

El lacayo—The footman.

El caballerango—The hostler.

El mozo—A general man for errands, etc. (I have given an idea of him in all his glory.)

El cargador—A public carrier.

El camarista—In hotels he is the chambermaid; in private houses he attends the gentleman of the house, brushes clothes, etc.

La recamerala—Female chambermaid, as employed in private houses.

Ama de llaves—Mistress of the keys, literally; the housekeeper.

Cocinera—The cook.

Galopina—The scullion.

Pilmama—In the Mexican idiom, *piltoutli niña* (*mama-cargar*)—The woman who carries the child out to walk.

Chichi—Mexican idiom, *chichihua*—Wet-nurse.

Molendera—The woman who grinds the corn

Costurera—Sewing woman.

Planchadora—Ironing woman.

The position of *portero* is the most responsible one about the house. Both day and night he is charged with the safety and well-being of its inmates. They are generally excellent and reliable men, and perform their duties with remarkable zeal and fidelity. In large cities he does nothing but guard the door, but in smaller towns the position of *portero* is often merged in that of *mozo*, or general man. At the capital one man will have the responsible care of a large building, in which perhaps ten or a dozen families reside. They all look to him for the safety of their rooms or apartments. He lives with his family in some dark little nook under a staircase, or, if the house is so arranged, he may have a comfortable room with a window on the street or *patio*.

A Mexican *lacayo* in his picturesque hat and faultless black suit, elaborately trimmed with jingling silver, is indeed a "thing of beauty and a joy forever," but not a single instance have I ever heard of a señorita's eloping with him: the difference in station is never overlooked when it comes to matrimony.

These servants have deep attachments for the family with whom



PETATE, JARANA AND POTTERY VENDERS.

they live. They sometimes serve in one a life-time, and when no longer able to do so, are succeeded by their children, in the same capacity.

In case of a death in the family where they are employed, they at once don the somber *luto* (black), and never appear outside the house without it for six months.

This faithful attachment is especially and frequently shown by the *pilmama*. She will tenderly and patiently nurse each child in rotation, and to the last one her devotion is unimpaired. She also takes charge of baby's clothes, and herself washes the dainty fabrics, rather than intrust them to a *lavandera*. Children have their own pet name for the *pilmama*, abbreviating it into *nana*, "*Quiero mi nana*" ("I want my nana") being frequently heard. The *chichi* (wet-nurse) does nothing but give sustenance to the babe, and is never permitted to leave the house except under the surveillance of the *ama de llaves*.

This latter functionary has entire charge of the household linen. She directs the army of servants under her, and is a kind of queen-bee in the hive. She holds herself far above the servants, will carry no household packages, and is very tenacious of the dignity attaching to her position. Indeed, it not infrequently happens that she is a relative or connection of the family. She has frequently three or four assistants.

Mexican servants as a whole are tractable, kind, faithful, and humble. They shrink instinctively from harshness or scolding, but yield a willing obedience to kindly given orders. They are accused of being universal thieves, in which accusation I do not concur, although, indeed, the extremely low wages for which they work might seem to warrant, or at least excuse, small peculations. But they have this redeeming trait, that they generally appreciate the trust placed in them, and this sometimes to a remarkable degree. Instances were not uncommon during the days of revolution when *porteros*, *mozos*, and other servants voluntarily sacrificed their lives in defense of the life or property of their employers. But they have their peculiarities,

acquired and engendered by the various circumstances that have hedged them about, for which all allowance must be made. If due patience and tact be exercised in the outset by foreign housekeepers, they will surely become deeply attached to the entire household, and better servants are not to be found. Especially is this true with regard to American children, to whom they become extremely devoted. But it must be remembered that their customs are overgrown with the moss of centuries, and care must be exercised in disturbing it by foreign methods of labor, or the application of new ideas. They know their own way, and have a repugnance to any interference with their precious "*costumbres*."

In their various employments their deportment is of the most quiet kind. If the mistress desires their attention, unless near at hand she does not call their names, but merely slaps her hands together, which attracts immediate attention. This clapping is practiced in the street as well as in the house. Nothing would sooner confuse a servant than calling her name in a loud, harsh key.

On the frontier the mistress is known as *señora*, but in interior towns and cities she is always the *niña* (child), no matter if she has reached a hundred years.

The hand motion by which a servant is summoned is the reverse of our beckoning sign—the palm being turned outward.

The wages of a cook are from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per month; coachman, from \$10.00 to \$30.00; serving women, \$3.00 to \$8.00; and so on in like proportion.

With these small sums entire rations are not furnished them. They are paid a *medio* and *quartillo* each day, independent of their wages, to buy coffee and bread in the morning, and bread and *pulque* for each dinner and supper; or they are paid 62½ cents every eight days, for this purpose. In some places a *medio's* worth of soap is given them each week to have their clothes washed, and the lower the wages, the less soap they get. The value of this soap is often collected a month in advance, thus leaving a glaring deficit in their clean clothes account.

They generally leave the last place in debt, which is assumed by the new master. If the servant's wages be \$4.00 per month, and she owes \$12.00 or \$25.00, as the case may be, she draws only \$2.50, leaving \$1.50 for her *abono* (amount of indebtedness).

A singular method of keeping accounts is that employed by the untutored common people. I saw an Indian on the line of a certain railway who had engaged to furnish goats' and cows' milk for the contractors. The cows' milk he purchased from another party; the account with the railway and that with the party from whom he bought the milk were kept on a stick stripped of the bark in alternate sections. Certain kinds of notches were then cut on either side, indicating pints or quarts; other notches, straight or oblique, represented *quartillos* (3 cents), *medios* (6 cents), or *reales* (12½ cents), the payment for the same.

An error occurred in the settlement of the accounts, which the book-keeper did not observe, but which was discovered by the Indian, and, though against himself, he would only settle according to the notches on his stick.

Customs may vary in different provinces as to the way of keeping private accounts. At the capital the lives and "*costumbres*" of the servants are different from those in small towns and interior cities. I append the account of a cook at Santa Rosalia, which will give an idea of the forms called *librettos* there used between servant and employer. In the table given below it must be stated that *X* crossing the line means ten dollars, and *V* above the line, five dollars; *O* crossing the line is one dollar, while a small naught above the line is half a dollar; a straight mark crossing the line (|) is a *real*; and a short one above the line is a *medio*.

By this it will be seen that "Gertrude Torres, under a certain date, agrees to cook and do whatever work is required of her in the house. She enters the house owing her former employer thirty-four dollars. Her new master assumes this debt, without which she could not have changed her place. Her wages are four dollars per month, and from this sum Don Santiago Stoppelli retains three dollars toward the liquida-

tion of the original amount. The accompanying plates show how these accounts are kept.

Sta. Rosa 8 de Mayo 1884
M^{ra} Guadalupe Torres
Sta. Rosa 8 de Mayo 1884

Sta. Rosa 8 de Mayo 1884
M^{ra} Guadalupe Torres se acomodo con esta memoria fecha de cocina y un fido lo que se ofrecio en la casa; un fido de veinte y cinco pesos que se pagaron a D. Santiago Hoffmiller por ella lo que desquitará con su trabajo con sueldo de diez pesos cada mes conido de fecha a fecha, cargo lo anotado arriba en recibos y recibos
\$34.00
Enero 8 recibí en dinero
Enero 13 Recibí en dinero
Febrero 24 Recibí en dinero

The furnishing of the homes of the common people is necessarily meager; sometimes only mats laid upon the dirt floor serve for beds, or a few rudely made bedsteads and chairs, with pictures of the saints and a quantity of home-manufactured toys, constitute the outfit. They are *jente ordinario*, but their houses are reasonably clean. One corner of the room is generally devoted to an infinite variety of pottery suspended on nails, This is collected from all parts of the country, and is their chief household treasure; even small children can point out the different kinds and tell where each piece was made.

Let one enter when he will, he is sure to be greeted politely, and to have the kindest hospitality extended to him. I remember one of

the houses into which I went where a pretty young woman of twenty years sat crocheting, while the baby slept in his *petate* cradle and the husband lay sick on his humble cot in the corner. She cordially welcomed me, and when I was seated, he, though feeble and trembling, raised himself upon his elbow, tendering me the hospitality of his *pobre casa*; then asked his wife to prepare for me a cup of coffee or chocolate, which she did.

I condoled with him on his illness and hoped he would soon be well. To this he replied he hoped so, but as he had consumption, there was little chance for his recovery; but if it were possible, he would like to get well, "in order to serve me the rest of his life!"

I was agreeably surprised to find so many sewing-machines, and that the women understand their use quite as well as we do. A machine agent informed me that the women of this class are as prompt to meet their installments as those in any country. But the price of sewing is so very cheap—only one cent a yard—that they must do a great deal to render themselves self-sustaining.

Babies are cared for with great tenderness. They are wrapped as tightly as possible in "swaddling-clothes" until about one month old, when the *calzonillos* (little breeches) are substituted, for both

Sta Rosa 23/5/84
M^{ra} Guadalupe Torres
Recibí de la casa de Santiago Hoffmiller, con este fido, goma de cuatro pesos mensuales y un fido cada otro día
\$36.00
Por 15 de trabajo 2.00
Recibo fido 34.00
Sta Rosa Mayo 7/84
Dⁿⁱ Santiago Hoffmiller
Man. Torres

boys and girls. The accompanying illustration represents a girl of two months. I asked the mother if it were girl or boy. "Mujer"

("woman"), she answered, "*Felicita Rodriguez criada de V.*" Never was there a more delighted mother than when I asked her to hold the baby until its picture could be made.



"YOUR OBEIENT SERVANT."

The *cuna* (cradle) is a concomitant of every humble dwelling. It is sometimes suspended from the ceiling, but quite as often it hangs under the table. The material of which it is composed is usually palm or maguey, and its quaint little occupant looks quite comfortable, snugly sleeping in the *rebozo*, while the cradle sways back and forth of its own accord.

These poor women are often the mothers of such beauties as would arouse envy in the breasts of many aristocratic parents. Miguel Mondregon, whose picture is here given, was one of these children. His mother was a cook. We met him in the street in Tacubaya on the opening of the feast of Candlemas, and when asked his name, he gave it, taking off his hat, as seen in portrait, which is an excellent likeness of him, and saying: "*El criado de V.*" His style of dress is typical of his class. No urchin was ever happier than he when paid his *real y medio* (18 cents) to stand, hat in hand, while being sketched.

His cheeks and lips were like cherries; his mouth a perfect Cupid's bow; his complexion brown as a *frijole*; and his eyes great, soft, melting, glorious orbs. An old woman, standing near, hearing our comments upon his beauty, remarked:



"Yes, he is a beauty now, but wait till he is twelve or fourteen years old, and he will be *mas serio*," meaning that he lost his *spirituelle* expression and became coarse and sallow. Pity it is that this loveliness is so evanescent.

The *evangelistas* (letter-writers) have a distinct position to themselves. They subserve a valuable purpose to the great army of servants and low-class people, who, through them, carry on a correspondence with their lovers. With a board on his knees, or perhaps sometimes a plain little table, and a big jug of ink, and pen behind the ear, the *evangelista* is ready to serve his customers. Anxious lovers stand around awaiting his leisure, the desire to transmit their sentiments making his services in high demand. Note paper, variously shaped, is at hand, and for a *medio* or *real*, a letter is furnished that will be expressive of grief, jealousy, love, and overweening affection.

Love-letter written by "un evangelista."

APRECIABLE SEÑORITA.

Quisiera tener el lenguaje de los angeles; la dulce inspiracion de un poeta; ó la elocuencia de un Ciceron, para expresarme en terminos dignos de Vd. Pero por desgracia mi mente la cubre el velo de la ignorancia, y no puedo menos que tomarme la libertad de revelar á Vd. mis aficciones; pues desde el primer dia que tuve la dicha de conocer á Vd., la calma ha huido de mi, y dominado por la pacion mas violenta, me adverbio a decir á Vd. que la Amo, con el amor mas puro y berdadero, y que aun me parece con ésta declaracion que hago á Vd. de mi amor, que no supera el ardor que mi triste y afligido corazon sufre, mientras tanto obtengo la contestacion de Vd. quedo impaciente por saber el fayo de vida ó de muerte que dé Vd. á su apasionado.

Es cuanto le dice á Vd. quien á sus pies besa.

MANUEL GOMEZ Y SUAREZ.

[Translation.]

ESTEEMED SEÑORITA.

Would that I possessed the language of the angels, the sweet inspiration of a poet, or the eloquence of a Cicero, that I might then express myself in a manner