magnificent. The Church dignitaries were clothed in a still grander and more imposing way: their gold and silver vestments, their embroidered silks and brocades, their jewels and ornaments of every kind, were dazzling in the extreme.

The higher arts and sciences have made little progress in Mexico; and, under its present unsettled state of government, they continue to languish, which is natural enough. A knowledge and greatly extended use of machinery has grown up since the English Companies were established; and this branch goes on advancing. Of mining I have already spoken, as you are aware it is *the* science cultivated in Mexico. The Mexicans are curious artificers in gold and silver, both for use and ornament. Some of their figures are modelled in the most artistic manner; and yet most of the best and most ingenious workmen are amateurs in humble circumstances. The wax figures have been rendered celebrated in England by Mr. Bullock.* The *leperos* are great workers in wax; and their representations of Mexican manners, costumes, character, and of almost everything else they

* There was a full and very beautiful collection of these figures in the Exhibition of all Nations.—W. P. R. (1852).

attempt, are most admirable. In embroidery of every kind, the richest and the finest, Mexico is hardly to be surpassed by any other country.

In printing, in all its branches, great advances have been made in the city; and I wish I had space to give you a full account of one of the most interesting things, whether considered in itself, or in the view of progress, which I saw in Mexico—I mean, the printing and publishing establishment of Don Ignacio Cumplido: it well deserves a chapter of itself.

It comprehends printing in every possible variety and shape (with the exception, I think, of stereotype), plain and ornamental; lithograph, carried to a degree of very high perfection; bookbinding in all its branches; periodical publications; a daily newspaper; illustrative literature; an "Annual" of much beauty—in short, everything connected with the press, in a truly creditable manner to the enterprising founder of the establishment. Then the machinery employed is all of a first-class order, principally imported from the most celebrated foundries in London; and, in fact, I could see nothing omitted which could tend to make Mr. Cumplido's establishment a

perfect model for those who chose to follow in his steps in Mexico. All this is very encouraging; and shows what may be done, under every disadvantage, where energy, industry, and intelligence form the basis of a novel and great enterprise.

But I have not yet mentioned what was the great characteristic of Mr. Cumplido's establishment; namely, its order, method, and perfect division of labour. Carried to an extent which I think I never saw surpassed, these essentially fundamental elements of successful enterprise have naturally led to the growing prosperity of Mr. Cumplido's great undertaking.

He himself, as you may suppose, was the fit interpreter of all his labours. Without ostentation, but with a sober enthusiasm in his calling, he delighted to show me exactly what he had done, and what he still proposed doing. He employs a very great number of hands, and is sedulous in studying their comfort and advancement. He has a school for the boys employed by him and under his especial charge; and while he rightly maintains the authority of the master, he appears to take a fatherly charge of all his workmen.

Mr. C— made me presents of various illustrations of his labours;* and I must not omit mentioning, that before we left, he sent H— one of the celebrated boxes of chocolate, made in Oaxaca, the lid and sides of which are adorned with figures and landscapes in miniature, characteristic of the country, perfectly and beautifully modelled, and all made from the pith of a tree.

What a world of good is such an establishment as Mr. Cumplido's in a new country calculated to produce! and therefore, I say, all honour to his name!

I have as yet said nothing of the *population* of the Mexican republic; and in mentioning it now, I can do little more than refer you to the statistics of my predecessors. The population has been roughly calculated at from seven to eight millions, of whom one million only are said to be white (or pure Creoles), and the remainder, Indians and castes, as Zambos, Mestizos, Mulattoes, etc. I cannot pretend to speak *ex cathedra*, but I should set down the Creoles at a somewhat higher figure,

* I have availed myself of one of them in my Frontispiece, the Lithograph there being a fac-simile of one produced by Mr. Cumplido, in a very handsomely got up account of the transfer of Yturbide's ashes to the Cathedral.

and the Indians and castes at a lower. Supposing seven millions to be the population, six parts of mixed breeds to one of original, is a heavy disproportion; but yet it may be so.

The city of Mexico is calculated at from 160,000 to 200,000 inhabitants. The first number is probably nearer the mark than the second.

If the statistics of Mexican population could be accurately drawn out, perhaps the most startling line would be that of robbers. In London we have two millions of inhabitants; in Great Britain and Ireland, twenty-five millions. How many *highway robbers* could we count in that vast population? In London, scarcely one; in the empire, a most insignificant number. Certainly, in Mexico it is otherwise; and to draw this long miscellaneous letter to a close, let me finish off with a robber story, which came under my own cognizance during my residence in the city of Mexico.

One cannot take a drive, or a ride, or a walk, beyond something like the centre of that city, with absolute security, if unarmed. Highway robberies have been perpetrated in the suburbs, —in the outskirts—in the streets—in the *paseo*

nuevo, with a daring and nonchalance proper to the Mexican *salteador*.

A much respected and somewhat fearless friend of mine, returning on a certain occasion with two companions from his hacienda, by the Tacuba road, in a close carriage, but altogether unarmed, passed the *garita* sometime after sunset. Within the precincts of the city therefore, and entering by one of the great thoroughfares, his carriage was yet suddenly arrested, the driver instantaneously dismounted by armed men, who quickly but calmly opening the doors of the vehicle, began at once the work of personal pillage. No one was near, resistance was impossible; so watches, purses, coats, waistcoats, hats, were instantly abstracted by the adroit robbers. The carriage was then permitted to proceed; and thus denuded, my friend with his two guests walked quietly into the drawing room of his town house, where part of his family and some company were assembled; and who, first with unmitigated astonishment, and then with hearty laughter, greeted their forlorn relative and his companions.

Amongst the company in the salon was a reverend padre, the daily *tertuliano* and intimate of my

friend. His reverence made no show of concealing his contempt for the pusillanimity of three men, who, at their very door, had thus permitted themselves to be robbed; and he only wished that *he* had been there, to shew how different would have been the result. My friend merely observed that he had no doubt of the padre's courage and daring, intimating that it *would* have been pleasant to have had the advantage of both in the dilemma in which they had been placed.

A fortnight afterwards, the affair of the robbery being forgotton, my friend invited his reverence—a customary matter—to pass a few days with him and some friends at his hacienda. In addition to other pleasures, the padre calculated, as usual, on a little quiet *monte*, of which he was very fond. The second day our host proposed an excursion to a neighbouring hacienda, whither all went, my friend and a companion on horseback, the others in two carriages. The first of these drove on at a brisk pace; the second, in which the padre and a friend occupied places, proceeded more leisurely, accompanied by the horsemen.

Presently a man came galloping up, and whispered to my friend the host. "I must return,"

he said to those in the carriage, "to keep an appointment I had forgotten, but drive quietly, and I shall soon overtake you." Our host galloped home, changed his attire, blackened his face, put crape over his eyes, armed himself; and with three or four of his men, similarly disguised, he quickly made up to the padre's carriage. Those with him were in the secret.

"*Alto!*—halt!" the pretended robber called out—and the terrified driver stopped. "*A tierra!*" was the next roar.

"*Qué es esto,*" said the reverendo, anything but at his ease; "what's the matter?"

"*Ladrones!—Ladrones!*" said his companion;" "for heaven's sake, padre, let us get out and throw ourselves down—*boca abaxo* (literally, mouth down)."

His reverence hastened to do as he was bid, and presently his host was striding over him with a rusty pistol in his hand.

"Eh!" said he in a disguised, harsh, and imperious tone, "give us all you have—quick—strip!" The padre took out his watch, pulled off his cassock, and stopped. "*Su dinero!*" shouted my friend (your money).

"My son," said the padre meekly, "how do you expect that a *pobre religioso* like me should have any money? I have none."

"Eh! eh!" exclaimed my friend, and drawing his long sword; "your money, I say, your money —or you die!"

"Padre, padre," said the companion, "do as I am doing; give up your money!"

The padre, terrified out of his wits, drew from a small inward side pocket a little leathern purse, containing four or five doubloons, intended for the possible exigencies of *monte*, but which he now made over to the robber; who then with his followers, took his departure.

My friend managed his business so well, that, again restored to his usual calm figure, and smoking his little paper segar, he was at the termination of the pleasure drive before the padre's carriage came up; and from him, still agitated by his sudden and unlooked for adventure, the robber received the particulars of the ferocious attack, and condoled with the padre accordingly.

"These robberies," said the reverendo, "are generally nothing; but there was a *devil incarnate* in this case—a *facineroso*—an assassin—who only

seemed to want the slightest excuse for murdering us all."

The padre was next day informed that the whole case had been laid before the Justice of the peace, whose people were scouring the country in search of the daring offenders. Of course, nothing came of it; for, as you may suppose, the *Juez de Paz*, had no information laid. But some time after the padre's return to Mexico, my friend called on him and said: "Padre, I have news to give you: the parish priest of my district has delivered up to the *Juez, all* that was taken from you, ordering that no questions should be asked. Doubtless the ladron went to confess, and was absolved on condition of restoring all the fruits of his robbery."

The reverendo was afterwards told the true circumstances of the case; but, to avoid all disagreeable discussion, he professes still to believe that his friends would amuse him with a pleasant fiction; and that he has too faithful a knowledge of Don—— ever to have confounded "a devil incarnate," and a "*facineroso*," with so good and respectable a man.

PART VI.

MEXICO TO ENGLAND.