

ed property in common, and are not to be prevailed upon to portion out their fields, which is highly disadvantageous for cultivation. Only a house-place and a garden are hereditary, the fields belong to the village, and are cultivated every year with out anything being paid for rent. A portion of the land is cultivated in common, and the proceeds are devoted to the communal expenses.

Having thus glanced at some general features, I return to the individual. The brown man is simple in his outward appearance; he is anxious to dress according to the fashion of his fathers. He wears short wide knee-breeches of buck-leather or coarse cotton; a kind of long jacket or short blouse without a collar, girded round the hips, covers the upper part of the body; he has neither shirt, nor waistcoat, nor any other article of luxury. On his feet he wears sandals, and has a little straw-hat or one of coarse felt with a low crown on his thick black hair, which many have hanging down to the shoulders. The tribe of Chinantecos in Oajaca always go bare-headed. To wear shoes or boots appears to the Indian of the old school, a pernicious innovation; to mount a horse they consider culpable pride. Even when they possess many horses, they ride a modest little ass, or at most a mule. A coarse woollen cloth, plain or striped, is the 'toga virilis' of the Indian, during the day it protects him from cold and rain, and is at night his only covering.

The dress of the women is a kind of sack bound about the hips with a girdle and extending to the feet. A broad mantel (huipile) with openings for the head and arms covers the upper part of the body. This garment is usually of wool and often skilfully embroidered with gay colours. In many parts a white petticoat, embroidered and adorned with ribbons, is worn by the richer Indian women, in others, the girls all dress in white. The thick locks of hair, braided with coloured bands, either hang down over the shoulders, or are tied up about the head. Heavy ear-rings, and broad strings of glass beads about the neck complete the toilette. Shoes they never wear, nor any covering for the head, except perhaps a folded cloth thrown over it when the sun shines too fiercely. But a small rosary, possibly with a scapulary attached and the stout thorn of a species of Cactus for a toothpick, hang about the brown neck of either sex.

The fair readers of these pages no doubt feel compassion for these poor people whose whole wardrobe is described in so few words. The unfortunates! they know nothing of all the thousand fine things that must be laced and clasped and bound about the human form to bring it to its proper shape, and yet the Indian girl yonder, in her white, almost Grecian attire, which conceals a form free and graceful as if chiselled by the artist, looks charming as a Nausikaa. The beautifully moulded arm is bare from the shoulder, the small white hand carries a fan of feathers, in the dark hair white blossoms of the blumeria (*cacalosutschil*, the favourite flower of the Indians) are braided; she smiles, and shows teeth like pearls, and her large dark eye is fiery as the sun of the south. Forms like this which may delight the eye of the painter are to be found among them. It must be said, however, that the case is often quite otherwise. Woman, who among all savage nations is regarded as a

beast of burden for man, is more frequently found worn out with toil, and confined within doors. Here let us for a moment look upon her in the drudgery of her daily labour.

The Indian's dwelling is in keeping with his simple person. In the warmer, well-wooded regions he generally builds his hut of wood. Unhewn logs support the beams and roof, are driven into the ground, and creeping plants which twine around them, supply the place of frame-work. Straw or palm-leaves constitute the roofing; the walls are made of sticks of bamboo, or slender stakes which afford the light free ingress to the interior. The roof on one side is commonly prolonged into a porch, supported upon posts. This main building is ordinarily about twenty five feet long, and fifteen wide, without partitions within. A smaller one is often joined to this to answer the purposes of kitchen.

Upon the higher table-lands the houses are built of unburnt brick (also of stones plastered with mud) with a flat roof constructed of beams laid close together with a covering of finely washed clay, which is stamped with great care. In the mountains one often sees roofs covered with shingles, and in the plains where the agave abounds, the flower-stalks and leaves of this plant are used for the purpose, while the walls — so-called dry walls — are built of stone without mortar.

Inside the hut, upon a floor of earth just as nature formed it, burns day and night the sacred fire of the domestic hearth. Near it, stand the *metate* and *metalpila*, a flat and a cylindrical stone for crushing the maize, and the earthen pan (*comale*) for baking the maize bread. A few unglazed earthen pots and dishes, a large water pitcher, a drinking cup and dipper of gourd-shell constitute the whole wealth of the Indian's cottage, a few rude carvings, representing saints, the decoration. Neither table nor benches cumber the room within, mats of rushes or palm-leaves answer both for seat and table. They serve as beds too for their rest at night, and for their final rest in the grave.

The utensils of the man, as a mattock and a hoe, together with a few strings and nets, hang upon the wall, and close by, the weaving apparatus of the women, consisting only of a few simple rods. A number of baskets of woven palm-leaves suspended from the beams above by grass-cordage, contain the scanty provisions of all kinds, salt, beans, rice, eggs, cotton, soap etc. These baskets take the place of chests and cupboards, and are thus hung aloft to protect the contents from the inroads of dogs, ants and children. Upon a longer line hangs a contrivance somewhat larger, perhaps three feet long by two wide, of twigs bound together, in construction similar to the traps in which boys catch titmice. The inside is covered with a piece of matting. Its purpose does not long remain a mystery, for a half naked Indian baby now and then lets his voice be heard; whereupon a push sets the basket in motion like a swing; and the little aeronaut is again brought to a state of slumber.

We entered the hut with the customary salutation. "Ave Maria!" — "En gracia concebida" was the reply of the man who was sitting upon a log of wood shelling

corn. A few chickens are assembled about him and greedily pick up the scattering kernels. These he now and then frightens away with one foot when they come too close. A few children, attired in the simple uniform of Paradise, were playing upon the floor. At our approach they with drew behind the mother, who was sitting upon the bare ground near the fire, engaged with her spindle, and stirring at intervals the pot over the fire with a stick. A few lean dogs were lying in the ashes. These raised their heads and set up a furious barking, which the master changed to a howl by hurling an ear of corn at their heads; which sent the uncalled for disturbers into the corner of the hut, where they were so unfortunate as to come into conflict with a setting hen, who defended her nest with the greatest outcry. Hereupon the Adamite in the aerial gondola awoke and brought himself into notice. The mother rose, leaned over the cradle, and quieted the little fellow by offering the breast.

"Could you sell us a little maize for our horses tied under the tree yonder, and provide us something for ourselves to eat?" inquired we of the Indian. A long discussion arose between the man and wife in the Indian language. They were unwilling to render the service, and replied repeatedly that they had nothing. We told them we only wanted a few eggs and beans with tortillas (maize-bread); and promoted our negotiations somewhat by showing our travelling-bottle and giving the man a draught from it. The urchin, who will not sleep any more, is bound like a little monkey upon the back of the mother, who with her burden kneels down before the stone, washes it, together with her own hands and arms, and proceeds to crush the half cooked maize and form it into flat cakes. A young stout-built Indian girl who has just arrived from the forest with a heavy load of dry wood assists in preparing the frugal meal, which contains as supplementary ground green Spanish pepper, an infernal dish, which burns the uninitiated to desperation, but by the Indians and Mestizoes is abundantly enjoyed at every meal. We are only able to talk a little with the man in bad Spanish.

The women and children use their Indian language only, which from their mouths sounds soft and pleasant. The people, like all the Indians, are peasants who down in the valley have their little field of maize that is just large enough to produce the year's supply. They also plant beans, pepper, tomatas, physalis, and solanum, sweet potatoes and cotton, but only enough of each for their own use. Every year a few swine are raised and sold, and also the chickens find their way to market in order to raise ready money for church and parish dues. The Indians in general, with their few wants, have abundance to live upon. In most instances they plant numerous fruit trees around their huts and make a considerable profit by the sale of the fruit. They collect and sell many sorts of raw products from the forest, gather pita and istle, (filaments of the bromelie and agave) work as day-labourers, in short have many ways of making their life more comfortable; but they nevertheless adhere to their old mode of living, and the money they earn, the men spend in drink on holidays, or bury it to keep it safe. The lot of the poor woman is much the hardest. She does the greater part of the labour and from the proceeds of it receives nothing.

The women get up at four in the morning make the fire and grind the maize for the morning soup, while the men sleep, rolled up in their blankets like mummies. After an hour the broth (atolli) is cooked, the men drink a basin-full and stretch themselves out again. Meanwhile the work at the grinding-stone goes on to prepare the bread for breakfast. Thus passes the whole day. The women draw the water, bring the wood, take care of the children, prepare the food three times a day, spin the cotton and weave articles of clothing for all the family. All the sewing, dying and washing devolves upon them. One often sees the whole family at the brook washing one garment after another while the wearer lies rolled up in a blanket waiting for them to dry. On Sunday the poor drudge must carry the fruit, or the earthen-ware, which is her manufacture, to market, an infant at the breast, a heavy burden upon her back and often a larger child on the top of it. Such a sight is often beheld along the roads leading to the villages.

With unwearied patience on their return they lead home the tipsy spouse, or if his drunken limbs refuse to support him longer, sit by him in wind and storm till the heavy mists have passed away from his brain. Poor creatures! who shall blame them that they unite themselves rather with the Mestizoes, with whom a less toilsome life awaits them, or that they now and then seize upon a fleeting pleasure which presents itself as a compensation for the thorns.

The extreme density of the population within, an invariable circumstance connected with an Indian dwelling, had driven us outside the hut, and we were sitting before the door. "How does it happen," says my companion, "that these children, rendered hardy as they are by exposure and by the simplest food, come to have bodies so out of all proportion to their little slender legs?" — "That", replied I, "is the result of their mode of living. The child is nursed long after he has been able to run alone. Meanwhile the mother enjoys every sort of food, even though she knows it to be injurious to the child, and neutralizes the prejudicial effect of it by allowing the child to share it with her. If she eats oranges she squeezes some of the juice into the child's mouth; if she drinks brandy the child receives its portion also. Such a diet necessarily sours and injures all the organs of digestion. After the child is weaned, its only food is maize-broth and bread or beans, and these it eats all day long without having any stated meal-times. The abdomen thus becomes affected with scrofulous swellings. Commonly they acquire the habit of eating earth and lime instinctively, to counteract the acidity of the stomach, and as soon as the parents notice it, they give them white-lead, their only remedy against earth-eating. Can we wonder that with such a diet the greater part of the children die under four years of age? When we also take into account that marriages are contracted very early in life, that through the intermingled family relations in the same village, hereditary disease is continually striking its roots deeper and deeper, that an almost exclusive vegetable diet allows the blood to degenerate, and that drunkenness unnerves the system of the men, it will no longer seem strange to us that the Indian population

is hardly on the increase, and that every great epidemic, such as the small-pox or cholera, causes an important retrogression!"

The subject of our conversation led us to speak of the usual diseases of the Indians and their remedies. In the regularly qualified physician they have no confidence. In every village there are a few old women to whom Aesculapius himself must yield. They understand the virtues of various plants and how to anoint and rub with different oils; know when it is necessary to place a black hen upon the feet of one sick of a fever, or to lay half a hen upon the abdomen to remove the inflammation, and understand also how to restore the stomach to its proper state when attacked by the cramp, a disease very common among the Indians. This latter operation is in the highest degree violent. The patient stretches himself upon a mat, and the old sibyl gets down upon his body with her knees, and pummels and kneads it with her clenched hands from the pit of the stomach downwards and sideways till the poor Lazarus groans and howls again. At last a broad girdle is tied about below the chest so that the stomach may not be again forced up out of its place.

The Temascale or steam-bath, the use of which among the Indians is of great antiquity, plays a conspicuous part in the cure of nearly all diseases. Imagine a little vault built up upon the level ground to the size of an oven and just high enough within to allow one to sit upright. Upon one side is a low entrance through which one is obliged to crawl upon all fours, and upon the adjoining or opposite side a stoke-hole which is closed within with broad flat fire-proof stones. Here, from the outside a fierce fire is built up till the stones are red hot. The bather now slips in through the hole, lays himself down upon a mat, and pours water upon the hot stones. This is at once converted into steam, which he brings into immediate contact with his body by means of a bundle of twigs. Two persons usually take the bath together, that they may be able to assist each other. When all the pores are open, cold water is thrown upon the patients, who are then rubbed and subjected to all the operations of a Russian bath. Both sexes apply this bath very frequently, simply to refresh themselves after severe labour, or for purposes of cleanliness (indeed one scarcely finds a house without a temascale), but it is also the universal remedy for all diseases. The third day after her confinement the woman takes the steam-bath. Whether the disease be typhus or inflammation, scrofula or tooth-ache, the patient must sweat for it; and if the result is obviously injurious, even if hundreds die after the bath, it nevertheless loses nothing of its reputation. The effect of the cold taken after the bath is often worse than the bath itself, since the temascale is never in the house, but in the neighbourhood of the same.

Indeed it may well be supposed that among so uncivilized a people, a deep-rooted superstition in matters of the healing art would play a conspicuous part. The Indian believes in witches (*naualli*) and imputes certain diseases to them which can only be opposed by magic; in the evil eye, the terror of small children (it is generally the result of a sour stomach), which the priest alone can cure by reading the gospel till the evil disappears. He fears the evil wind (*Checatl*) a malicious spirit

of the elements which dwells in the waters. Thus if an Indian suddenly is attacked by any kind of pain, such as rheumatism or choleric, *Checatl* is the cause of it. He falls to considering now what water he has last crossed; for there it is that the sprite has seized him. To this water a new pitcher is brought before daylight, together with some fresh maize-bread in a new cloth, a shell of maize-broth and another of chocolate. The name of the sick person is then pronounced three times in the empty pitcher with its spout turned towards the water, which is to induce the *Checatl* to come and accept of the present. For the same reasons the Indian is very careful of the children when they go over a bridge, and if one accidentally tumbles in, the spot where he falls is whipped, in order that the shadow may not continue to lie there, and thus be caught by the water sprites. It is in the highest degree worthy of notice how much this belief in water sprites resembles that of the German nations and the fables of the Greeks. In the depths of the rivers where they flow the most tranquilly and are overshadowed by the highest trees, dwells the *Atlantschana*, a sweet little figure that, floating along upon the water in a shell of many colours, sings enchantingly in the twilight, and all who approach the river, allured by her song, are drawn down under the waves. At the sources dwells the father of streams who, by night, walks about upon the shore tending his flocks, the fishes. The Indian also addresses his prayers to the mother of waters, when the rains have long failed, that she may send the clouds, and hang up votive offerings to her upon the mountain tops. In certain regions offerings of all sorts of food are even brought to the fountains, and offered to the nymphs upon the shore, that they may never withhold from the inhabitants an abundance of water.

It is only with great difficulty that one can arrive at these remains of the faith of former times, for they lead a life by themselves, and carefully conceal it from all who are not of their race. In another chapter, when describing Indian festivals, I shall mention many other similar observances, and for the present return to the hut, where our frugal meal has long been awaiting us.

A freshly plucked pisang leaf served us as a table-cloth. Two dishes stood before us containing black beans with a fried egg laid upon the top; the *malcachete* (I write the names as they are pronounced), a sort of earthen mortar, was filled with *tshilmole*, or broth of Spanish pepper, and a mountain of maize bread was served up in a *schikale* (dish of gourd-shell). When eating with the Indians one needs no spoon, nor knife and fork; these are articles of luxury unknown here, but instead, a piece of maize-bread, baked thin like a pan-cake, warm, dry and tasteless, is taken in each hand, and by this contrivance one manages, by bringing one hand to the assistance of the other to scoop up the food. With a little practice one gets along capitally, bites off a piece of the cake with each mouthful, and empties one's plate without greasing one's fingers. In the majority of instances the *Mestizoes* live in the same manner, but are better bred and speak better Spanish. On bringing the first dish they always use this expression: "blessed and praised be the holy Sacrament," to which the reply is: "for ever." After this, the host is prepared

to offer the customary salutation or wish that it may agree well with you, and if he joins you at table, before beginning to eat he makes a cross over his plate with the first piece of tortilla he breaks off. This pertains to people of quality, and distinguishes the Christian from the dog, as they are accustomed to say. Speaking of dogs, the lean creatures which had been so unceremoniously silenced on our arrival, now stood around us in a half circle with their tails between their legs, accompanying with their eyes every mouthful on its passage from the plate to the mouth, and receiving now and then a bit, which they caught with unerring dexterity. This, however, somewhat to our annoyance, attracted several black-bristled swine around us, that seemed to have no objection to hazarding a charge upon our supplies, and would have carried it perhaps into execution, had not the little urchins appeared, now no longer clad in their paradise robes, but provided with some slight covering — in one instance rather shorter than necessary to be sure — who, with clubs and cudgels proceeded to rid us of our troublesome guests. The last tortilla which we took served us for a napkin and was then thrown as booty to the dogs, who quarrelled violently over it, and frightened away the Zopelotes (vultures), who as last expectants had modestly waited in the back-ground. The Indian woman who had brought us the warm tortillas, I mean the young one, who was really very good looking, was as solemn as a Niobe, no doubt from bashfulness, and because she could not speak with us. So I asked her in her own language for some water: "Nelschmakes tepizatl." — "Kema Patzin" (yes Father), replied she, and had such a mischievous smile, as much as to say: Well here I am; ask what you will, I am ready to answer you. But my Indian studies were of too limited extent to allow me safely to venture further, and I avoided compromising myself, by directing my conversation to the host and inquiring about his crops.

The Indians have some difficulty in comprehending figures, and this is easily accounted for from the fact that they have a different numerical system from ours. While our system of numeration is founded upon the ten digits, the Aztec has constructed his according to the number of fingers upon one hand, and counts thus:

1	2	3	4	5						
se, ome, yei, nau, makuilli										
					6	7	8	9	10	
					tschikuase, tschikome, tschikuyei, tschikunau, matlactli,					
					11	12		13		
					matlactlionse,		matlactliomome,		matlactliomyei,	
							14	15		
					matlactlionnau, kaschtulli,					
					16	17		18		
					kaschtullionse,		kaschtulliomome,		kaschtulliomyei,	
							19	20		
					kaschtullionnau, sempoalli,					
sempoallionse sempoallionse etc., to twenty nine, and then thirty is formed: sempoalli-										

onimatlactli or twenty and ten. One now counts on to twenty and nineteen and calls forty ompoalli, or twice twenty. The twenties now form the great groups, sixty is three times twenty, yeipoalli; a hundred five times twenty, macuipoalli, two hundred, ten times twenty, matlacoalli. Thus we see that the fundamental numbers from one to four are repeated in every column, and at the conclusion of every five, a new word is formed till we reach twenty.

Twenty is already an incomprehensible amount for the Indian, as indeed many combinations indicate; for instance, sempoaschutschil: a many petaled double marigold; sempoatepatl: a mountain with many summits. When the Indian attempts head-reckoning he must do it of course according to his system, and has great difficulty in reducing the result to our decimal system, especially if it be over twenty. He knows that he often gets sadly cheated in consequence, and brings to the aid of his arithmetic all sorts of mechanical resources, such as maize kernels, beans etc. In this way our bill was reckoned up, which amounted to twelve quarters or three reals. Hereupon we parted good friends.

In the above I have given many glimpses at the domestic life of the Indians, and to complete the subject will add a few more particulars. Among these people there are some who are quite in advance, but nevertheless, their mode of life is not at all changed. One observes by the more spacious dwelling, which is lined with mats; by the altar which has a greater number of images, and is also furnished with a chandelier; by the multitude of parti-coloured dishes, pots and varnished calabashes, arranged upon a frame-work of stakes, that a wealthy man lives here. Such families have always their kitchen in a house by itself, and here sleep the whole family upon a simple mat on the ground, without any other pillow than a log of wood perhaps, without bolster or coverlet. In the colder season of the year, they all sleep with their feet towards the fire; but in summer, in the open air before the house.

The food of the Indians, as I have already mentioned, consists for the most part of vegetables, such as maize in all its various methods of preparation, beans squashes, and different kinds of roots and vegetables, which grow spontaneously in the fields, like the portulaca, phytolaca, cactus, palm-cabbage etc. They are very fond of fruits, and take great pains to cultivate them. Scarcely a meal passes without some sort of fruit, which is always eaten raw. The family all eat together, the women sit with crossed legs, the men squat upon their heels, and are served first. Their customary drink at meal-times and after meals is water, or upon the table-lands pulque. They also brew many sorts of fermented liquors, which they drink when they return from labour. In the lands bordering upon the sea-coast they drink the palm-wine or tuba, and also tepatsche or castile, prepared from the crude sap of the sugar cane with ananas or bananas, and made rather bitter by means of the mimosa root. Upon the table-lands, besides the pulque, the colonche (the fermented juice of the tuna, one of the species of cactus), is used for drink, also chicha, sentetscho and chilote. The latter is brewed from maize and barley, and consequently