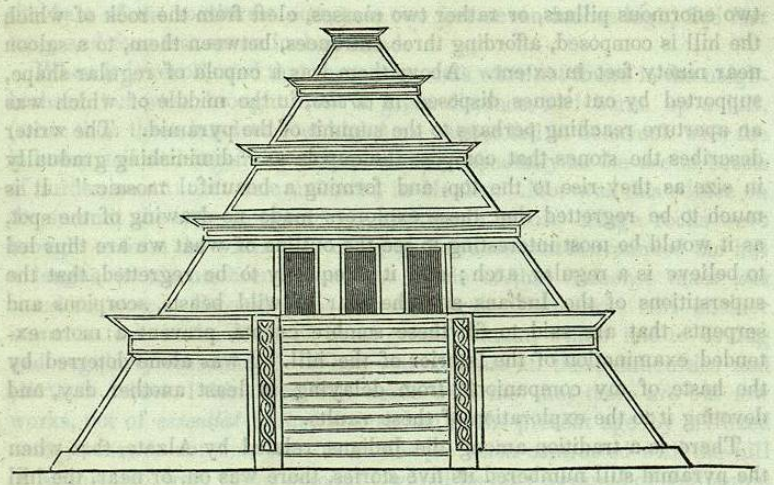

RESTORATION OF THE PYRAMID OF XOCHICALCO.

Such, in all probability—from the authority of unimpeachable traditions, and the remains now crumbling to ruins and overgrown with the forest at its base—such, was the Pyramid of Xochicalco, when it first rose aloft covered with its curious symbols of mystic rites, and received from the Indian builders its dedication to the gods, or to the glory of some sovereign whose bones were to moulder within. Who those builders and consecrators were no one can tell. There is no tradition of them or of the temple. When first discovered, no one knew to what it had been devoted, or who had built it. It had outlasted both history and memory!

But no matter who built, or what nation used it as temple or tomb, those who conceived and executed it were persons of taste, refinement and civilization; and I venture to assert, that no one who examines the figures with which it is covered, can fail to connect the designers with the people who dwelt and worshipped in the palaces and temples of Uxmal and Palenque.

Fragmentary fragment as this pyramid is, it may still be deemed in outline, material, carving, design, and execution, one of the most remarkable of the antiquities of America. It denotes, besides, an ancient civilization and architectural progress, that may well entitle the inhabitants of our Continent to the character of an Original race. On the other hand, (for those who are fond of tracing resemblances, and believe that whatever there was of art, science, or cultivation among the aborigines, came from the "old world,") there is much in the shape, proportions and sculptures of this pyramid, to connect its architects with the Egyptians.

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The day was far advanced, when I stood for the last time on the corner-stone of the upper terrace and looked at the beautiful prospect around me. It was the centre of a mighty plain. Running due north were the remains of an *ancient paved road*, leading over prairie and barranca to the city,* distinctly visible at the foot of the Sierra Madre—and, all around, at the distance of some miles, east, west, and south, rose lofty mountains, among whose valley-folds nestled the white walls of haciendas, that owed their strength and massiveness to the spoliation of the very ruins on which I stood. Palace, temple, tomb, fortification, whatever it was, (and to all these uses has it been appropriated by the guessing tribe of antiquarians,) the Pyramid of Xochicalco was nobly situated in its day and generation, and no one will now visit its crumbling remains without a better opinion of the unfortunate races, who were pushed aside to make room for the growth and expansion of European power.

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TETECALA.

It was near three o'clock, when we again took up our line of march under a burning sun; and, lingering with Pedro until after my companions had departed, I found, on reaching the bottom of the hill, that they were already out of sight, and that all traces of them were lost on the path among the trees and bushes. I shouted—but there was no answer. I inquired at the first Indian hut I passed, but no travellers had gone that way; and, although following a distinct and apparently straightforward road, I acknowledge that I was lost. To add to my disquietude, I had forgotten the name of the village at which we were to lodge. It was useless, however, to sit down in the forest, and I therefore resolved to push onward with confidence that the path led somewhere. I had not gone more than half a mile when I came up with another straggler of our party—lost, like myself—and we trotted along side by side, occasionally shouting for our companions, and then halting a moment to take breath in the close and sultry air, filled with clouds of mosquitos and flies that settled on our hands and faces as soon as we drew our bridles.

Suddenly, our road terminated at the margin of a wide stream, which was swollen over its banks by the late heavy rains, and was dashing along with the rapidity of a mill-race. On the opposite shore the road again reappeared, and we judged that this was of course the ford.

Pedro, who was mounted on a stout, long-legged animal, was sent ahead, and partly swimming his animal and partly wading, he reached the bank in safety. I immediately followed, but my horse was both short limbed, and weary from the exertions he had made in the morning. Scarcely had the water risen above his girth when he was off his legs. I kept his head

* Cuernavaca.

toward the opposite shore, and as much against the stream as possible; but with all his efforts he could make no headway, and was swept bodily down by the current toward a wreck of broken trees and branches, that bent over the water from the bank we had quitted. I spurred, whipped, encouraged him, without avail. He made another effort; but failing in that, kept his head above water and resigned himself to the tide. I felt my situation to be dangerous, especially as I was rapidly approaching the long and sharp branches, by which I knew that I should be severely injured. I resolved, therefore, to leap off and swim for the bank, which was not more than a dozen paces distant. But, at that moment, Pedro galloped down to the point opposite which I was drifting; and, as I was about executing my purpose, I saw his lasso, flung with great accuracy, settle around my animal's head. With the end wound round his saddle-bow, Pedro stood firmly on the shore, and, in a minute, the action of the current had swung my horse on soundings. Drenched as I was, I shall ever hereafter feel a debt of gratitude to a lasso—which is rarely felt for anything in the shape of a noose!

My companion and myself continued our journey, both wet, (for he had fared not much better than myself,) but both gratified with our drenching, as it had the effect of a bath, while the evaporation of the water from our soaking clothes, cooled and refreshed us.

Thus through valley and glade, (rarely meeting an Indian or passing one of their miserable houses,) and without intelligence of our party, we pushed onward until about six o'clock in the evening, when we reached a wide and cultivated plain, traversed by a considerable stream, resembling in its verdant banks and soft meadows set in a frame of lofty mountains, the scenery about the sources of our Potomac. We had not long journied over this plain before we passed the hacienda of Miacatlan. At a short distance, to the right of it, appeared the village of Tetecala. As soon as a passing Indian mentioned the name, we recollected it to be that of our halting-place for the night.

We speedily passed an Indian suburb, buried, as usual throughout the *tierra caliente*, in flowers and foliage, among which lounged the idle and contented population. Here we were met by a guide, who had been sent forward by our courteous entertainers, and we were soon under the shelter of their friendly roof.

Our horses were quickly unsaddled and bounding over the wide corral; and refreshed by a clean suit and a cigarrito, I had strolled over the tasteful village, and visited the market and the church (one of the neatest I have seen, especially in the simple and true taste of its architecture, and the arrangement of the altar and the pulpits,) before our companions made their appearance. It turned out, after all, that they—not we—had mistaken the road, and had wandered much out of their way under the direction of a guide! It is better sometimes to have none.

In addition to all our antiquarian researches, to-day we have travelled nearly fifteen leagues, and although I have earned a right to a soft pillow

and bed, yet as there are none of these comforts in the house for me, I wrap myself in my serape on the hard settee, with full expectation of a night of sound repose.

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21*st September—Wednesday.* We left Tetecala rather late this morning, without other refreshments than a cup of chocolate and a biscuit, as our intention was to stop at the hacienda of Cocoyotla, where we arrived about 11 o'clock.

We had no letter of introduction to Señor Sylva, the proprietor; but we were, nevertheless, most kindly received by him. He requested us to dismount, and to amuse ourselves by inspecting his garden and orange-grove while he ordered breakfast.

This is a small, but one of the most beautiful estates in the *tierra caliente*. A handsome chapel-tower has recently been added to the old edifice; a wing on broad arches has been given to the dwelling, and the garden is kept in tasteful order.

Back of the house and bordering the garden, sweeps along a sweet stream, some twenty yards in width, and, by canals from it, the grounds are plentifully supplied with water. But the gem of Cocoyotla is the orangery. It is not only a grove, but a miniature forest, interspersed with broad-leaved plaintains, guyavas, cocos, palms, and mammeis. It was burthened with fruits; and a multitude of birds, undisturbed by the sportsman, have made their abodes among the shadowy branches.

We sauntered about in the delicious and fragrant shade for half an hour, while the gardener supplied us with the finest fruits. We were then summoned to an excellent breakfast of several courses, garnished with capital wine.

When our repast was concluded, Señor Sylva conducted us over his house; showed us the interior of the neat church, where he has made pedestals for the figures of various saints out of *stalactites* from some neighboring cavern; and finally dismissed us, with sacks of the choicest fruit, which he had ordered to be selected from his grove.

RANCHO DE MICHAPAS.

P. M. Our journey from this hacienda was toward the Cave of Cacahuawamilpa, which we propose visiting to-morrow, and we have reached, to-night, the rancho of Michapas.

This is a new feature in our travels. Hitherto we have been guests at haciendas and comfortable town dwellings, but to-night we are lodged in a rancho—a small farmer's dwelling—an Indian hut.

We arrived about five o'clock, after a warm ride over wide and solitary moors, with a back-ground of the mountains we passed yesterday. In

front another Sierra stretches along the horizon; and in the foreground of the picture, a lake, near a mile in circuit, spreads out its silver sheet in the sunset, margined with wide-spreading trees and covered with water-fowl.

The house is built of mud and reeds, matted together; that is, there are four walls without other aperture but a door, while a thatch, supported on poles, spreads on either side from the roof-tree, forming a porch in front. This thatch is not allowed to touch the tops of the walls, but between them and it, all around the house, a space of five or six feet has been left, by means of which a free circulation of air is kept up within. The interior (of one room,) is in perfect keeping with this aboriginal simplicity. Along the western wall there are a number of wretched engravings of saints, with inscriptions and verses beneath them; next, a huge picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, with tarnished gilded rays, blazes in the centre; and near the corner is nailed a massive cross, with the figure of our Saviour apparently bleeding at every pore. A reed and spear are crossed below it, and large wreaths and festoons of marigolds are hung around. Six tressels, with reeds spread over them, stand against the wall; and in one corner a dilapidated canopy, with a tattered curtain, rears its pretentious head to do the honors of state-bedstead. The floor is of earth, and, in a corner, are safely stowed our saddles, bridles, guns, pistols, holsters, swords and spurs—so that taking a sidelong glance at the whole establishment, you might well doubt whether you were in a stable, church, sleeping-room or chicken-coop!

Don Miguel Benito—the owner and proprietor of this valuable catalogue of domestic comforts—received us with great cordiality. He is a man some fifty years of age; delights in a shirt, the sleeves of which have been so long rolled up, that there is no longer anything to roll down; and a pair of those elastic leather-breeches that last one's life-time in Mexico, and grow to any size that may be required, as the fortunate owner happens to fatten with his years. Not the least curious part of Don Miguel's household, is his female establishment. He appears to be a sort of Grand Turk, as not less than a dozen women, of all colors and complexions, hover about his dwellings; while at least an equal number of little urchins, with light hair and dark, (but all with an extraordinary resemblance to the Don,) roll over the mud floors of the neighboring huts, or amuse themselves by *lassoing* the chickens.

G——, the caterer of our mess, thought it but a due compliment to Don Miguel (who does not disdain to receive your money) to order supper—though we resolved to fall back in case of necessity upon our own stores, and accordingly, unpacked some pots of soup and sardines.

In the course of an hour, a board was spread upon four sticks, and in the middle of it was placed a massive brown earthen platter, with the stew. At the same time, a dirty copper spoon and a hot tortillia were laid before each of us. Although we had determined to hold ourselves in reserve for our soups, yet there was but little left of the savory mess.

Our turtle, flanked with lemons and claret, then came into play; and the repast was ended by another smoking platter of the universal frijoles.

Wild and primitive as was the scene among these simple Indians, I have seldom passed a pleasanter evening, enlivened with song and wit. When we crept to our reed tressels and serapes, at eleven o'clock, I found that the state-bed was already occupied by a smart-looking fellow from the West Coast, (who I take to have been rather deeply engaged in the contraband) and his young wife—a lively looking lass, rather whiter than the rest of the brood—who had spruced herself up on our arrival. Twelve of our party lodged together in that capacious apartment, while Don Miguel betook himself, with the rest of his household, to mats under the porch.

22*nd September*. It rained heavily last night, but the morning, as usual, was fresh, clear and warm. After a cup of chocolate, we sallied forth toward the Cave of Cacahuawamilpa, having previously dispatched our arriéros with the mules to Tetecala, to await our return on our journey toward Cuautla.

Our forces this morning were increased by the addition of some twelve or thirteen Indians, who had been engaged by Don Miguel to accompany us as guides to the cavern. They bore with them the rockets and torches which were to be burned within, and a large quantity of twine for thridding the labyrinth.

Leaving the lake, situated on the very edge of the table-land, we struck down a deep barranca, at the bottom of which our horses sunk nearly to their girths at every footstep, in an oozy marsh, that had not been improved by last night's rain. But passing these bogs, we ascended a steep line of hills, whence there was a splendid view of the snow-capped volcanoes of Puebla, and soon reached the Indian village of Totlawahmilpa, where it was necessary to procure a "license" to visit the cavern, or, in other words, where the authorities extort a sum of money from every passenger, under the plea of keeping the road open, and the entrance safe. As we had special passports from the Mexican Government to go where we pleased in the *tierra caliente*, I thought this precaution unnecessary, but our Indians refused to budge a peg without a visit to the Alcaldé; and therefore, while some of the party entered a hut, and set the women to cooking tortillias, others proceeded with the passports to the civic authorities.

We found the Alcaldé to be a stout old Indian, in bare feet, shirt sleeves, skin trowsers, and nearly as dark as an African. He was enjoying his leisure by a literary conversation with the schoolmaster, who was his secretary, and the two were discovered in the midst of a host of ragged boys from eight to sixteen years old, seated on benches and learning their letters.

The moment we appeared, the Alcaldé rose to receive us with great dignity, and handing the passport to his secretary, he listened attentively

while he heard that Mr. —— and Mr. ——, of the Diplomatic Corps, were fully authorized by the Supreme Government to travel wheresoever they pleased without let, hindrance, or molestation from any of the good citizens of the Mexican Republic. When the secretary had concluded the document, and the Alcaldé had looked at it—upside down—and they had examined the signature of Vieyra and Bocanegra, and expressed themselves perfectly satisfied of their genuineness, they retired to a corner for consultation.

"The Señores," said the Alcaldé, turning to me, "wish to see the cavern, and they have permission from the Alcaldés and Chiefs in Mexico to go where they please;—this is true; but that liberty does not refer to the Cave of Cacahuawamilpa, which is *under* ground, while the passport relates only to what is *above!* The Señores must have a license from the prefect here, and, moreover, they must pay for it."

I told him that the Diplomatic Corps never paid for any such permissions. He shrugged his shoulders and said that might be, and no doubt was all very true in the city of Mexico, but that it was not the custom *here;* "*los diplomaticos* must fare like other people and *pay* for a license."

I thought of Stephens and his "broad seal;" and I produced my passport from the Department of State with the coat of arms of the United States, and the signature of Mr. Webster; but it was all Hebrew to the scribe; the eagle was *not* the Mexican eagle, and "*Webastair*," he had never heard of. He shook his forefinger from right to left, as if intimating that it was all a humbug, and that no such man was ever known in Mexico. They were old stagers in the matters of fees, and strangers did not drop down on such visits every day of the year!

While this by-scene was going on, the school exercises were, of course, suspended, and the pupils, with staring eyes and gaping mouths, listened to the discussion. At length, as time was rapidly passing, the Alcaldé was asked *how much* he wanted, and told that we would give him no extravagant sum. He named, I believe, ten dollars as his price, but we compromised for five—two of which were for the prefect, two for himself, and one for the secretary. As I was anxious to get the autograph of so distinguished a functionary, I asked him for a *written* license; but he replied that it was not necessary. "You may go now," said he; "no one will molest you;" and turning to our guide: "The Señores are *muy caballeros;*" (which may be translated, "*very* gentlemen") "take care of them, and at your peril, see that they come back safely."

The secretary made a bow—the Alcaldé another—our guide led the way, and we rejoined our party at the Indian hut, where they had half a dozen women baking tortillias as fast as they could pat them, for our breakfast at the cave.

We lost no time, but mounting at once, pushed over a hill or two until we reached a small path leading through a corn-field, at the foot of which ran a clear and narrow rivulet. There we dismounted, and crossing the hill, the mouth of the cavern was pointed out on the opposite side of the

glen, half way up the mountain. The dell was filled with tangled vines and shrubbery, growing up among lofty trees that sprung amid the rocks and *debris* of the hill-side. The path to the bottom of it was steep, and so covered with tall grass and bushes that it became necessary to send an Indian with a machete to cut a path.

On reaching the stream at the foot of the opposite side, the glen was found to be quite as tangled, and an Indian was again dispatched to clear the way. As he cut, we climbed after each other, slowly and painfully over the sharp and rugged rocks. When near the top, however, and in sight of the entrance, a tall shelf of rock, slanting at a sharp angle with the hill, opposed itself to our farther progress. It was about four yards wide—below it the precipice plunged down almost perpendicularly for two hundred feet, while there was nothing to grasp but the bare surface of the rock, and a few threads of vines that grew from the fissures of the impending cliff. A ledge of about three inches had been chipped in this rock, along which it was necessary to pass. The barefooted Indians crossed as nimbly as cats; and those of our party who wore shoes followed with ease; but I, in a pair of water-proof, thick-soled boots, and with not the steadiest head over steep places, found the transit exceedingly difficult. I hung on, however, by the vines, and succeeded in crossing in a very lubberly manner.

The Indian women with our tortillias, and the detachment we had dispatched in the morning with our cold ham, beef and sardines, had already arrived. There was a huge rock with a flat surface, upon which we spread our viands—fruit, cocoanuts, and pines—and made as picturesque a breakfast table as ever was longed for by a pic-nic party within a hundred miles of London.

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CAVERN OF CACAHUAWAMILPA.

I was one of the last to leave the entrance of the cave, which hangs in a huge arch of sixty feet span, fringed with a curtain of vines and tropical plants. Our party preceded me for some distance along the road that descends rapidly for the first hundred yards. Each one of the guides, Indians, and travellers, carried a light; and when I saw the swarthy crew, with their savage features, long hair, and outlandish dress, disappearing gradually, until nothing was left but the dot-like glimmer of their torches in the distance, it seemed more like some spectacle of witchcraft in melodrama, than an actual scene occurring among folks on earth. I lit my torch and followed.

The first hundred yards brings you to the bottom of the cavern, and, if not warned in time, you are likely to plunge at this season of the year, up to your knees in the water. You cross a small lake, and immedi-

ately before you, under the vast Gothic vault of the cave, rises a lofty stalagmite pillar with a fringe falling from the top of it, formed of the brightest foam, congealed in a moment. A mimic pulpit springs from the wall, covered with elaborate tracery,—and, hard by, an altar is spread with the fairest napkins, while, above it, depends a crystal curtain hanging in easy folds, each one of which flashes back the light of your torch as if carved from silver.

We fastened the end of our twine to a pillar of the altar, and struck out westwardly, in the direction of the cavern. After a short distance we turned slightly to the south, and passing down a pile of rocks that had fallen from the roof, entered the *second chamber*.

In the centre of this, a huge stalagmite has been formed. We called it the Tower of Babel. It is a lofty mass, two hundred feet in circumference, surrounded, from top to bottom, by rings of fountain-basins hanging from its sides, each wider than the other, and carved by the action of water into as beautiful shapes as if cut by the hand of a sculptor. An Indian climbed to the top of it, and firing a blue-light, illuminated the whole cavern. By the bright, unearthly blaze, every nook and corner became visible, and the waters and carving of the fountain-tower stood out in wonderful relief.

We penetrated to the *third chamber*. Here there was no centre column, but the effect was produced by the immensity of the vault. It appears as though you might set the whole of St. Peter's beneath it, with dome and cross. It is a magnificent cathedral; the wall sheeted with stalactites, and the floor meandered by those arabesque troughs of pure white, and antique pattern, which we had seen at the Tower of Babel.

An Indian fired a rocket, which exploded as it struck the top of the immense dome, and amid the falling stars, the detonation reverberated from side to side of the immense vault with the roar of a cannonade. A sheet of stalactite was struck, and it sounded with the clearness of a bell. Four Roman candles were lighted and placed on rocks midway up the temple sides, and they shed a faint illumination, like the twilight stealing through the fretted windows of an old cathedral.

Beyond this chamber was a narrow path between the almost perpendicular rocks, and, as we passed, the guide crept through an entrance near the floor, and holding his torch aloft, (so that the light fell as from an invisible source,) displayed a delicious little cave, arched with snowy stalactites. In the middle rose a centre-table, covered with its fringed folds, and adorned with goblin nicknacks. It was the boudoir of some gnome or coquettish fairy!

Two rocks standing beyond this retreat, are the portals of another chamber, groined, like the rest, in Gothic arches with the tracery of purest stalactites, while its floor is paved all over with beautiful little globular stalagmites. In a corner fountain, we found the skeleton head of a serpent.

The path beyond this is nearly blocked up by immense masses that have fallen from the roof. Passing over these, you attain another vaulted

cathedral, bright as the rest with flashing stalactites, while its floor is covered knee-deep with water. The dark lake, lit up by the blaze of a dozen blue-lights and Roman candles, and reflecting the flashing walls of the cavern, the torches of the party, and the tribe of attendant Indians—would have made a picture for Martin.

We had now penetrated nearly five thousand feet in the interior of the earth, and the guides said that the chambers were still innumerable beyond. Persons have slept here and gone on the next day, but no termination has yet been discovered. Some years since, in exploring beyond the usual limits, a party of travellers discovered the skeleton of a man; his bones were white and dry, and the Indian guides, after placing them in a heap, erected a cross on the top of it, with which they consecrated the whole cavern as the grave of the unknown dead. Whether he was a lost traveller, an absconding debtor, a suicidal lover, or a wretched murderer seeking concealment from vindictive pursuers, no one can tell!

From this chamber we returned to the entrance by the clew of our twine. I scarcely remember anything so beautiful as the view, when we caught the first glimpse of daylight, shining, like a "gray dawn," through the green drapery of vines that mantled the mouth of the cavern and reflected on the lake-like pool.

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We returned to the foot of the hills, where we found our servants and horses, and refreshed ourselves from the fatigue produced by the incessant exercise and exertions of the last three hours. Retreating through the glen to Don Miguel's rancho, and paying him liberally for his entertainment, we bade farewell to this part of Mexico, and turned our faces eastward.

We were obliged to return to-night to the village of Tetecala, and as the afternoon was already far advanced, we obtained a guide who knew a nearer cut over the mountain, than the road by which we reached the rancho on yesterday.

Night came upon us before we had half finished our journey, and I know no more of the road from actual observation. It was pitchy dark, and there were a number of ravines and barrancas to pass; but such is the unerring sure-footedness of animals of Mexico, that I reined my horse as near the guide as I could conveniently get, and followed the lead of his sagacious mule. From the manner in which the beasts climbed and slid over rocks, in the utter darkness, I have no doubt that the path was beset with many perils. After passing the mountain, we had to swim a river near thirty yards wide, which was considerably swollen by the late rains, so that, what with fatigue and danger, I was glad enough to reach our destination; where the first salute from our entertainers, when they heard

that we had made a night-march over the mountain, was, "Thank God, there were no accidents!"

A smoking supper was soon on the table, and although our worthy hosts (who had not made a journey that day of near two thousand varas into the bowels of the earth,) were exceedingly anxious to prolong the chat after our cheerful meal, we slipped off, one by one, to our cots and sofas. We have travelled seven leagues to-day, besides our pedestrian excursion in the cave.

HACIENDA OF SAN NICOLAS.

23*rd September*. We left Tetecala this morning at eight o'clock, with the intention of passing to-night at the hacienda of St. Nicolas, which belongs to the Messrs. J——. For the present at least we seem to have done with the mountains, as our road to-day lay entirely over the plain. During the three last days, we have been wandering among gigantic mountains and over wild moors, where the solitude of nature reigns in all its majesty; but the picture varies in the direction of Cuautla. The mountains sink into the plain, and the plain is rich, fertile, and cultivated with the nicest economy.

About twelve o'clock we saw the hacienda lying in the distance, in the lap of the plain, with a small hill or two hard by, just large enough to vary the scenery. As we approached the white walled buildings, we could not help remarking the uncommonly neat appearance of everything about the estate. The sugar-fields were in capital order, the roads smooth, the fences had been put up, the cattle were under the care of men. The Indian village, inhabited by many of the laborers on the estate, was tidy and comfortable, and there was a cleanness and decency in the appearance of the people, that I had not seen elsewhere. Indeed, the whole view of this plain, hemmed in by the distant summits of the mountains, reminded me strongly of some of the pictures of rural beauty constantly presented to the traveller in New England; and I was the more forcibly struck with this, when I looked from the corridor of the hacienda over the whole expanse of country, and saw it dotted here and there with villages and haciendas, the white towers of whose chapels rose up beautifully from an unbroken mass of verdure.

We were received at this plantation by the administrador, or steward, who had been expecting us for an hour or more; and though he had already partaken of his dinner, (believing that we did not intend visiting St. Nicolas to-day,) he immediately ordered another, in the meantime showing us to a large and cool apartment, containing a number of beds, where we made a hasty toilet.

We took a *siesta* after dinner, and then walked with Don A. over the estate. The whole of the fields are planted with cane for a great distance around the house, which forms, by itself, a very extensive establishment.

First, there is the dwelling, a large two-story edifice, having in the basement all the offices, and the store where every necessary is sold to the Indians; above this are the kitchens, parlors, bedrooms, and an immense corridor on arches, looking toward the east, filled with caged birds, and hung with hammocks, where the family pass most of the long warm days of summer. In front is the *corral*, on the west of which are the store-houses and buildings to receive the crop; while on the east is another huge edifice where the boilers, engines, crushing machines, cooling vats, moulding apartments, &c., constitute the *trapiche* of the hacienda. It is a little city in itself.

At sunset, all the Indians employed on the premises assembled under the corridor on the basement floor, to account to the administrador for their day's labor and their presence. As he called their names, each one replied with "*Alabo á Dios*,"—"I praise God," and ranged himself against the wall in a line with those who had already responded. When the whole list had been examined, they were dismissed, and departed in a body singing an Indian hymn to the Virgin, the sounds of which died away in the distance as they plodded home over the level fields to their village.

At night we heard the sound of a clarionet, bass-drum, and flute, at some distance from the dwelling, and on inquiry, discovered that a band of musicians had been organized in an adjoining village, by the owner of the hacienda. We mustered a company and strolled over. The whole of a large hut had been appropriated for a musical hall, where the performers were just assembling; while others, who had already arrived, were engaged in tuning their instruments. The leader was quite a respectable-looking Indian, decently dressed, who played the violin; the clarionet player was fortunate in the possession of cotton drawers and a shirt; the bassoon had a pair of drawers but no shirit; the serpent was the wildest looking Indian I ever saw, with long dishevelled black hair, and eyes worthy of his instrument; the big drum was a huge portly old negro, who reminded me of many of our performers on it at home; while the octave flute was an urchin of not more than twelve, the wickedest little devil imaginable, but a fellow of infinite talent and a capital performer.

The night was rather too hot to permit us to remain long in the apartment with an Indian crowd; we therefore took our seats outside, where we were favored by the self-taught amateurs with several airs from recent operas, performed in a style that would not have injured the reputation of many a military band at home.

It may reasonably be argued, from a scene like this, that the Indians have talents for one of the arts requiring a high degree of natural delicacy and refinement. If it had been the care of all Spanish proprietors gradually to bring forth their latent dispositions, as the Señores J. have done, Mexico would now present a picture very different from that of the