

magically a door opened and a swarthy, dark face peeped out, as if to say, "What in the world are you two women doing here?" We took no time to see how he looked; and shaking with alarm, yet convulsed with laughter, we turned hastily from this dark hall to one a little less obscure. The unusual noise and scampering of feet attracted the attention of the occupant of another room, and before we could catch our breath, another door opened and the head of a veritable Apollo looked out. This last apparition was too much, and the floor, polished by the feet of past generations, seemed to give way beneath our own, and we collapsed on its slippery surface. Overcome by imaginary terrors, we calmly awaited our fate. Seeing our alarm and ghost-like paleness, he came forth with the manner characteristic of an accomplished Mexican gentleman, and kindly offered to serve us in any way possible. Madame de C—— quickly explained, in beautiful Spanish, the cause of our fright and consequent flight, and before she had finished he, too, was in the full enjoyment of our unexpected merriment.

Ere we had arisen from our humble position on the floor, we glanced upward at the walls, lined with pictures, where our attention was riveted upon one of them which would of itself have put us to flight. It represented some penitents at confession, while the devil, *painted red*, pranced around on all fours, evidently angered because these devotees were lost to him.

Our Apollo informed us that he was a law student in one of the colleges, and had chosen a room in El Carmen because of its peculiar quietude. He accompanied us in a deliberate inspection of the time-stained office. It is doubtful, however, if we were in a sufficiently equable frame of mind to contemplate serenely the beauties of the numerous exquisite paintings which adorned the walls. The grand old organ stood mute yet eloquent; its language uttered in the past, its tones never more to be repeated.

When we descended to the ground, the cause of our fears sat unmoved, not having changed his position since we left him, save tipping his hat a little more to one side, while the expression on his

face was as guiltless of any knowledge of our approach as his body was of a shirt.

Probably the largest bachelor establishment on the American continent, perhaps in the world, is that of Baron Guillermo Wodon de S——. In the war of reform, when church property was confiscated and sold to the highest bidder, this gentleman became the purchaser of an extensive convent, and no transformation could have been more complete than that he wrought in the venerable building. The walls which had echoed only the sighs and prayers of pious nuns now resounded with the voices of the bachelor occupant and his *bons-camarades*. That the Baron makes an admirable host, we, with our friends, can testify, having been delightfully entertained at this metamorphosed hall. Our entertainer combined the grace and courtesy of the manner of his native country with that of the land of his adoption.

A more charming climate, both summer and winter, is not to be found in the republic than that of Michoacan, which is sixty English miles from the capital. It is so temperate that one experiences no dizziness.

The State is rich in minerals—gold, silver, and precious stones. It possesses woods of endless variety. Among them we saw in the museum the cork tree, pitch-pine, red and white cedar, red, white, and black walnut, wild olive, mahogany, poplar, ash, red and white oak, willow, laurel, beech, rosewood, ebony, and many others impossible to mention. Everywhere in the State fine fruits abound, and skirting as it does the *tierra caliente*, those of both tropical and temperate climes alike flourish. Here, for the first time, I saw in perfection the *chirimolla* and *granadita*.

In 1839 Madame Calderon de la Barca made the journey from the capital to Morelia on horseback, and regretted that so much beauty was wasted. She says: "We are startled by the conviction that this enchanting variety of hill and plain, wood and water, is for the most part unseen by human eye and untrod by human footstep." These beauties are now no longer concealed. The railway has penetrated

the country in more than one direction, and has rendered accessible its most romantic scenery, while opening up its varied and valuable productions.

The district of Uruapan has become famous for its exquisite lacquered ware bearing the same name, and which has received gold prizes at the Philadelphia, Vienna, and Paris Expositions. The finest specimens of the work yet exhibited, strange to relate, have been executed by two or three families. As explained to me by one of the workers in the market of Morelia, simple old-fashioned gourds, generally cut into plaques, are used as the basis of operations. They first apply some neutral tint as the groundwork, after which the artist, with an ordinary pocket-knife, makes the design in either fruit or flowers—perhaps after the order of an engraver on wood—and then, little by little, the colors are deftly put into these indentures by the fingers, time being allowed for each to become entirely dry before adding another. These paints are prepared by the Indians themselves from the native dye-woods, and as a variety of colors is used in the process, much time is expended in making this wonderful ware. Not the least important in the various processes employed, is that of rubbing, when thoroughly dry, the entire picture with a curious admixture of oily substances, of which the ordinary caterpillar is the principal. But there is good sense, and reason as well, in resorting to so obnoxious a thing as a caterpillar, for it completes an object that is not only one of great utility, resisting alike grease and water, but also gives a ware that is to the last, even when worn into shreds, an article of fadeless beauty.

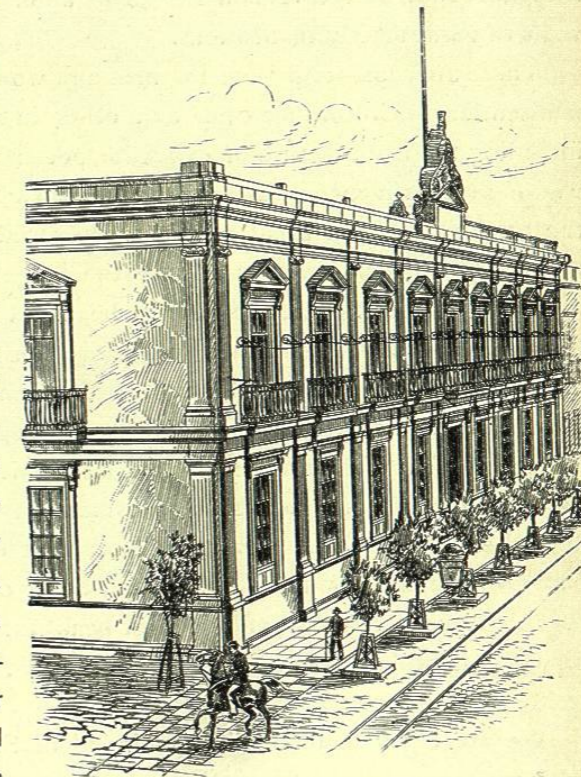
In the State of Michoacan there is the most picturesque lake in the republic. Since my visit there the railway has reached its shores, rudely awakening it from the slumber of ages. Humboldt visited Patzcuaro, and speaks of the lake as rivaling the world-famed Lake of Geneva. Even in this land of grand and romantic scenery it stands alone in its exceeding loveliness. A pleasure boat has been recently launched upon its limpid waters for the recreation of health-seekers and tourists. The town of Patzcuaro supplies good accommodations

in its comfortable hostelries, and its inhabitants are fully alive to the advantages of being in communication with the rest of the world.

The early Spanish fathers appreciated the natural beauties of this region, and founded here a bishopric and the College of San Nicolas, which, however, were both subsequently removed to Valladolid, the college being united with that of San Miguel in 1580, at the same time transferring its name to the latter institution.

The tourist visiting any of the larger cities of Mexico is much surprised to find schools and colleges with modern equipments such as would reflect credit upon any country.

At Morelia the most notable of the colleges are the "Colegio de San Nicolas"—of which Hidalgo was regent—and "El Seminario." Each of these has about five hundred pupils. The Church, or Conservative party, patronize and control "El Seminario," while the Liberals maintain the former. A bitter feud has been naturally aroused between the students of the two schools, and not so very long ago they would draw themselves up in battle array, and proceed to pelt each other with stones until all were satisfied. San Nicolas was the first institution of learning established on the American continent, having



COLLEGE OF SAN NICOLAS.

been founded about the year 1540. Two or three years later, in 1543, it was placed under the protection of the Emperor Carlos V.

A magnificent library that is open to the public is connected with this institution. The population of the city is about forty thousand, and its public benefactions are numerous and excellent. Among them I noted a hospital for men, and a separate one for women; Civil Hospital, Hospital del Corazon de Jesus, and Monte de Piedad, and many others. Not only are these institutions cleanly and well kept, but they are also spacious and airy. Since the reform war, and the separation of Church and State, many of the convents have been converted into hospitals. The afflicted inmates have a permanent and agreeable source of diversion in gazing upon the highly embellished walls of these stately institutions.

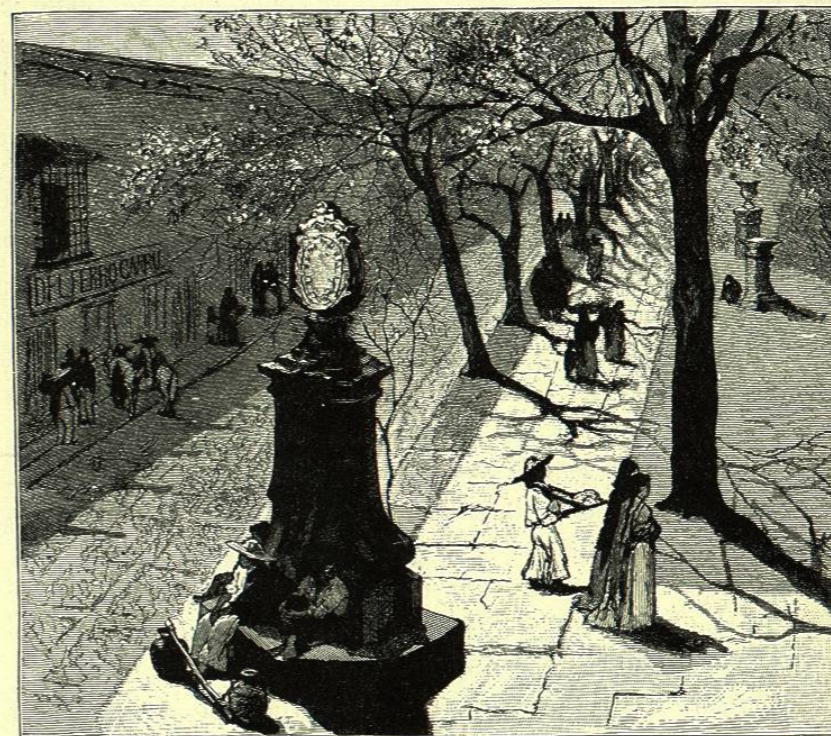
There are separate prisons for men and women, and also a general penitentiary. Cotton factories and other industrial establishments, including the manufacture of exquisite pottery, place Morelia in the van of progressiveness. The temples of worship are magnificent, and the public edifices of great elegance, while well-kept *pantheons* (ceme-teries), *paseos* and *alamedas* add to the long list of its attractions. A favorite place of recreation is the beautiful avenue known as the Calzada de Guadalupe. It was originally constructed for the accom-odation of the faithful who visited the Sanctuary of Guadalupe, where it terminated.

The Morelianos are exceedingly conservative, and neither Americans nor other foreigners have obtained any extensive foothold; nevertheless, there is a growing undercurrent of liberalism, which in many ways manifests itself. They have a city of many natural advan-tages, but while it is one of the most beautiful and interesting in the republic, it will be many years before the Anglo-Saxon race will reside there in great numbers.

We are everywhere forcibly reminded of Spanish domination in the architecture, which, like the language, has changed but little. Cities may differ in building materials, but the ancient Spanish is uni-versally copied. However, it must be acknowledged that the Anglo-

Saxon can make no improvement on the style of architecture in its suitability to the climate and the exclusive lives of the people. But there is often seen a free admixture of every known order of architect-ure, for in a newly finished building we saw the Doric, Corinthian, Pompeian, Romanesque, and Spanish. The interior decorations were exclusively in the gorgeous Pompeian.

To the stranger the most attractive points in the prevailing archi-



MONUMENT TO MORELOS—"CALLE REAL"

ecture are the *portales*, those inviting retreats along the sidewalks, and the aqueducts, which may be seen for miles, with their high, massive arches, through which one catches glimpses of blue sky, lofty mountain peaks, and peaceful valleys, animated with charming pas-toral scenes.

The city has stately proportions and attractions that are peculiar

to itself. We never tired of exploring the historic places which have from its founding been objects of unflinching interest to all visitors and travelers. Calle Real was an especial source of pleasure as we viewed it from the Plaza of the Martyrs, upon the corner of which stands the monument erected to Morelos. Watching the itinerant vendors from our shady retreat, and the idlers who added their statuette-like figures to the monument, the whole resting tranquilly under the motionless trees above them, we could but feel that the hapless poor have an aptitude for posing, and in lending themselves to this occasion the scene was at once thoroughly harmonious and national.

One gets strong ideas of imperialism in the decorations and furnishings of the municipal buildings and halls of congress. A city of twelve or fifteen thousand inhabitants has the mayor's office fitted up as if that functionary were a representative of royalty. The legislative halls have an appearance of regal magnificence with their immense, lofty apartments, gayly frescoed and lined with portraits of the governors of the State; mirrors, chandeliers, and carpets of richest texture; and the dais with its canopied chair for the executive. For me, all this splendor, while it suggested the influence of the viceroys, found a suitable solution in the national love of bright colors and display.

Two lines of chairs facing each other extend from the dais to the further extremity of the hall, where another official occupied his elevated seat, but without the canopy.

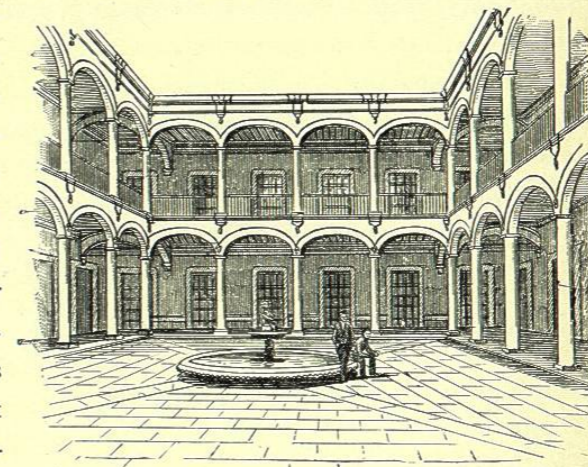
The legislature was then in session, and having letters to Governor Jimenez, then newly installed, we were courteously invited by him to visit the palace. We gladly accepted and had the additional pleasure of seeing that august body in session in this the Virginia of Mexico. If Morelia has gained that name, it is not alone because of her many distinguished sons, who have long since passed from these living scenes, but, without intending or wishing to detract from the men of any other part of the Republic, the members of the legislature of Michoacan were the most commanding in appearance of

any assemblage that I saw in the country. The dark, Indian type prevailed, with large, well-shaped heads, eyes of unusual brilliancy, broad, square shoulders, erect figure, and graceful bearing.

In one of her admirable descriptive letters Mme. de C. thus mentions the hospitality of the citizens of Morelia: "The tropical banana and many creeping vines with gorgeous blossoms, among them the *Bougainvillea*, hanging in great clusters of pink, crimson, and purple, such as we do not see elsewhere, beautify the *patios* of the hospitable Morelianos, who, when the stranger stops to admire the luxuriant growth and wonderful coloring of the flowers, cordially invite him to enter and examine at leisure." Of the hospitality of the Morelianos to us, she says: "I wish there were time and space to tell of their kindly reception of two foreigners; of the simple yet elegant manner in which the family of the intelligent young editor of the *Gazeta Oficial* (*Official State Paper*), Señor Ojeda, entertained them at an afternoon tea, and of the gracious goodness of which the honored visitors were the grateful recipients from other kind acquaintances, to whom letters of introduction were presented."

My personal tribute is, that in all my travels in Mexico no place has left upon my mind more pleasing or lasting impressions. Though so conservative, the hospitality of its people is pure and genuine.

Our own distinguished countrywoman, Mrs. Mary Halleck Foote, like Madame Calderon, made the journey from Morelia to the capital on horseback. Her admirable illustrations of the scenes in and about that quaint old city, together with her



FIRST PATIO IN COLLEGE OF SAN NICOLAS.

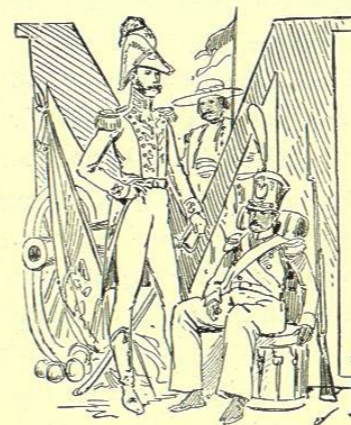
charming descriptions of the people, appeared in the *Century Magazine* for 1881-82. She says: "I had fallen into that helpless attitude toward the outer world which is like a spell over the women of the country. The return of the engineers and the discussion of plans for our homeward journey on horseback broke up the dream—one last drive on the *paseo* in the splendor of the low sunset light, then a bustle of packing, and talk of saddles and horses, servants for the road, and of steamer days and telegrams, last calls and a sense of multiplied obligations, which fate might never permit us fitly to recognize. When the railroad is completed, and the tides of travel ebb to and fro, if our friends of Casa G— are among those northward bound, may they find as gracious and courteous a welcome as they gave the strangers within their gates."

The closing wish finds a hearty echo in the breasts of two other American women who gratefully add their heartfelt testimony to the kindness and hospitality of the dwellers in that historic city. Just four years after Mrs. Foote's visit, Madame de C— and myself bade our entertainers there a warm, and sad *adios*.

Our two weeks' vacation had drawn to a close. At the hour when the mellow chimes of the grand cathedral were calling to matins, when the sound of bells far away in Indian villages fell softly on the newly awakened senses, the military responding with drum and bugle-call, we bade adieu to this delightful mediæval city and its interesting inhabitants, and returned with mental and physical energies renewed to our complex nineteenth century life and its manifold duties.

CHAPTER X.

ACTORS AND EVENTS IN MEXICAN HISTORY.



MEXICO maintained her struggle for independence through eleven years. At the outset, no people could have been less prepared for such a contest. Their weapons of warfare were primitive and few in number. They possessed no knowledge of military tactics, and their leaders were unfitted by training and profession for warlike deeds. But in that era of social and political ferment the chances were many that their efforts would ultimately be crowned with success; and while the difficulties attending the high enterprise must have seemed at times almost insurmountable, their faith in the issue was unclouded.

Doubtless they also derived both stimulus and encouragement from the assured success of the American Republic, and gladly risked their lives in the hope of a like glorious consummation.

A better grounded or more righteous cause never existed than that of Mexico against the tyranny and usurpation of the Spaniards, who filled every place of power and emolument in the government to the exclusion of the Creoles and native population.

This state of affairs was long accepted as inevitable; but the idea of the divine right of kings and the immutability of established order received a rude shock when Napoleon overturned so many of the sovereignties of Europe, and among them that of Spain. Grand possibilities opened then before the vision of the foremost few, and these animated by the purest patriotism, unavoidably joined forces