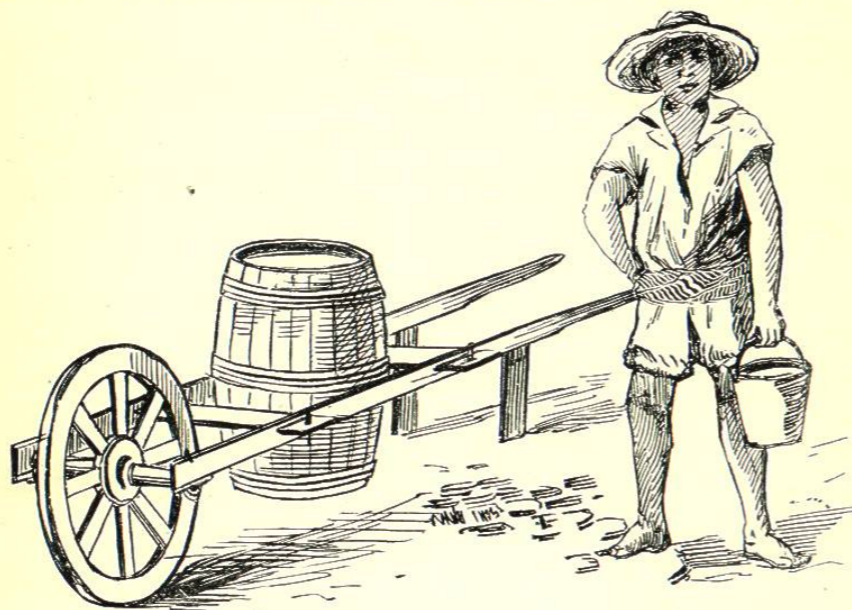


faces of all satisfaction was evident that one belle had not arrived before the others.

The Rio Concho and the Rio Florida flank Santa Rosalia on either side, and from them open ditches run through the town, supplying water for domestic purposes. Policemen are stationed at intervals to prevent children from playing in the water, the water-carrier here as elsewhere being an important factor of domestic happiness and comfort. The Rio Concho is so well utilized for irrigating purposes



WATER-CARRIER OF SANTA ROSALIA.

that the haciendas for thirty miles on either side are amply supplied with water. The absence of timber along the streams is noteworthy, the only forest tree in this section being the cotton-wood. This fortunately occurs in abundance, and furnishes fuel.

In towns the size of Santa Rosalia, hotels are not yet considered necessary to the well-being of the inhabitants, the *mésón* supplying their place. Below will be found the "Notice to Travelers," as I saw it in that old *adobe* town. This and the water-spouts jutting out like giant arms across the street, afforded equal diversion.

"NOTICE TO TRAVELERS.

"Persons who wish to lodge in this *mésón* will subject themselves to the following rules :

"1st. The house is opened at 5 o'clock A. M., and closed at 10 P. M. Only in urgent cases will these hours be altered.

"2d. Feed for animals will be supplied at reasonable prices, but outside animals will not be received.

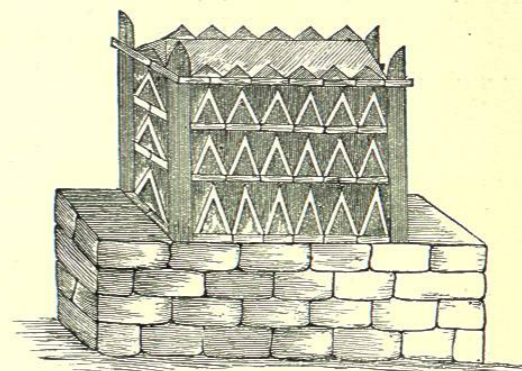
"3d. The prices for rooms are—for single rooms three reals per day, for double rooms four reals (fifty cents) per day. For each room, guests are entitled to two animals; all in excess of two will be charged three and a quarter cents per head per day for each animal. This charge is for standing room only, feed being extra.

"Carriages, wagons, and other vehicles will be charged one real per day, each.

"4th. The owner of this establishment is not responsible for objects lost from the rooms of travelers, or animals, or anything else, unless directly delivered to the care of the manager or left in the house."

The rooms at three reals per day were in front, and those for four, in the rear, near the horses.

The *patio* of this *mésón* had numerous posts in the ground, which I was assured were placed there for theatrical purposes. In the center of the open square was the only public hall of the town, and at the end, quite near the horses, a stage had been constructed with movable scenery, having its sills lashed to the floor by maguey ropes. On gala nights a canvas is stretched over the poles, as a cover; and with numerous lights, and the customary decorations, a brilliant effect is produced.



TOP OF KITCHEN CHIMNEY IN SANTA ROSALIA.

With many regrets my two weeks' delightful sojourn at the hospi-

able home of Dr. and Mrs. Charles Tarver terminated, and the journey to the capital continued.

Jimenez is the first station, situated in the midst of a vast plain, and contains but one or two solitary houses. Parral, a fine mining district, is about fifty miles distant, and has already attracted the attention of American enterprise.

Villa Lerdo is the next station; the town proper, however, is located about two miles distant, but conveyances are always there to transport passengers on the arrival of trains, and the railroad company has a fine eating-house there. It is located in the State of Durango, in the "Laguna Country," generally known as the best cotton-producing region, the soil and climate being so favorable that the plants need renewal only once in several years. From thirty to forty thousand bales of cotton are annually shipped.

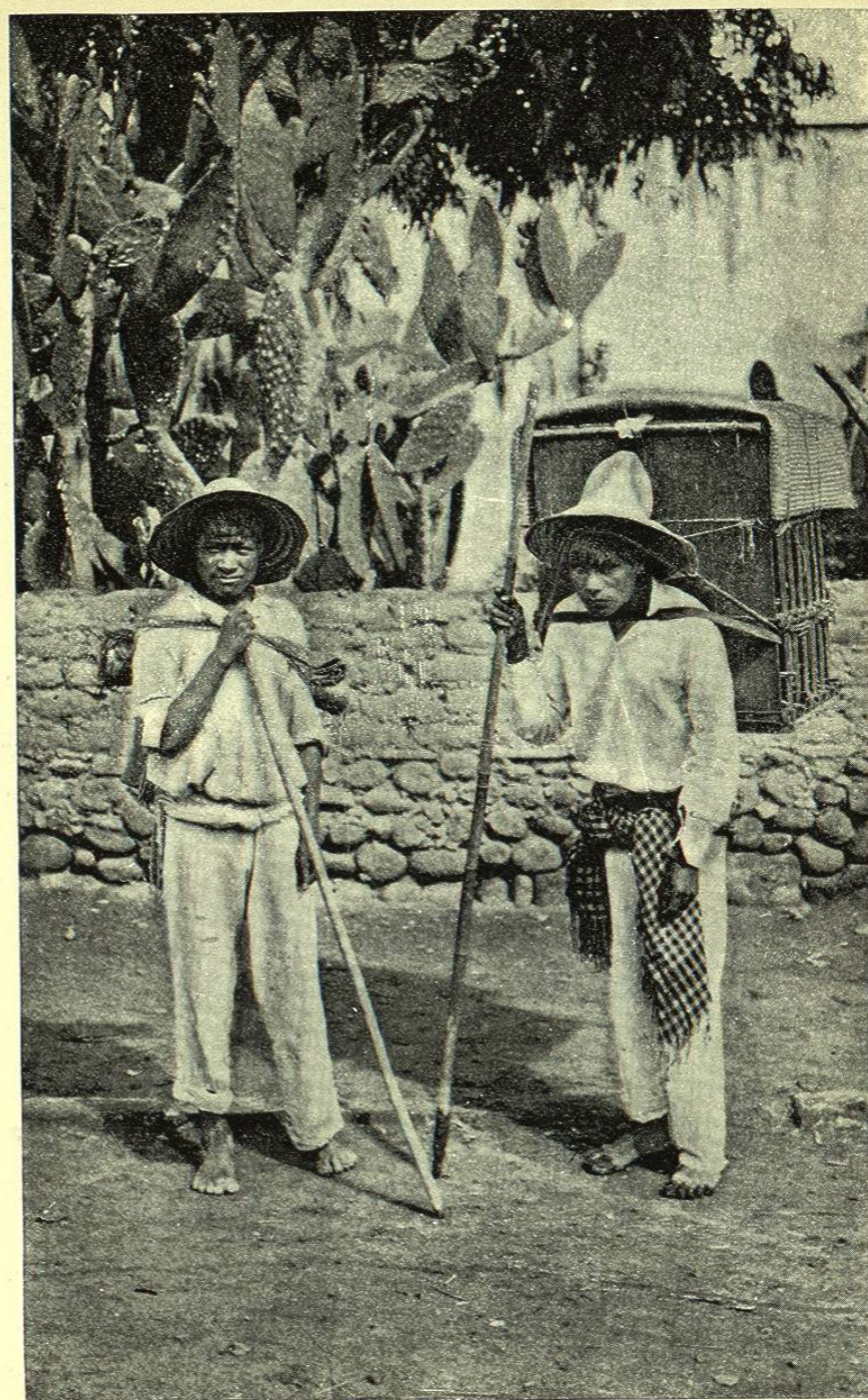
The capital of the State is Durango, more than one hundred miles away.

After leaving Villa Lerdo, we have more green valleys, more water, and stronger evidences of the fertility of the country. Both the types of people and the face of the country change as we go farther inland. More of the pure Indian blood is visible.

Boundary landmarks are seen on either side of the railway, two or three feet high, built of adobe or stone, and having octagonal-shaped, bright-painted caps. They more resembled grim tombstones, leaving off the colored caps, than the purpose for which they were constructed.

As we speed along the vast table-lands, over the smooth broad-gauge Central, all looks restful in its solitude. But such dreary stretches of country, without apparently an inhabitant! Now and then an Indian, black as charcoal, stands motionless, crook in hand, in the midst of his little flock, gazing at the swiftly advancing and receding train—his big hat tilted back, framing his face—his clothing of *manta* giving him a ghost-like appearance.

For centuries the table-lands have been the chief highways and avenues of commerce. They are strangely modeled, and extend over a territory perhaps fifty to one hundred miles in width from El Paso



WENDING THEIR WEARY WAY.

to the *tierra caliente*, near two thousand miles, as smooth as a floor, broken only now and then by a river or *arroya* or *barranca*. Mountains on either side rise and tower nearer or more remote as the table-land narrows or widens. The mountains are dome-shaped and suggest a striking analogy between nature's economy and the structural skill displayed by man. Mountains and churches are alike dome-shaped.

There is an absence of large and navigable rivers, inland lakes and other water-courses. But there are many beautiful valleys. After a dreary desert of alkaline sand, parched by scorching winds, round the turn of the road appears a lovely vision of a sweet and peaceful valley, with a picturesque village or city resting in it like a jewel in its setting.

After leaving Fresnillo, a once widely known mining community, now in disuse, we come upon Zacatecas, the highest point and the largest city between El Paso and the capital, having an altitude of about nine thousand feet, and containing nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants. Having crept, as it were, along the smooth table-lands, not suspecting the nearness of this grand old city, its sudden appearance was a revelation to us, with its towering domes and glistening turrets, its lofty chimneys announcing its vast industries of silver mining and coining.

The principal streets run through a deep ravine, following its widenings. Cross streets, lined with domes and spires, and picturesque dwellings, climb the mountain sides. The houses are built of stone, brick, or adobe; all except those of cut stone being frescoed in bright colors which contrast strangely with the substantial character of the buildings. The Cathedral has an elaborately carved façade. The Mint, the Custom-House, and many business houses are of cut stone, porphyry being mostly used. The Alameda has two drives and two promenades, the latter in the center with rows of trees between and stone seats along the outer lines.

This distinctively Mexican city has now been invaded by the American innovations, street railways, telephones, and electric lights.

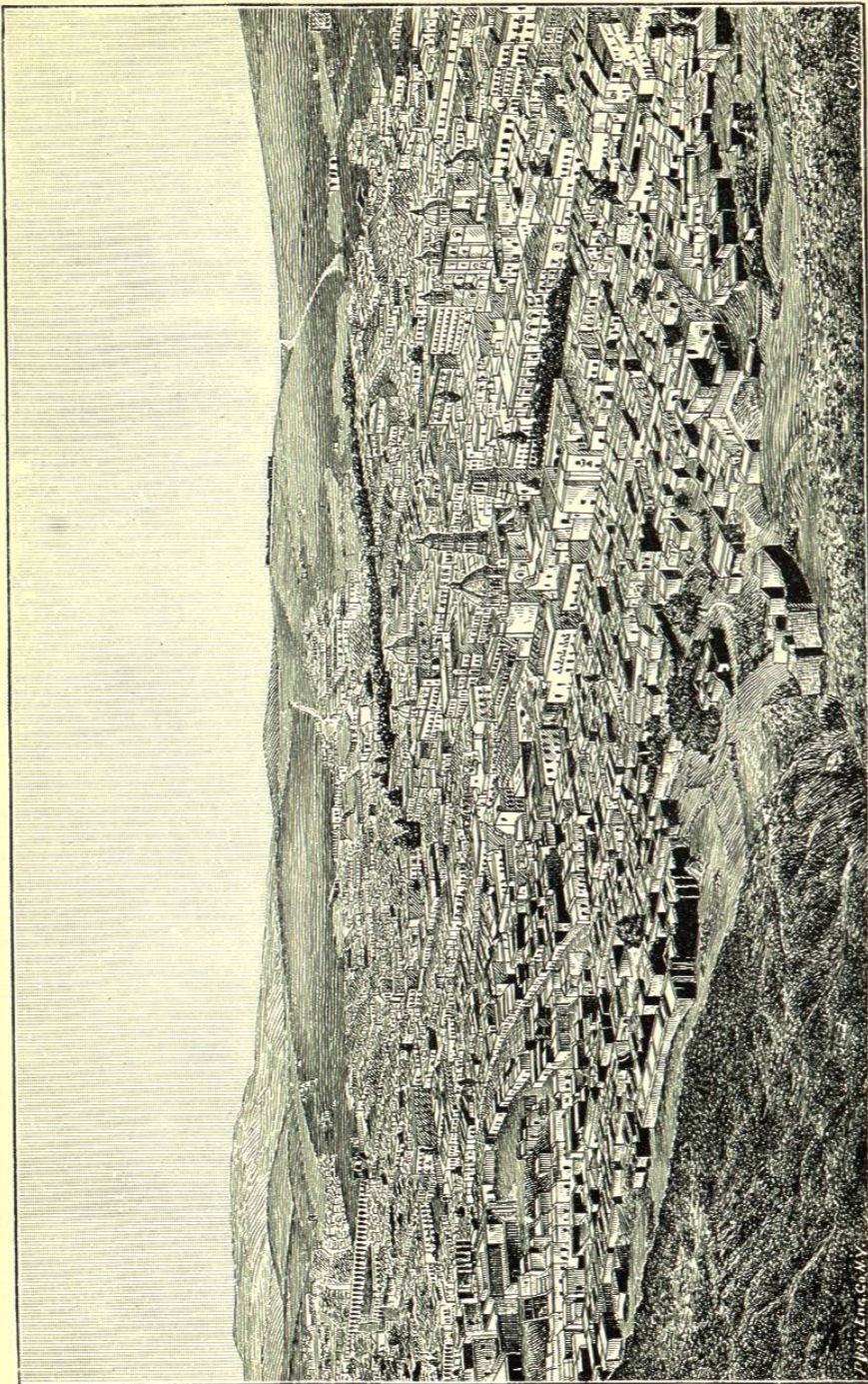
The Hotel Zacatano was formerly a convent, being a portion of the church property confiscated in 1859 by Juarez. It is a beautiful specimen of Moorish architecture about three centuries old, having been begun in 1576, and completed twenty years later. It is built around an open *patio*, and entered through an arched carriage-way. The church adjoining formerly belonged to the convent, but, with a portion of the building in front, has been purchased by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions for \$24,000. The church has a membership of two hundred and seventy-five, besides a mission school.

Zacatecas is perhaps the greatest mining camp in the world, about fifteen thousand men being now employed. A thousand millions of dollars is said to have been the value of the output here in the last three centuries. Most of the mines are now owned and worked by large companies.

The Spaniards commenced working the mines about 1540; but they had then been operated for an unknown period by the Indians. When the conquerors learned of their incredible richness, they dispatched five thousand Mexican colonists, with a strong military force, to take possession of the region. The Indians were driven to the southwest, but the name of their chief, Zacatecas, was given to both camp and province.

Two miles north, at Oraso, the site of the St. Bernabe Mine, is an old chapel—the Capilla de Bracho—dating back to the earliest days of the Spaniards.

Further to the north is the Veta Grande Mine, opened by Tolsa in 1846, and named the "Alvarado." Great fortunes have been made out of this mine, and it still yields immense quantities of ore, fifteen millions of dollars' worth having been taken from one shaft in about ten months. The Acacio Company, whose members reside in Spain, own two thirds of this immense property, which covers fifty-five square miles. At the beginning of this century, the San Acacio had already produced \$140,000,000, and so far from being exhausted, is now producing more richly than ever.



CITY OF ZACATECAS.

The great mine of the Mala Noche was operated for centuries, but is not now worked—though the name survives—the Mexican owners not having capital to cope with the water. The La Plata, lying between the Mala Noche and the Veta Grande, is also owned by Mexicans. Its ore now yields \$800 to the ton.

The Cantara Lode is an immense ridge, running along the face of La Bufa, a mountain five hundred feet in height, overlooking the town, its crest crowned with a quaint, historic old church. In this and its principal branch, the Quebradilla vein, are situated some of the most productive mines, the workings of which extend under the city in all directions.

The suburban town of Guadalupe, five miles distant from Zacatecas, is reached by street-cars run by gravity. The mules which draw the cars to the city are unhitched, and the return is made, *sin mulas* ("without mules"), with startling velocity down the steep incline.

My impressions on entering Zacatecas were vivid, and what I saw of this interesting city will remain indelibly impressed on my memory, but on leaving it I found that the bounteous hand of Nature held in reserve a vision of exquisite beauty. The results of the highest human effort often bring disappointment to the beholder, but the works of the Divine Architect never! In the early morning a capricious veil of mist almost obscured the sun, but now and then its genial rays pushed through this curtain, disclosing a towering mountain peak, crowned with a gorgeous rainbow. Instantly upon an opposite height appeared a mellow neutral-tinted bow, bending like a "triumphal arch" over mountain and plain carpeted with tender verdure.

—Faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age,
That first spoke peace to man."

The rainbow tints upon the mountains were reflected in the valley, in the characteristic and peculiar dress of the hundreds of busy

workers, mostly Indians, far below us assorting ores. Red and plaid *serapes*, more than rainbow-hued, were tossed carelessly, but with artistic effect, upon the shoulders of the men, while countless women and children with gay skirts, naked feet, blue *rebozos*, jetty hair either flowing or in plaits, moved about with unstudied grace. Nature, too, contributed her fairest to the scene. As we whirled around the dizzy height, the train, forming loop after loop, as we headed the frightful *barrancas*, and circled among the clouds, we saw sparkling waters leaping and dashing from high summits; then the gladdening view, when we had gone higher than the clouds, and beheld a sky more blue than Italy ever boasted! Finally, the salient point of every rustic scene, the *lavendaras*, with their flowing black hair and red petticoats, washing along the mountain streams, filled the landscape with peasant life and homely color. Our spiral windings around this mountain can be compared to nothing less than a revolving panorama, in which both the object and spectator moved. Once seen it is never forgotten.

Thirty miles southwest of Zacatecas, at Quemada, are interesting ruins, supposed to mark one of the resting places of the Aztecs in their march to the valley of Mexico. A citadel is in the center of a walled inclosure containing about six acres, with still an outer wall of unhewn stone, eight feet thick and eighteen feet high. Several pyramids and immense pillars are also within the inclosure.

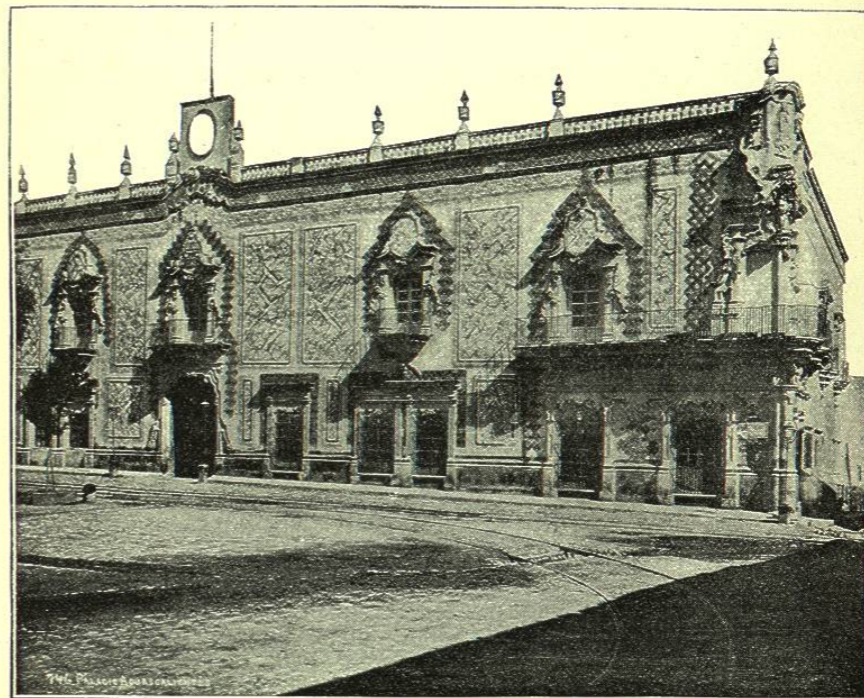
Aguas Calientes ("Hot Waters") derives its name from the medicinal springs in its vicinity. The waters are extremely efficacious in rheumatism and skin diseases. For centuries people have resorted to them, and still their virtues are undiminished.

There are two sets of bath-houses—the old, in the town, to which the water is conveyed in conduits; the new, a half-mile distant at the springs. Street-cars run out to them through an avenue of cottonwood trees, extending along an *acequia* (ditch) which carries away the waste waters from the springs.

The common people avail themselves of the open *acequia*, to freely indulge in the customary luxury of the bath. A fine view

was obtained of this interesting pastime, as we halted for dinner at the station. They plunged and leaped wildly in the rushing waters—men pulling women headlong—their hair white with soap, recalling a pet poodle—and *vice versa*—children screaming, dogs barking—the sides of the ditches closely lined by people of the same class, in full enjoyment of the scene.

Aguas Calientes is distant about seventy-five miles from Zacate-



THE NATIONAL PALACE AT AGUAS CALIENTES.

cas, and was founded in 1575 on a grant made by Philip II. of Spain, with a view to rendering the country safe for travelers to and from the mining regions. The grant extended five leagues on all sides from the first chapel erected. This was a small adobe building on the site of the church of San Diego, an ancient edifice with a convent adjoining, which is now converted into a scientific and literary institute.