



MEXICAN PLAZA, FOUNTAIN, AND CATHEDRAL.

FACE TO FACE WITH THE MEXICANS.

CHAPTER I.

A NEW HOME AND NEW FRIENDS.

ALTILLO! Saltillo! Saltillo!"

These piercing cries rang out again and again on the still morning air in the long ago from the lips of a terrified Tlaxcalan boy away up in the Sierra Madre Mountains.

But what do they mean?

As is well known, Mexico is a land of song, romance, and tradition, and these are inseparably intertwined in the lives of the people. Every noted spot has its legend, which descends not only to posterity but also to strangers. As the tradition about the founding of Saltillo lends something of interest to a sojourn of several months in that city, I tell it as it was told to me; in doing so reserving the right to say that, like most traditions, it has a decidedly made-to-order air.

The little Indian boy before mentioned had an aged, infirm, and blind old uncle. Now, it was a strange fancy of this blind man to take a stroll very early every morning, and it was the duty of this little nephew to hold him by the hand as a guide to his steps, as well as to amuse and entertain him on the way.

The spring known in Saltillo as *El ojo de agua* (the eye of water) breaks boldly forth from the craggy rocks, and in its fall transforms itself into a pool of considerable depth. The water is as cold as ice, and shimmers and glistens in the white sunshine as it reflects on