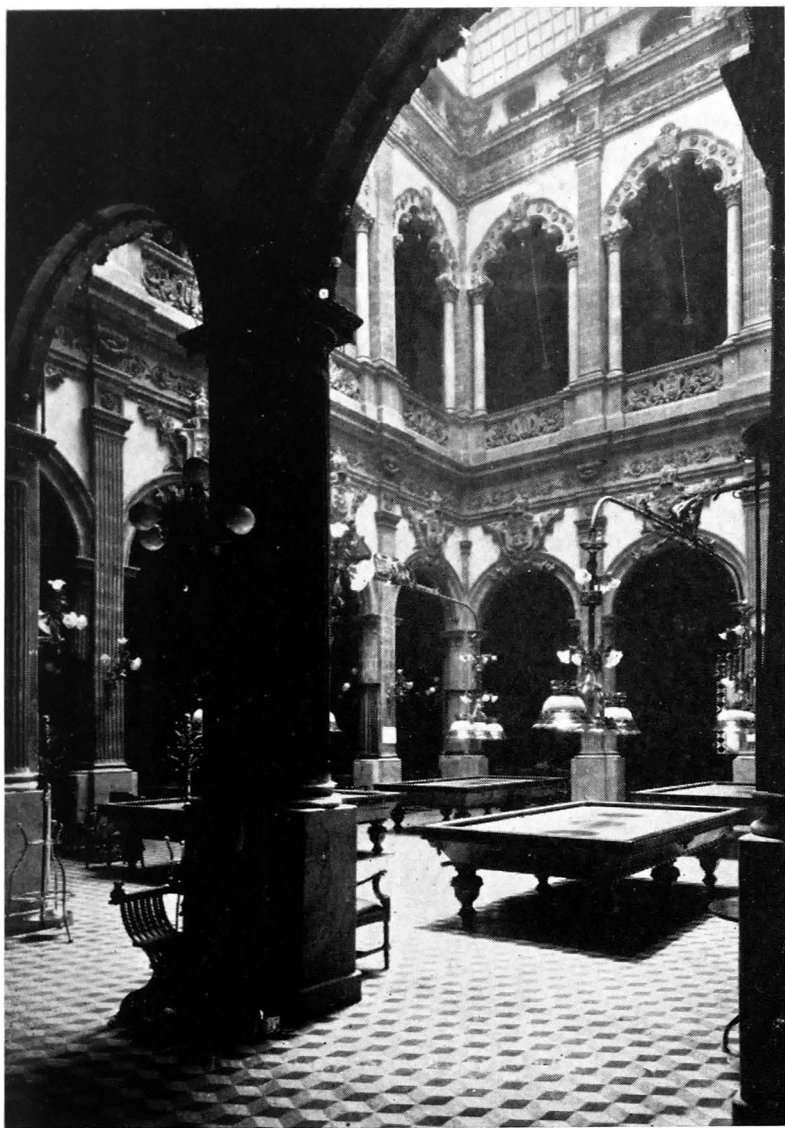
This was the first time that such a flight had been made to the northern part of the United States. This particular flight accomplished great things in furthering the good will between the people of the northern states and Mexico. Such acts between nations, as this flight, will develop a friendship which cannot be equalled in any other way. Colonel Fierro flew into the far North and won the great admiration of both the people of the United States and western Canada. It is apparent the Mexican people wish their foreign friends to learn the truth of conditions in the Mexico of Today, and then allow them to draw their own conclusions.

The students, who form a prominent part in the political life of Mexico, have much praise for the late Dwight Morrow. Sitting at a table in the Principal Cafe on Bolivar street, in Mexico City, I had a very interesting talk with a group of University men. It is in this cafe where one may find a group of students and especially football players at most any time. The average Mexican, especially the student, does not look with favor upon the very rich men. They feel that one should have

the opportunity to become financially independent, but not to such extremes, as where men have so much money they cannot even keep track of it. I could not help but ask as to why so many of the students held the late Mr. Morrow in such high esteem, as he was a very wealthy man. The youngest of the group advised me that because Mr. Morrow had done so much good with his money, would tend to make him a good type of citizen. Another one interrupted and said, "We think highly of Mr. Morrow; he did many fine things for the Mexicans; he was a true friend, and he willed 50,000 pesos to our University." That was the first time I had heard of his gift to the school, but it did seem wherever one went there was something Mr. Morrow had done for the people. It was not only the gifts, but it was to give his time and to actually associate with them, that won their hearts.

The Mexican people appreciate having foreign diplomats, as well as all students of foreign affairs, make a close study of their nation. They feel that the many revolutions, as well as the Mexican characters so often portrayed in fiction stories and motion pictures, have left very bad impressions regarding their country and their people, in many foreign nations. They welcome the foreign visitor and favor his personal visit and association with their citizens. The Mexican citizen feels that to know Mexico you really must see the country as it is today. They do not wish to carry on any colorful campaign for publicity in foreign lands, but feel that the most substantial policy will come from reports by ambassadors, to their country, as well as the truth of actual conditions carried back by the travelers. Mexican officials are forging ahead with their program, and offer no publicity campaign to counteract the one which is being made against their administration in foreign countries, especially the United States.

The late William Wrigley, the chewing gum king, saw the great possibility in gaining a "personal feeling" with the Mexicans which might make his name very popular. The chewing gum King announced he was going



A Billiard Room in a Mexican Casino.



to build a home in Mexico City. He had them built all around the continent as well as on islands. In Mexico City there is a small group of palatial homes owned by families from the States and referred to as the "American Colony." They expected Mr. Wrigley would select a site within the Colony. When the construction started, it was found he had selected a place just across the mythical line which was considered the border of the American Colony, only upon the Mexican residential side. When they asked Mr. Wrigley why he had selected such a location outside the American district, he told them, "I have a home in the United States and if I am going to build in Mexico I am going to build it among Mexicans." It is easy to see that this won the respect of the natives even though, it is said that the famous advertiser resided within its walls but a few weeks. Up until his death, the house was at all times held in readiness by a corps of native servants.

Little does the average citizen consider the part Mexico may play in case there is an invasion of this continent. Regardless of where the invasion might be made it is apparent that Mexico will take no little part in offsetting the attack, no matter if it be in Canada or the United States. If we are to look at the map of the continent we will realize that, if the United States were to be attacked, the enemy's best strategy would be to enter the continent at some point on the Mexican coast line. There is not the least chance any foreign country may negotiate with Mexico, regardless of concessions, to allow them to establish a headquarter base with which to attack the United States either by air, land or water.

It, no doubt, would be very difficult for Mexico alone to defend its own country, in case the time ever arises when a foreign nation wishes to attack them. This is not probable, as the United States is not apt to stand by and allow any foreign nation to attack either the shores of Mexico or Canada. Mexico could soon muster a defense, both in the air and on land. Their navy is too small to give much space here. It is very evident Mexico relies much upon their air corps to defend its long coast

lines. It is possible for their airships to cover all the important harbors from the main air base up in the mountains at Mexico City. Colonel Roberto Fierro is chief of the Mexican air corps unit. He has been connected with all branches of aviation since it first assumed interest in Mexico.

Each year the United States allows two flying cadets from Mexico to come to the United States and take a routine aerial course. This is often given at San Antonio, Texas. The present personnel of the Mexican air corps unit consists of approximately 200 flying officers. Their equipment consists of many types of airships, mostly of American design, and their new program calls for the establishment of one of the best fitted air units in the world. One of the first acts performed by President Cardenas was to separate the air service from the regular army and to place Colonel Fierro in charge.

If the invasion were made along the Mexican shoreline with the ultimate plan of reaching the United States, the Mexican air corps would play a most important role. No doubt, even if the United States air force went to their aid, the Mexicans would be able to "fly their country" with better results than a visiting air man. The mountain conditions in most parts of Mexico bring about a condition of flying weather which is experienced in few places. I do not wish to convey the impression that I think the flying officers of the Mexican air corps, excel in ability over the United States officers. Indeed not, but the point I wish to bring out is, that the conditions found in Mexico are much different from those found in the States. With a cooperation between the flying units of the two nations, it might avoid the destruction of our men and planes such as came about during the time the army took over the air mail. I look for the day when the United States and Mexico will show greater cooperation in their peacetime aerial development. One would almost admit it appears feasible that the units of both countries would fly side by side in case either had the misfortune of entering war, especially by invasion of this continent.



Avenida Cinco de Mayo Street. (5th of May Street.) Mexico City.

The Mexican soldiers will offer much resistance to any enemy who might attempt to invade their lowlands as well as their mountain country. To be successful the invading army must enter a territory which best favors the type of fighting native soldiers prefer. The Mexicans would be able to offer a resistance that would hold the strongest army invasion off until it would be possible for the great strength of the United States army to come to their support.

May the dove of peace everlastingly fly over our borders as well as along our coast lines. If the time should ever arise when some nation should invade the North American shores, may it be possible that the flags of our three great countries, United States, Canada and Mexico, will be unfurled in one united defense.

THE END

## APPENDIX

STATE NAMES AND THEIR ABBREVIATIONS.	CAPITALS	POPULATION OF STATE CAPITALS.
Aguascalientes . . . . .	Ags.	Aguascalientes . . . . . 62,000
Baja California (Northern Territory) . . . . .	B. C. T. N.	Mexicali . . . . . 15,000
Baja California (Southern Territory) . . . . .	B. C. T. S.	La Paz. . . . . 8,000
Campeche . . . . .	Camp.	Campeche . . . . . 20,000
Chihuahua . . . . .	Chih.	Chihuahua . . . . . 45,000
Chiapas . . . . .	Chis.	Tuxtla Gutierrez . . . . . 13,500
Coahuila . . . . .	Coah.	Saltillo . . . . . 43,500
Colima . . . . .	Col.	Colima . . . . . 21,000
Federal District (Nat'l Cap'l.) . . . . .	D. F.	Mexico City . . . . . 1,250,000
Durango . . . . .	Dgo.	Durango . . . . . 35,000
Guerrero . . . . .	Gro.	Chilpancingo . . . . . 7,500
Guanajuato . . . . .	Gto.	Guanajuato . . . . . 16,000
Hidalgo . . . . .	Hgo.	Pachuca . . . . . 41,500
Jalisco . . . . .	Jal.	Guadalajara . . . . . 176,000
Mexico . . . . .	Mex.	Toluca . . . . . 37,000
Michoacan . . . . .	Mich.	Morelia . . . . . 36,000
Morelos . . . . .	Mor.	Cuernavaca . . . . . 9,500
Nuevo Leon . . . . .	N. L.	Monterrey . . . . . 155,000
Nayarit . . . . .	Nay.	Tepic . . . . . 16,000
Oaxaca . . . . .	Oax.	Oaxaca . . . . . 32,200
Puebla . . . . .	Pue.	Puebla . . . . . 115,000
Queretaro . . . . .	Qro.	Queretaro . . . . . 32,300
San Luis Potosi . . . . .	S. L. P.	San Luis Potosi . . . . . 75,000
Sinaloa . . . . .	Sin.	Culiacan . . . . . 27,400
Sonora . . . . .	Son.	Hermosillo . . . . . 20,150
Tabasco . . . . .	Tab.	Villahermosa . . . . . 15,600
Tamaulipas . . . . .	Tamps.	Victoria . . . . . 16,750
Tlaxcala . . . . .	Tlax.	Tlaxcala . . . . . 2,650
Veracruz . . . . .	Ver.	Jalapa . . . . . 34,500
Yucatan . . . . .	Yuc.	Merida . . . . . 97,750
Zacatecas . . . . .	Zac.	Zacatecas . . . . . 19,900

INTERESTING STATISTICS SUPPLIED THE AUTHOR  
BY MEXICO'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED  
STATES, DR. FRANCISCO CASTILLO  
NAJERA, AT THE MEXICAN EM-  
BASSY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Population: 16,552,722 (1930 Census).

Area: 1,969,365 square kilometers.

Total Exports in 1933: \$364,967,039.00 (Mexican Currency).

Total Imports in 1933: \$244,475,056.00 (Mexican Currency).

Annual imports from the United States:

59.94% of the Nation's total imports, estimated at \$146,544,-  
913.00 (1933) and consisting of: machinery and tools, auto-  
mobiles and accessories, chemical and pharmaceutical products.

Annual exports to the United States:

47.91% of the Nation's exports, estimated at \$174,871,105.  
(1933) and consisting of: silver, zinc, gold, copper, lead,  
coffee, crude oil, gasoline, skins, sisal, fruits and vegetables.

Railroads: 23,811 kilometers, other lines under construction.

Highways: 42,539 kilometers (Federal and State).

All-weather roads: 10,967 kilometers (Federal and State).

Roads to be constructed under the Present Administration:

Projects for highway construction are so vast in scope that  
there is not an accurate estimate. The road program includes,  
however, completion of the International Pan-American high-  
way and a complete network of roads from coast to coast.

Automobiles:

59,628 automobiles (1932)

5,296 buses, and

20,702 trucks.

Airplanes: 153 (1933, all kinds).

Crops:

Sugar: 3629,445,834 kilograms per year (1930)

Corn: 2043,384,973 " " "

Wheat: 278,040,193 " " "

Beans: 131,840,352 " " "

Coffee: 41,255,779 " " "

Rice: 72,391,538 " " "

Mineral resources:

Silver: making 36.35% of the value of the total mineral out-  
put. 2,170,306 kilograms were produced in 1932, valued at

\$61,748,678.00. During the year 1928, silver reached the highest point of production, that year's output being valued at \$131,336,521.00.

Oil: In 1933, the total output was valued at \$90,636,000.00.

**Total mineral production:**

During the year 1929, the mineral output was valued at \$373,342,398.00. In 1932, its value was \$169,886,662.00.

At present, however, it is believed the industry is constantly increasing its production and is expected to regain its former status.

**Live stock:**

Asses:	4.56%	of the total, valued at \$511,850,768.00
Cattle	70.55%	" " " " " " 60,627,438.00
Horses:	8.36%	" " " " " " 51,344,868.00
Mules:	7.08%	" " " " " " 29,521,411.00
Hogs:	4.07%	" " " " " " 32,885,556.00
Goats:	3.51%	" " " " " " 22,852,873.00
Sheep:	2.32%	" " " " " " 16,214,373.00

Border line between the United States and Mexico: 2,727 Kilometers.

Standing army: 39,979 troops, and 9,059 officers.

Air force: 137 officers, in 1935. (on duty)

**Tourist Trade:**

Tourist Trade in recent years increased considerably, although the rate of increase is difficult to determine due to the fact that the years 1934 and 1935 registered an inflow of tourists without precedent.

NOTE: The Metric system is used in Mexico. A kilometer is about 2-3 of a mile (.621). A kilogram is slightly over two pounds (2.205). At this writing the Mexican dollar is worth a little more than 28 cents, U. S. money.

### MEXICAN FESTIVAL DATES

These festival are held in Mexico every year, at the same dates, with the exception of the religious celebrations, the dates of which vary slightly from year to year.

February 5th.—Constitution Day. Popular festivals throughout the entire country.

February 23rd.—Merida, Yucatan and Mazatlan, Sinaloa,—Mardi Gras festivities.

- February 24th.—Amecameca. Traditional celebration at Sacromonte.
- February 28th to March 7th.—Chalma. Traditional festival,—Indian dances.
- April 3rd.—Mexico City. Traditional celebration at the Viga Canal. Boat races at Xochimilco.
- April 10th.—Ixtapalapa. Traditional celebrations.
- April 16th.—Villa Obregon (formerly San Angel). Traditional festival of the "Amapolas" or poppies.
- May 1st.—Celebrations over entire nation. Labor Day.
- May 5th.—Entire country celebrates in commemoration of the victory of Puebla against the French.
- June 24th.—Traditional bathing fiestas. Swimming contests.
- August 15th.—Papantla. Great Indian festival. Games of pre-hispanic origin, among them the famous "Volador" or flier.
- September 8th.—Los Remedios. Native dances.
- September 8th.—Tepoztlan. Traditional festival in honor of the idol "Tepoxteco," of the Aztec mythology.
- September 15-16th.—Independence Day. Popular celebrations throughout nation.
- October 2nd.—Mexico City. Opening of the bull fighting season, which continues each Sunday until April.
- October 12th.—Hispano-American Day. Known as the "Dia de la Raza." Celebrated throughout country.
- November 7th.—Agriculture and Cattle Fair. Mexico City.
- November 20th.—Anniversary of the Revolution. A very popular celebration over entire nation.
- December 8th.—Patzuaro. Popular festival. Typical native dances which create wide interest.
- December 12th.—Gustavo A. Madero (formerly Villa de Guadalupe). Traditional festival with native dances.
- December 16 to 31st.—Mexico City. Traditional celebrations called "Posadas."