there, like the smile of the eye before it closes in sleep, and the mountain valley of Orizaba, with its *petite* perfection of a termination, disappears from our view, perhaps forever; for the stage-coach gives way to the rail-coach, and leaves this grand defile on a side-track. Its path is on the northern side of these hills, through a like but not more lovely valley.

This summit properly concludes the Tierras Calientes. They are of two classes. The low flat belt which lies along the sea, and which extends back some fifty miles to the base of the mountains, and the first terrace of the hills. This terrace is about three thousand feet above the sea. It seems to engirt the whole Mexican range. It extends from Monterey to Oaxaca. Pronounce this "Whahaca," and you will find it easier to handle than it looks. On this shelf, not quite half-way up to the level of the capital, is found the most fruitful section of the country. Here are perched along the eastern side of the country such towns as Monterey, Jalapa, Cordova, Orizaba, Cuernavaca, and Oaxaca. This is the best region for the production of the banana, orange, coffee, sugar, and other semi-tropical fruits. The cocoa, pine-apple, rubber-tree, and other more tropical products belong to the plains by the sea.

This terrace, too, contains the favorite gardens of the land. Its cities have been the winter retreats of the rich men of the capital ever since the country was occupied by the Europeans. Jalapa lies the lowest, being sixty miles north-west of Vera Cruz. It is said to possess the finest view of gulf and mountain of any city. It was on the high-road to the capital before the railroad took a more southern route. Cortez passed up its pass, and Scott followed. To-day it is on a side-track. Its jalap, pronounced as it is spelled, brings grief to those children whose doctors adhere to the old practice. Should you adopt its Spanish pronunciation of halapa, you would avoid that disagreeable reminder.

Cordova and Orizaba are on the same side-hill, and are to-day the favorite resort of the Mexican gentry, the latter especially. Here, too, are the repair shops of the railroad, so that quite an English-speaking population is growing up about this spot. Cuernavaca, to the south, is on the same rich belt, and was the chosen seat of Cortez. We are yet four thousand feet from the top level of the land, though the crawl of an hour or two up the face of this dam has lessened that altitude.

Our mules have rested while this lesson on topography was being given, but they must now hurry forward, for night and danger are on us. Give your last glance into that deep south valley, that mountain-lined passway, that last of the villages of the Hot Lands.

A group of horsemen passed us when we were half-way up, red-jacketed, broad-and-slouched-hatted, well armed, dark, and dangerous looking. Were they spying out the contents of the coach? We easily change them into robbers; not so easily, however, as they may change themselves into that shape. Night comes swiftly down. One realizes the rapidity of the flight of Apollo in Homer —he came like night—in these tropical countries. Our three Mexicans are left at Orizaba, and their places are taken by a revolutionist general, with his carbine, and a Frenchwoman who had been hostess at a hotel most frequented by robbers on the pass from Puebla to Mexico, between Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl—not very encouraging comrades for weak nerves. Our first station is a great robber haunt. The Red Bridge it is called—whether from paint or blood, who knows? Fear says blood; fact, probably, paint.

The lady offers me a cigarette, which is graciously declined. She is offered in return a rich Cordova orange, hanging on its stem and among its green leaves. This is even more graciously accepted. But extremes meet. The next morning the orange was found knocking about the coach. So both the cigarette and Cordova failed of reaching the lips to which they were proffered. She lighted, and smoked, and expectorated as perfectly as the rebel general before her, and showed she was all ready to lead a revolution or vote for Lerdo, as circumstances and *pesos* might offer. The latter is the stronger circumstance here, as everywhere. Dollars outweigh scruples, whether of conscience or of the apothecary.

Buena confesion para retenerla.

The unsuccessful revolutionist said the people were getting sick of Lerdo. He did nothing. They wanted railroads and emigration; he opposed both. He was Spanish, and not American. When some one told Diaz, the rival candidate, that he would be the next President, "No," said he, "there will never be another President. By that time I shall be an American citizen." This is, much of it, the talk of the outs against the ins—mere bosh—Diaz probably being as little of an American as Lerdo after he gets elected. Yet some say that railroad enterprises will receive a check, and that the new President will install himself with the Church and reactionary and anti-American party. I doubt it. He is too wise. If so, the revolution is only the surer, swifter, and completer. I believe he will verify his antecedents, and lead the country in liberty, education, and improvement.

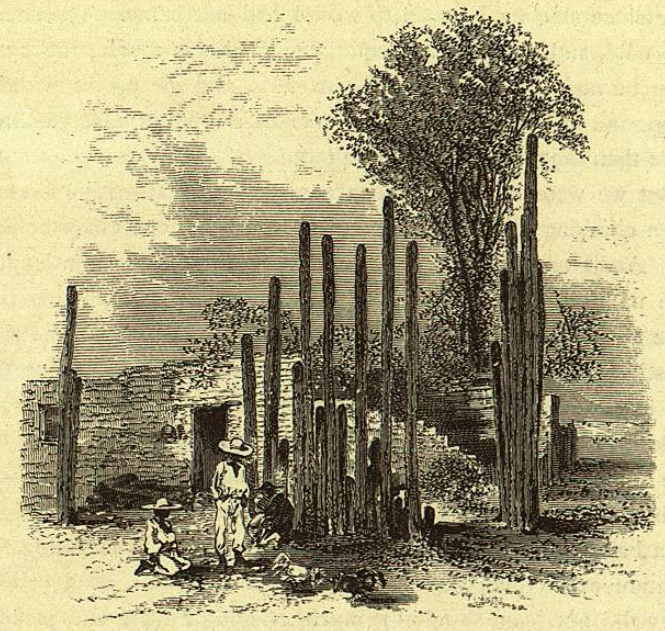
Ellos no son los antecedentes de P. Diaz

Our general debarks at the next station, and leaves the stage to three of us. Each takes a seat and stretches out *ad libitum*. Dust piles in on us as a covering, and, through the mouth, covering the inside as well as outside of the body. The moon shines clearly. "*Tres jolie pour le voyageur*," says the French lady. (Very pleasant for the traveler.) Indeed it is. The hills stand out clearly. The cactus hugs the dusty road, as thick-set as an English hedge or New England bramble-bushes on a country roadside. Its tall leaves tower like huge crowns, and show not so much the richness of the soil as the intensity of the heat. The organ variety is quite frequent, and looks, as it lines the road in the gray moonlight, as if we were riding through Springfield Arsenal. This does not make the terror less, unless we change the feeling, and fancy our road is through a vast organ. That changes the night to music, though we can not quite complete the quotation, and say,

> "The cares infesting the day
> Have folded their tents like Arabs,
> And silently stole away."

Cares, or fears, which are the soul of cares, still encamp about. A few shots from the sun will scatter them all. Here we are, six

or seven thousand feet above the sea, and here flourish the huge-leaved plants that only hot-houses can raise in the upper States, and they at their best in but a puny shape. Crosses at the roadside show where some have been murdered, and help along our fears and faith with their *memento mori*.



THE ORGAN CACTUS.

The moon goes down as we drive at ten o'clock through the still streets of Saint Augustine, as still as when we leave them three hours later. Not a person or creature is abroad. The adobe huts are all closed, and every donkey ceases to bray and every dog to bark. The court-yard welcomes us, and a supper, not over-relished or over-relishable, and a bed, exceedingly relished. Out in that court-yard the tropical plants are diffusing their fragrance on the dark, soft, summer January air, as we hie us to our wished-for couch.

Three hours, and we are roused up, and are soon off. The mule-boy, well clad now against the cold, waves his flambeau, and the coach rattles out of the sleeping town.

The host has loaned us blankets and pillows, and we make our beds on the racking seats. The roads are bad here, and no mistake; at least they seem so in that two of the clock in the morning. Napoleon said that two-of-the-clock-in-the-morning courage was the most difficult to find. I agree with him. For the first time since starting I began to wish I had not come. The coach was cold, and knocked us about; the road was rough; the flambeau burned out; and aches and chills, and sleepiness without sleep, and perils by robbers, all made a mixture that required more than that sort of courage to face.

But we were in for it, and there was no retreat. Like Cortez, when climbing this same range, we had burned our boats behind us. *Nulla vestigia retrorsum.* So on we drag our slow length. The mules seem terribly lazy. We are sure that the mule-boy does not stone the head ones enough, nor the driver lash the rear ones. I had enjoyed (I fear I must confess it), when sitting on the top in the afternoon, seeing the boy shy stones at the three front mules. There are three tiers of mules—two in the thills, three before them, and three in front. The three leaders can not be reached by the driver's lash, and so the boy who accompanies him picks up a bag of stones, and lets them drive, one at a time, hitting the creature every time, and just where he aims—flank, neck, or ear. They did not seem to mind it much, cringing a little, and picking up a little, but not much of either.

The robbers do not make their appearance, the only disappointment we suffer. The weary hours drag along from two to five, when

> "Night's candles are burned out, and jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-top."

How great the change that comes over the tired half-sleepers! My companion had fulfilled one Scripture, and I, having compelled him to go with me to Orizaba, went twice the distance of his own accord. He wakes and chatters. Madame the cigarettist rouses and rises. As a fond lover said on a fonder occasion, "Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily," so is it here. Popocatepetl puts

in his appearance and Iztaccihuatl. (I want you to learn to pronounce these, so I keep inserting them. Do not skip them; they are very easy when you get the hang of them. Take them just as they look, and look at them that you may take them, remembering that "hu" is like "*wh.*") How quiet and grand they look in their glittering whiteness; the former a rounded dome of the Orizaba type, the latter a range of peaks, with less form and comeliness.

"Our Em'ly" lights her cigarette, and smokes as calmly as the smoking mountains, which do not smoke. I have seen no sign of a volcano in any of them. She is from near Strasbourg; and when she was told she was no longer French, but German, "No, no!" she exclaimed; "*Français toujours! L'Allemand barbare!*" But she was not French forever, and if Germany is barbarous, it succeeds.

The Indian village of Tepeaca is soon entered. A town when Cortez landed, and all Indian to-day, as is about all the rest of the country, it was a favorite place for him to retreat upon, and had no small influence in deciding his fortunes. It looks to-day as if it never could have influenced the fortune of the lowest nature, much less that of this lordly invader.

Soon the flame-shots come. The sun breaks suddenly and superbly on the black and weary night. Never before did I so feel the power of that other verse sung at the grave's mouth, the beginning of the night of death,

> "Break from thy throne, illustrious Morn!"

What a shout will ring through the universe when that day triumphs forever over that long, long night of dusty death!

A cup of chocolate and a fresh roll, served by Indian dames, and we rattle down hill twenty-five to thirty miles, to Puebla. The fields open wide to the bases of the P. and I. aforesaid. You can pronounce them if they are not printed in full. Corn-stalks are standing in the fields, and in some instances the corn is being gathered. Melinchi, a high mountain anywhere but here, rises on our right, opposite the snow volcanoes. It is named for the favor-

ite Indian mistress of Cortez, who, more than all other persons, helped him to conquer. It is the haunt of robbers, and its caves are dens of thieves.

We stop only once to change horses and to buy some pretty steel trinkets, pushed into our faces by boys and men, who seem to find the only patronage for quite extensive steel works in these passing travelers. They offer little flat-irons, spurs, cuff-buttons, and other well-executed articles of embossed steel.

The towers of Puebla soon come to view, and a long, wide, dusty thoroughfare, poorly kept up, leads us to the vale where the sacred city lies, seemingly close at the base of Iztaccihuatl, but actually sixty miles from it. We pass the fort over which French and Mexicans fought, by churches and churches and churches, into narrow, busy, well-paved streets, to our hotel court-yard, whence, after the immeasurable dust has been measurably removed, we go to the dépôt and start for Mexico. As we shall return here again, we leave it for the present undescribed.

If you want to know that luxury of modern civilization, the rail-car, put between the beginning and ending of your journey a twenty-two hours' stretch of staging in a mountain land. Then you will relish it. How vast these plains outspread themselves! What a change from the narrow terrace of the coast and the tumbled-up steepness of the intermediate country! We climbed seven to eight thousand feet from the base of Chiquihuite to Tepeaca, a distance of not over one hundred and fifty miles. It was all Cumbres. Here we have prairies as flat and broad as those of Illinois, but not as rich; yet, unlike them, bounded with magnificent hills, snow-covered and smoking, and black and comely. What would not Chicago give for just one of them? The road runs about a hundred miles through a dry, and lean, and level land.

At Epizaco, the halting-place and half-way house between Mexico and Puebla, we get a glimpse of the three snow peaks, the only place where I have seen them together. Orizaba lies low; his stony British stare being seen just above the horizon, while his up-

land rivals stand out in all their proportions. He is lower, not because of actual inferiority, but because he is farther down this orange of earth. They are all of nearly equal height.

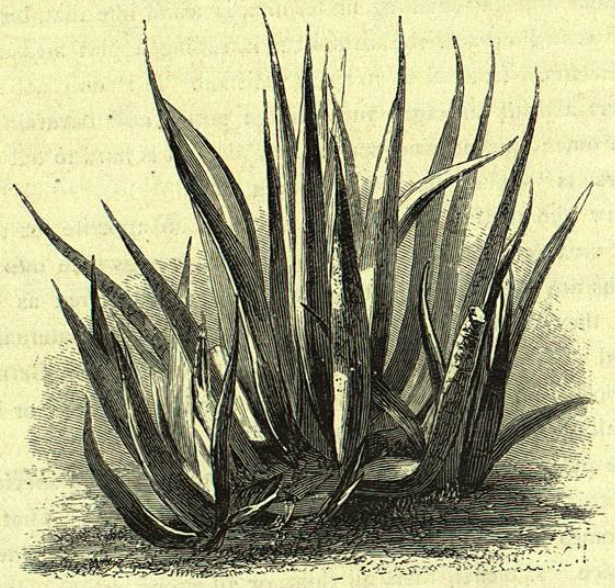
Here, too, we get not only our last look at Orizaba, but our first at a filthy habit of man. Old folks and children thrust into your noses, and would fain into your mouths, the villainous drink of the country—pulqui. It is the people's chief beverage. It tastes like sour and bad-smelling buttermilk, is white like that, but thin. They crowd around the cars with it, selling a pint measure for three cents. I tasted it, and was satisfied. It is only not so villainous a drink as lager, and London porter, and Bavarian beer, and French vinegar-wine, and Albany ale. It is hard to tell which of these is "stinkingest of the stinking kind." No tan malo.

How abominable are the tastes which an appetite for strong drink creates! The nastiest things human beings take into their mouths are their favorite intoxicants. If administered as medicines, they would never taste them, except under maternal and uxorial constraint. And yet the guzzlers of England, Germany, America, and Mexico pour down huge draughts of sour or bitter stuff, all for the drunk feeling that follows.

The pulqui is a white liquor found in the maguey, a species of the cactus. It grows eight years uselessly as a drink. That year it becomes yet more useless by depositing in its centre a bowl of this juice. If picked then, all right, or all wrong, rather. Just as this central bulb is beginning to swell with its coming juices, it is scooped out, and a hole big enough to hold a pail is made in the bottom of the middle of the plant. Into this cavity for three or four months the juice exudes, and is taken out by the pailful daily. If the plant is left alone, this bulb shoots into a stalk ten to twelve feet high, with a blossom. It is this blossom which is exhibited in our States as the century-plant—a seven to ten years', and not a hundred years', blossom. Then it comes to seed and naught.

The chief traffic of the road is in carrying this stuff to Puebla and Mexico. It lies at the station in pig-skins and barrels, the pigs looking more hoggish than ever, as they lie on their backs

and are tied at each leg and at the nose, stuffed full of this foolish stuff. It ferments fiercely, and the barrels are left uncorked and the pigs' noses unmuzzled to prevent explosion. You will see the natives sticking their noses into the hog's nose, and drinking the milk of this swinish cocoa-nut, even as they are dumping it on the platform. Never was like to like more strikingly exhibited than in such a union of hogs and men.



MAGUEY PLANT.

Thousands of acres are set out with the plant, a few feet apart, in every state of growth, from a month to its octave of years, when it sees its corruption, and the people begin theirs.

So have I seen, as Jeremy Taylor would say, the Connecticut Valley filled, from Hartford to Brattleborough, with a like large and deep green shrub, growing each by itself, putting forth broad leaves, not for the bowl of juice at its heart, but for the leaves themselves, which are not for food or drink, but for smoke. Shall the deacons and class-leaders and vestrymen of the only New England river valley find fault with these untrained and unchristianized Indians

Tambien la guerra al tabaco, Sr. Puritano?

for making their soil to bring forth only one article, when they are in the same condemnation?

And worse—for this maguey plant is useful for many things, though it has one failing: the tobacco-plant is useful for nothing. They use its leaves for all sorts of purposes: twine and paper, even needle and thread, roof and shelter. It is the good demon of the Aztec house. Though it does get drunk once in eight years, it is sober all the rest of the time. Our maguey is nothing if not narcotizing. True Christianity will, we trust, cure that defect, and make Mexico and New England and the West, in its abuse of barley and rye, alike free from the perversion of the gifts of God to our own unrighteousness.

The train sweeps round the mountain range of P. and I., and we come to their western side. Puebla is on the east of them. The sun pours a flood of glory over yet more western summits. Our friend quietly says, "There is Mexico."

It does not take long to look and admire. It lies under the blaze, a dim mass of points of fire. Its surroundings overcome us with their grandeur. Twelve miles away, where he spoke that word, is the eastern extremity of the lake on whose western end the city is situated. The brown spurs of Iztaccihuatl lie close to the edge of the lake. The land about it is almost on a level with it; salt marshes, in which the white alkali makes them look like snow. All round the farther sides of the lake black mountains stand. Other lakes lie hidden from our eyes about their bases. The water flashes in the setting sun.

Up these lowest spurs close beside us Cortez climbed and saw the wondrous valley and its waters, prairies, hills, purple and snow mountains, and resplendent city, and he vowed that it should be subdued to the Cross. With fearful expenditure of blood he accomplished his purpose, and gave it a bloody cross, instead of bloody sacrifice of human life. Looking from a like point out of this car window, the product itself of true Christianity, may we not imitate Cortez, and pledge the city that lieth like the very mount of God, in magnificence unequaled by any capital of earth, and all the sur-

Este viajero es miope p.a todo menos p.a el protestantismo.

rounding region, not to a persecuting and debilitating Christianity, but to one that comes without a sword, comes with an open Bible, a joyful experience, a holy life, education, comfort, refinement for all, the true Cross and Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, who created this scene and its inhabitants for His own praise and glory? May they soon all glorify Him!

Soon Otumba appears, where Cortez fought his greatest fight, without a gun, or pistol, or horse, reduced with a score of reckless followers to the level of his foes. As he debouched through yonder western hills on this broad plain, after the Noche Triste, he met here hundreds of thousands of the Aztecs in solid rank. Cutting his way through till his arm and sword failed, seeing the palanquin of the chief, rushing for it, and striking him dead, he sends a panic into the multitude, who let him through to these lower spurs round which we have just run, on whose farther side, looking toward Puebla, or Cholula then, dwelt his faithful allies, the Tlascalans, who received him, and helped him organize a victory that has continued until now.

Not far from Otumba stand forth two pyramids of earth, like those of Cholula, called the Sun and Moon, each several hundred feet square and high, on a geometric line with each other as perfect as a Hoosac Tunnel engineer could have carved them, each now surmounted with a tiny chapel, emblem of their conversion to the Roman faith. They are the only Aztec remains of mark in all the valley; and they are probably Toltec, an ante-Aztec race, to which that warlike people were indebted for all their arts and refinements, perhaps also for their horrid barbarities of worship.

Guadalupe now appears on the right, a sierra not three miles from the city, the most sacred mountain of Mexico or America, and the most profane. A *via sacra* ran from it to the town, on which the penitent myriads walked upon their knees. Now our train rushes along it, regardless of shrines and kneelers and other vanities of faith. The worshipers have accepted the situation, and ride to and from the favorite seat of their goddess in the railway car, even as pilgrimages are now going on over Europe in first

and third class trains. The times change, and we change with them.

The city glitters in the light of the setting sun. Its last beams are gathering on the peaks of the silent Alps that stand forth on our eastern sky, as they had stood on the western when at Puebla. We have run clear round them. They change their light to color, grow rosy in that flush sent from between the saws of Ajusco on the west, and then turn to the awful white of death.

Ere that the Hotel Gillow has welcomed us to its comfortable chambers, and we are housed like Cortez in the Aztec capital.