

1: Full text of "Travels in Mexico and life among the Mexicans"

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At seven we reached Atzacatzalco, a little town, and after leaving this pueblo again took our way through beautiful plains, with fields of peas in bloom bordering the track, and green levels stretching far away on either hand, dotted with feeding cattle. Above and beyond were grades and curves, and the hills were ascended one after the other, and we dipped into other valleys and got glimpses of the country farther on. Up to Tlalnepantla the rich and easily-worked soil would have caused a Northern farmer to open his eyes, for there was not even a stone to sharpen the plough upon; it might be said that there were no ploughs either susceptible of being polished by friction from stones, for here these primitive farmers plough with a stick, as in times most ancient. One small valley we passed through belonged, with its surrounding hills and a gem of a lakelet in its centre, to one estate. Though the railroad cuts along the borders of a worthless hill, still the wealthy proprietor of this vast estate obliged the company to pay for a right of way. There is room here for some reflection upon the rapacity and ignorance of some of these Mexicans, who throw every obstacle in their power in front of the wheels of progress. Cuautitlan, another small town, reached in about two hours from Mexico, is much resorted to as a place for festive gatherings. Here the bull, the "noble patriarch of the herd," is taken from an uneventful life of inaction in the field, and permitted to try his prowess against the valiant Mexican. A flaming placard announced that there would be a bull-fight in this place that evening, "Esplendida Corrida de Toros en la Villa de Cuautitlan," when there would be sacrificed Cuatro Tremendos y Bravos Toros. A procession of beggars here invaded the train, and brought with them the odors of a dozen bone-boiling establishments; they also exhibited for our inspection a greater variety in deformity and mutilation than many a hospital can show in a year. These loathsome evidences of their claim upon humanity they thrust beneath our noses, expecting us to pay them for the privilege of inspection. After we had departed, and the strong breeze sweeping through the car had permitted us to indulge in a long breath, one of the engineers remarked that the civilizing effect of the "iron horse" was already being made manifest, "he had heard of several of these beggars having been run over. It has been a question among old residents in Mexico whether it would be better to leave the extermination of these wretches to the slow advance of the railroad, or to pass laws for their suppression and extinction. A most speedy way of killing them off has been suggested, which has the countenance of enlightened communities: At the hacienda of Huehuetoca. Mexico, the engineers of the "Central" have availed themselves of a more magnificent piece of engineering than they themselves could have afforded to undertake, "a work dating from the beginning of the seventeenth century, "the great cut of Nochestongo, an immense gap, said to be three miles long, and in places two hundred feet deep. Utilizing the work of more than two centuries ago, the railroad thus secured an easy egress from the great mountain valley, and proceeds by easy grades to the country beyond. The end of our ride on the railroad was at the small hamlet of Salto, for rails had not then "been laid much farther on; and we left the train and took to horses, which had been telegraphed for and were awaiting us. These animals we mounted, after many adjustings of stirrups and saddles, and galloped off in the direction of Tula. We were a picturesque crowd, with our Mexican saddles and accoutrements, our revolvers and blankets; though the novelty of my position, on the back of a horse I had never met before, rather interfered with my enjoyment of the scene. In five minutes our whole party was enveloped in a cloud of dust, so that all one could do was to cling to the saddle and let the horse steer his own course. We soon reached the Tula River bridge, where three solid piers of stone were in readiness to receive an iron bridge that was being put together on the banks, and where six hundred men were at work in the little vale. They were under the intelligent direction of a contractor, Mr. Carrigan, who successfully managed this large body of Indians and half-breeds, and was pushing the work ahead rapidly. A common laborer on the road receives about thirty-one cents per day; and this amount, large as it is, he successfully manages, when he gets it, to squander in riotous living. On our return, the next day, two huge derricks, which we had not seen before, were in position, ready to swing the iron bridge into place; three days

later, it was resting upon its bed of masonry, and in less than two weeks more the engine had crossed it on its way northward, and was snorting "Buenos dias" to Tula itself. The workmen lived in little huts, made of the branches of trees and the leaves of the maguey plant, just large enough to shelter them; and at a point on the river they had TULA. In the huts, and beneath bowers of branches, Indian women were quietly engaged in making tortillas and in other domestic duties. Looking upon this peaceful scene of activity, I could not help thinking of what a gentleman, an American long resident in Mexico, had said to me, coming up on the train from Vera Cruz: The scenery was mainly that peculiar to the dry hills, except where the aqueduct traced its fruitful course, or in the river-bottom. Now and then we were obliged to turn aside for an unfinished culvert, or walk our horses over frail bridges of brush, earth, and poles, and occasionally the "Cuidado! In this town we found friends to welcome us, for it was the headquarters of the superintendent of construction and his party. Here I found a few friends who had left New York with me two months previous, and who had come on here while I stopped in Yucatan. Surrounded by hills of apparently basaltic rock, the little city of Tula is compactly built of stone, taken, probably, from the ruins of Indian cities. It has a pleasant little plaza, containing a garden of flowers, with a fountain bubbling up in the centre of a stone basin. The town was formerly of great importance to the Spanish invaders and settlers, and here they built their most holy and noble cathedral, dating if we can believe the inscription on the wall from the year One especially, of the Virgin supporting the dead Christ, is less a caricature than is generally seen in these holy pictures. A wall, that once served the purpose of defence, surrounds this great cathedral, and building and enclosure are well worth a visit, even in this land of churches and chapels. Above the city, on a hill overlooking two valleys, a ridge about a mile in length, are the ruins of buildings said to have been erected before even the Aztecs came to this country. In the year , according to Prescott, who follows the native historian, Clavigero, the Toltecs arrived in this valley and commenced their city; they abandoned it in the year , and the Chichimecs took possession in , and eventually the Mexicans, in Here the last tarried for one hundred and twenty-nine years, took quite a breathing spell, in fact, and then went and founded the city of Mexico. It will thus be seen that the ruins of Tula have great antiquity. Prescott states that the Toltecs are the first people of which we have traditions, coming from a northerly direction. They entered Anahuac Mexican valley probably before the close of the seventh century. They were well instructed in agriculture and mechanic arts, and invented the complex arrangement of time adopted by the Aztecs. The noble ruins of religious and other edifices are referred to this people. Their shadowy history reminds one of those primitive races who preceded the ancient Egyptians. After four centuries, the Toltecs disappeared as silently and mysteriously as they came. It was at the beginning of the eleventh century, if we may credit the Indian historian, Ixtlilxochitl, that the seeds of disturbance were sown in the hitherto peaceful kingdom of Tollan, and all through the illicit love of the then reigning monarch, Tecpancaltzin, for a woman, a daughter of Papantzin, one of his nobles. The sin of Tecpancaltzin, according to the historian, brought with it its punishment, and during the reign of his natural son, Meconetzin, the Toltecs were destroyed as a people, not only through internal dissensions and famine, but in a great battle waged with an invading nation from Xalisco. They were scattered in every direction, but have been traced mainly southward. The discovery of pulque, the national beverage of Mexico, dates from this epoch, and is said to have been made in this very region. Upon examining the ruins on the hill, previously mentioned as commanding the town, we found that some one had been excavating there. I then recalled the account given by Charnay, the French archaeologist, in which he pretends to have unearthed temples and palaces on this very site. Imagine a palace composed of rooms about six feet by eight! Such were about the dimensions of the apartments referred to, and which we photographed and rambled over that day. In the Plaza are some great stones, taken from the ruins of the Toltec city. There are three colossal sculptures, perhaps of Caryatides, standing erect, and another lying down; this last is in two pieces, and was formerly united by tenon and mortise, even as I found the adornments on the palace at Uxmal. Near the office of the railroad superintendent is a great stone ring, like those found in the ruins of Chichen-Itza. At the door of the cathedral is a beautiful baptismal font,â€”at least, that is its use now,â€”taken from these same Toltec ruins. Doubtless, nearly all the buildings here were made from stone taken from the Toltec city, as you may find sculptured stones used for the pavement of courts, inserted into walls, etc. I have thus roughly sketched the old city at which the great

railroad arrived in April, It does not need a more prophetic eye than belongs to ordinary man to discern the result of the opening of a country so rich in mineral and archaeological wealth. For a thousand years man has lived in this country,â€”a thousand that are chronicled,â€”and no one knows how many previously. The works of his hands lie scattered throughout valley and plain, crest many a hill, and adorn many a secluded vale. The time is coming when these buried cities shall again see the light. Tradition has it that here the great culture hero, Quetzalcoatl, developed the civilization that raised the Toltecs above the level of their neighbors. Here is pointed out that famous "Hill of Shouting," whence the "God of the Air" sent his summons and commands over the entire vale of Anahuac. Here were those celebrated gardens, in which grew cotton ready dyed in various colors for the loom, and those famous crystal and feather palaces. Some say that Quetzalcoatl was a native of the East, and came from over the ocean. For him, indeed, has been claimed nearly every nationality on earth, and he has been by turns a Welshman, an Egyptian, and even an Irishman; but, as it is expressly stated that he was a man of peace, this last supposition is hardly tenable. The Hill of Bells,â€”Cerro de las Campanas,â€”where the Emperor was shot, is conspicuous near the city, and the objective point of many a pilgrimage, now that the railroad has made it accessible from the capital. Situated southeast of Tula, and about forty miles distant from Mexico City, are other ruins intimately connected with Toltec history,â€”the pyramids of Teotihuacan. Both during their residence at Tula, and after the disruption of their empire, when a remnant of the Toltecs turned their faces in this direction, these pyramids were considered by them as the nucleus of a holy city, Teotihuacan, City of the Gods. Their kings came here to be crowned, and here dwelt their priests; but though their traditions undoubtedly refer to these pyramids, yet they are doubtless of pre-Toltec origin. These are the principal pyramids, but there are also many smaller mounds and pyramidal elevations, which nearly surround the larger ones, and line a broad roadway, called the "Street of the Dead. Both are composed of rock, stones, cement, and pottery, and their outlines are hardly any more sharply defined, at the present day, than an ordinary steep-sided hill. The vegetation of aloes and creeping vines which covers their sides contributes to hide the pyramidal outline, and the facing of dressed stone, with which their sides were once probably encased, has been entirely removed in the lapse of time. The summit platform of each pyramid once supported respectively images of the sun and of the moon, covered with gold, and glowing so brightly as to guide the worshippers on their way to the valley to visit this most holy place of ancient times. In the western face of the Pyramid of the Moon we saw an opening, which is supposed by some to lead to hitherto unexplored treasure vaults deep down in the body of this vast. By creeping on the hands and knees through this narrow passage down an incline for about twenty-four feet, one has the satisfaction of reaching a pozo, or well, about fifteen feet deep. Farther than this no one has yet penetrated; yet it is safe to say that this aperture was left by the ancient builders of this pyramid, and not made by treasure-seekers, as is shown by the carefully cut and smoothed walls of the passage and well. Two great peaks rise from the distant ridge of enclosing hills, one exactly south and the other north, and a line drawn from one to the other of these pyramids passes exactly over the apices of both. There may be nothing in this, yet it struck me as a remarkable coincidence, as I verified my casual observation with the compass, standing on the summit of the Pyramid of the Sun. South of the Pyramid of the Moon, and running along the western base of that of the Sun, is the wonderful avenue called El Camino de los Muertos,â€”the Road of the Dead, or Micoatli, lined on either side with tumuli. These mounds have been a still greater puzzle to antiquarians than the pyramids, yet it would seem that the ancient appellation applied to the place, "Path of the Dead," would explain their object. These heads of clay or terra-cotta, so grotesque in feature and singular in design, are so abundant that one can hardly wander over a freshly-ploughed field without treading on one. No two of them, it is said, have ever been found alike in feature, and this would seem to bear out the theory that they were designed as images of the kings, priests, or minor rulers. Garcia Cubas, in his study of these pyramids, likens the insignificant Rio Teotihuacan, which flows near, to the Nile, and the Camino de los Muertos he calls another Memphis; in fact, he finds here a duplication of the pyramids of Egypt. But as this was written a dozen years ago, the worthy man may have changed his mind by this time, and may now view them differently. That portion of the plain of Teotihuacan immediately about the pyramids is rather sterile, but about the little village of San Juan, where clear streams have their birth, near an ancient templo, the soil is fertile, and the dwellers there seem contented and happy. At

all events, they are contented and lazy, and it is only by very active skirmishing that one may eventually capture a boy as guide to the ruins, and it requires equally hard work to find a horse. Travellers have wondered, as we wonder to-day, at the unlimited supply of these "antiquities," as the fields are actually full of them, and we discovered many as we rode over them on our horses, and many others we bargained for with the natives. My companions on this occasion were the Rev. Butler, Methodist missionary to Mexico, and Mr. Brocklehurst, an English gentleman, who was also with me at Teotihuacan, and who has since written a very instructive book of travels. Our mission was to rescue an imprisoned native preacher who had been unjustly incarcerated. Him we found in jail, an elderly Indian, with as mild a countenance as it is possible for one of these natives to have. He had but one eye, and those who were instrumental in having him placed in durance vile had taken advantage of this fact to creep up, as he was riding along one day, and shoot at him from his blind side; failing in their object, they hastened off and lodged a complaint against himâ€”for not allowing himself to be shot decently and in order!

2: In Praise of Mexican Inventors - Taki's Magazine - Taki's Magazine

WE left the great city at six o'clock in the morning, when the air was cool, and before the sun had risen far above the snow-capped volcanoes that guard the valley, gliding over a smooth road-bed, through level fields of grain and grass divided by hedges of maguey, past immense savannas where flocks.

I AWOKE, one morning, on the banks of the Rio Grande, the great river separating the two republics of the North, with twenty-five hundred miles between me and the city from which I had departed five days before. I had left it in the gloomy twilight of an evening in May, on the first day of that month of disappointments. O the kaleidoscopic changes of that ride by rail! We left New York with hardly a tree in blossom; in Western Pennsylvania, the cherries, peaches, and pears were bursting into bloom; in Ohio, they had hidden their skeletons of branches in sheets of pink and white; and in Indiana and Illinois, as the great road trended southward, foliage and flower vied in its display of verdure and efflorescence. Night fell about us in the centre of the famous Horseshoe Curve, partially veiling its glories and its beauties; but before the second day had drawn to a close we had reached the Mississippi, had crossed its miracle of a bridge, and had entered the city which stands at the confluence of our mightiest rivers, St. Louis. Thirty-six hours and a thousand miles parted us from the great metropolis of the coast; but we did not stop here, for a train was in waiting in the great Union Depot, and it was but a step from Eastern to Western track; another iron steed was harnessed into our carriage, and in another hour we were dividing the mists that lay above the Missouri prairies. When I sought my berth that night, the third of the journey, we were still speeding across the boundless Indian prairies; but when I awoke, next morning, the beautiful plains, with vast herds of cattle feeding on them, and covered with flowers of every color, proclaimed our entrance into Texas. Diagonally across this grandest of States we drew a southward-trending line, and the thousand pictures that danced before our eyes that appeared, vanished, and were replaced by others, which in turn waltzed away into space were seen through the crystal plate of a hotel-car window. We ate, we played, we slept; we awoke refreshed, to renew the blissful experience of the day that had passed, with an ever-recurring change of scene. It is at San Antonio, one hundred and fifty miles from the Rio Grande, that one first enters a really Mexican settlement. Beyond San Antonio, running south, the great inclined plane of Texas, which slopes to the Gulf of Mexico, and which is fertile in the northern and central portions of the State, becomes more sterile, and is covered with chaparral, of cactus, yucca, and mesquit, vegetation anything but attractive, though shading a peculiarly sweet and nutritious grass, which renders this region desirable for the cow-boy and ranger. It is not my purpose to describe other country than that pertaining to Mexico; yet in Texas we find ourselves in a former province of New Spain, and at San Antonio in an ancient Mexican town, set down in the centre of a very pleasant and fruitful region. The scenery of this section, though of the finest, is less attractive to me than its history; for here were established, as early as 1690, by monks coming up from Queretaro and Zacatecas, those frontier missions of Mexico. The "Mission Period" lasted from 1690 to 1821, or so long as the Spaniards held possession of Mexico; but at the opening of this century, Texas, although a province of New Spain for one hundred and fifty years, was almost unknown to Americans. Then came the inevitable trouble between the hardy and independent citizens of this remote province and the military rulers sent to govern them from Mexico. After the massacre of the Alamo, in 1836, the Mexicans lost men, and courage, and territory, until the last was finally entirely wrested from them, and the limits of Old Mexico fixed at the Rio Grande, instead of the Rio Sabinas. But, except to pause a moment to gather up these scattered threads of history that connect San Antonio with the country we are about to visit, we have no cause to linger here; our destination is Mexico. Let us return to the Rio Grande. The Mexican monks pushed their religious conquests into the Indian country, founding fortified posts as far east as San Antonio; but there was no permanent settlement on the Rio Grande until 1765, when the Presidio of Laredo was established. Herds of cattle and horses gradually extended over the intervening country, and to the south and west; but at the breaking up of the colonies, in 1803, these became the prey of the Indians, or ran wild, and gave rise to great droves of mustangs, which were in later years found grazing here in countless numbers. So complete became the desolation of this southwestern section that, when General Taylor marched with his army from Corpus

Christi to the Rio Grande, in , it is said that not an inhabitant existed there. It was not till that the repopulating of this portion of Texas commenced, when the mustangs were caught or killed, and the foundations laid for that great enterprise of stock-raising, to which alone this arid region is adapted. Over this apparently worthless territory the stock-raisers of Texas are now quarrelling bitterly, and running fences in every direction, one owner alone having above one hundred miles of barbed wire around his ranch. Along the entire length of the treacherous Rio Grande, there are few natural passes through the sterile hills that guard its banks. Laredo is situated at one of these, and is the objective point for the great railways, which are shooting their steel shafts across the Border, and which take no heed of men or towns, but seek for passes with natural advantages. It is the largest town in Webb County, which has an area of fifteen hundred square miles, and lies along the river. Its climate is mild, though trying, and cattle are pastured throughout the year, though only about one tenth the county area is fit for cultivation. Laredo itself contains about six thousand inhabitants, constantly increasing in number, and the American element yearly gaining on the inert and useless Mexican. Every town on the Rio Grande has its counterpart on the opposite side of the river, and so there is here a new and an old Laredo. One, the American, is busy, prosperous, progressive; the other, the Mexican, is idle, lifeless, and gone to decay. Yet, notwithstanding that the American Laredo has such an undesirable neighbor, it is advancing with mighty strides, dragging after it the moribund carcass of its sister town, which it is all but resuscitating, in its own efforts to enter into a new and quickening life. It is an American town engrafted upon a Mexican stump, but which might have been a yet more vigorous shoot if it had been a seedling in virgin soil, instead of a nursling with decaying roots. There are few beautiful buildings in Laredo, but these are ambitious ones, such as the court-house and jail, which cost nearly sixty thousand dollars, and those of the several railways. If I were writing of the Laredo of five years hence, I should speak of handsome and substantial structures, for these are destined to be built. The Mexican character of the town is visible in its plaza and church, the former treeless, and the latter more barren of ornament than is usual in the houses of worship in Catholic Mexico. The town has a bank, several second-rate hotels and first-rate bar-rooms, many large mercantile houses, an "opera-house," a ten-thousand-dollar school fund, telephones, and water-works, and electric lights in prospective for the very near future. Yet, withal, Laredo is set down in the midst of a landscape that is absolutely heart-rending in its dreariness, and rejoices in a Main Plaza. It is hot, but that is nothing; it is windy, but that does not signify; yet when heat and wind combine, and the one scorches the Rio Grande sand until it is fine grit, and the other hurls it into the air in whirlwinds of dust, then the dweller in Laredo muffles his head and curses his unhappy lot, while the temporary sojourner curses likewise, but departs. But for the heat, and the sand, and the fleas, and the Border Mexican, it would be pleasant to live in Laredo, if one were not obliged to gaze continuously upon its joyless scenery. But as Laredo is the "gateway" to the promised land of Mexico, one need not remain here if he choose to go farther, for here two great international lines cross the Border and invade Mexican territory. One hundred and sixty-seven miles west is Corpus Christi, the Gulf terminus of the "Mexican National" railroad, while to the north is San Antonio, connected with Laredo by the "International and Great Northern. Thence it will be continued southward by the "Mexican Southern," a concession controlled by General Grant, and eventually may penetrate the confines of Guatemala, and even Central and South America. With a management presided over by the greatest general of our armies, and the skilful organizer of our railways, it is possible that within a decade of years one may obtain, over the "Gould System" of roads, a through ticket from New York to Panama, or from St. All possibilities seem limitless, after an inspection of the great lines of the Southwest, thrown into Mexico through the force of genius and enterprise. The muddy Rio Grande was bridged by the railways but little over a year ago, until which time it had always been crossed by ferries. It was in the dry season; at that time it was but a gentle stream, meandering sluggishly between its sandy banks, and which a man could almost wade across. It endured the ignominy of being spanned, without remonstrance; but as the melting snows fed its mountain sources, far away in Colorado and New Mexico, and its multitudinous branches swelled its current to a torrent, it then, in the expressive language of the West, "just humped itself," and bore those bridges triumphantly away to the Gulf on its turbid bosom. But it is not always that man proposes and river disposes, for the structures of iron and stone now built will be able to defy old Rio Grande in his wildest mood. The bridge we crossed, belonging to the "National," was

built, it was said, in eight days. The distance from Laredo to Monterey, our destination, is one hundred and seventy miles, for the road does not directly approach it, as land is worthless here, and a road must zigzag over the country, and cover a good deal of it, in order to get some return for its outlay. It would seem that Nature intended the broad and arid Rio Grande valley to be forever a dividing line between the two republics; though steam and electricity were things not taken into account in the original plan of the continent, so that excellent roads now span otherwise impassable areas, and conduct to fertile fields beyond. The frontier is crossed at about seven in the morning by the daily train which reaches Monterey at six in the evening. On the Mexican side of the frontier the luggage is examined by gentlemanly customs officials, and later on the road a polite young man makes pretence of peeping into your valise; but further than this there is no inconvenience, and you would not know that the smoothly-running train was not in the United States. The "National" is a narrow-gauge three feet , but the cars are wide and comfortable, and those of the first class contain reclining chairs. For three hours the passage is through a desolate and forbidding country; then the mountains, offshoots of the Eastern Cordillera, show their crests, always fantastic in shape, and toned by distance into amethyst and purple. They present every variety of outline: This mesa has perpendicular walls, a thousand feet high, it is said, and a surface of nearly a thousand acres. To the top the only access is by a narrow, zigzag path, which only a man, or a donkey, can ascend. And if a man is very much of a donkey, he cannot get up at all. Richly has he been repaid for whatever sacrifice he may have made in leaving the stately halls of the Emerald Isle,â€”with such others of his countrymen as occasionally condescend to honor America with their presence,â€”as not only has he gained to himself rich store of gold and pesos, lands and cattle, but even his name has undergone a transformation. Now, why does not Mexico entice thither more of the sons of Erin? What have we of the United States to offer in lieu of such distinction as this? We can, indeed, bestow upon them the paltry honors and emoluments of office; but what avails this to the Celt, whose noble nature spurns all lucre as dross? Let our rulers look to this. Let them at once enact that every immigrant be addressed as a "Don"; else New York may lose many influential citizens, and Castle Garden become a howling wilderness! At the station of Palo Blanco we are in the midst of a region of upland, and many small towns are passed on the mesquite-covered plains, the principal of which are Salado, Lampazos, and Villaldama; but they are not on the railroad, but nestle far away at the foot of a hill, or in a plain where a darker green indicates cultivation and gardens. Mines reputed wealthy in galena and silverâ€”or in traditions of themâ€”give a certain importance to some towns, and Bustamente, sixty miles from Monterey, is celebrated for the products of its looms. Hacks were in waiting to convey us to the city, which is a mile distant from the station, and to which also a fine tramway leads. Perhaps that enterprising American who built the tramway from the railroad station to and through the city, whose expenses are about a hundred dollars a day, and who is constantly experiencing annoyances from the civil authorities,â€”being obliged, among other things, to carry a policeman on every car, who promptly returns every man ejected for nonpayment of fare,â€”rejoices exceedingly that his lines have been cast in such a pleasant place. It is presumed that he expects to recover a fair interest on his investment; and perhaps he will, if the powers that be cannot find a pretext for confiscating the line, and turning it over to some deserving native,â€”it being well known to the Mexican that the American has great constructive skill, but no executive ability. Everybody rode at first, from the novelty of the thing, but everybody did not pay; and doubtless the proprietor of the line realized the difference between his position and that of the owners of Northern street railways, whose patrons pay a six-cent fare for a five-cent ride. But the Mexicans are older, as a people, than the dwellers of the North, and perhaps more competent than they to deal with grasping monopolies. Monterey lies on a fertile plateau enclosed by spurs from the Sierra Madre Mountains, at an altitude above the sea of sixteen hundred feet, and at a distance, in a direct line, from Mexico City of about four hundred and fifty miles. The scenery about Monterey is attractive, especially noteworthy objects being the mountain peaks. To one to whom the Hispano-Mexican architecture is a novelty, the city must seem quite attractive, with its enclosed courts blossoming with flowers; but types of its buildings may be found in several of the earlier chapters of this volume. The climate is equable and salubrious, and in the gardens and orchards are found fruits of the South, as well as of the North. Like Chihuahua, it carries on its commerce chiefly with the United States, and since the completion of the railroad this has grown rapidly; the population has nearly

doubled in the past decade, and now numbers forty two thousand. This last-named building, on a hill to the west of the city, is a prominent landmark, not only in the suburban scenery, but in the history of modern Mexico. In September, , the American army of the North had advanced as far into Mexico as Monterey, the capital of New Leon, and the key to all the northern provinces. In the city was the Mexican general, Ampudia, with 10, men, and this force the Americans, under Taylor, though only 6, strong, assaulted in their stronghold. They commenced the attack on the 21st of September, and after fighting desperately from street to street, assailed from house-tops and terraces by the populace, as well as by the regular soldiery, they penetrated to the central plaza. Its location, in a fertile valley supplied with large springs, which pour forth a great volume of water, was most advantageous for trade with the Indians. The streams from these springs flow through half the town, and about their banks are clustered the mud and cane houses of the lower classes. In a stroll, one morning, I encountered a full company of soldiers industriously washing their clothing, and the while it was drying bathing their persons in the swift waters. A thing that will strike a stranger as anomalous in Mexico is, that though every shop in every city keeps and sells vast quantities of soap, and though everybody in the neighborhood of a stream is constantly washing, both himself and his garments, yet every person of the lower order is as dirty as though just dipped in a city sewer. As this fact has come under my observation through thousands of miles of travel, I have at last come to the conclusion that personal ablution in Mexico is done by proxy; that is, that certain ones are hired to exhibit at the lavatories, and thus save the credit of the more respectable of the community. A great effort has been made, of late, to bring Monterey forward as a health resort, and pamphlets by the thousand, the work of some interested, though injudicious author, have been circulated, praising the city to the skies. There is certainly much here to recommend the place to the tourist. Its buildings are old and quaint, its central plaza delightful, its altitude above the sea sufficient to insure a pure and healthful climate, and it has, a few miles away, some very remarkable mineral springs. Because there are no American hotels of note, the food is vilely cooked, and the streets, over which said invalid must be jolted, and the walks, are broken and full of holes. There are no attractions in the suburbs to which an invalid would take pleasure in walking, for the city is completely begirdled by the huts of the lower classes, whose squalor and misery are not exceeded in any other city of Mexico. Six miles distant from the city, and a mile from a station on the "National" road of the same name, are the hot springs of Topo Chico. As I have previously remarked, one needs to forecast events at least five years, in writing of Mexico in ; and it may seem uncharitable to mention that the accommodations for the suffering invalid, who has been lured by the seductive pamphlets to these waters of rejuvenescence, gushing out of the "Paradise" aforementioned, are utterly wretched. With good hotels, one at the springs and another in the city, Monterey may some time claim as many visitors as its Californian namesake. In advance of the railway, and on its completion, there had been a great influx of Americans into Monterey, and the streets were tolerably full of disappointed fortune-seekers. They came here as to a new country, little realizing, until too late, that this very city was old when our republic was born, and that the Mexican, both Spanish and Creole, possessed an instinct for trade and a love for lucre as keen as the shrewdest Yankee in our country. Beyond establishing a few cheap bar-rooms, they had not accomplished much in the matter of business, and even though these charged a real for a glass of beer or lemonade, they did not seem to be making money. Race prejudice is stronger here than in the interior, for the Border States have suffered more; and if any one imagines that the Mexican is disposed to allow the American to make a dollar, except by superior skill, he misunderstands the prevalent feeling. He is quite willing el Americano shall spend his own money in the building of railroads, tramways, and hotels, but he will resist strenuously any attempt to capture Mexican trade.

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