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INTRODUCTION.

In this chronicle—which I hope is not altogether gratuitous—of our travels and adventures in Mexico I have endeavored to answer some of those questions which present themselves to the tourist upon the eve of departure for that country. Such queries often remain unanswered, for, as our neighbor republic is constantly changing, the guide-books speedily become ancient history, while the really artistic folders furnished by the railways and the tourist agencies treat only of their own particular routes and consequently give but slight glimpses of the landscape and the people. While aiming to supply this lack I have also in these pages, which are transcribed almost literally from my notebook, endeavored to bring our neighbor over the way a little nearer to us, hoping that we may some day know her better and learn to feel for her the interest of a sympathizing elder sister.

To know our neighbor it will be necessary to visit her, and she is well worthy a visit. It is true that

she is given over to germs so that we were almost forced to believe that the Mexicans belonged to the great Germanic race; nevertheless the cities of Mexico are not so offensive as Constantinople or even some of the cities of southern France and Italy, while her balmy air, her magnificent ruins and her prehistoric architecture compensate, in some degree, for her lack of pictorial art. It is also true that we missed the Pullman cars and the many creature comforts of our latter-day civilization, but it is a wholesome experience for the twentieth century American to revert again for a season to the simple ways of his fathers.

In the future our country will doubtless be brought into closer and closer relations with the Spanish-American nations of this continent. The only way we can deal justly with them is to endeavor to see things as far as possible from their point of view. Although this point of view may often seem to us childish and puerile, we may, nevertheless, while leading our neighbors up the steep grade of civilization, also chance to learn something of them. We might even take a lesson in that graceful idleness which would be such a relaxation to the strain of our busy lives, for if we do not speedily mend our ways it is not an utter impossibility that long after the Anglo-Saxon race on this continent shall have died out from overwork

and nervous exhaustion the Latins of Mexico may languidly roll their cigarettes under the shadow of the trees and sleepily speculate upon the causes of our downfall.

But let us dismiss these unwelcome imaginings and come back to the present which is still our own. Do you, my tourist friend, take with you on your journey to Mexico a happy philosophy for hardships and a disposition to see in her people neither spectacles nor beggars, but kindly neighbors? Live as nearly as possible an Aztec idyl with the idle Aztecs and make little use of your nose. Study your Prescott on the spot and know the romance of the land and the people and realize if you can that this toiling multitude is the same proud race that defied Cortés, that threw off the Spanish yoke, that put the army of the United States upon its mettle, that repelled the French invasion. From its humble ranks has risen many an apostle of freedom, many a hero.

And what does it matter if the modern Mexican be a little careless of his dates and his figures—what if he does forget his appointments to-day? For him a to-morrow is coming as full of sunshine and soft airs as the present, and after that another to-morrow, and another and so on, indefinitely; so why should he distress himself that the duty of the moment is unfulfilled? Has he not good sense on

his side? In our neighbor's opinion all desirable things are hidden in the *manana*, therefore let us hope that in the *mananas* to come Mexico may find a glorious future for her government and her people.

H. W. S.

Rockford, Ill., November, 1899.

MEXICAN VISTAS.

CHAPTER I.

When we—Ahasuerus and I—made ready for a winter in Mexico, we neglected one important precaution—we were not vaccinated; a mistake which, later, caused me much anguish of spirit. Many a night, as I tossed sleeplessly on my hard pallet while the wicked flea pursued me, I imagined myself in the first stages of the smallpox. I arranged my worldly affairs, disposed of my humble belongings, and in my mind's eye saw myself going home as fast freight. My first bit of advice, then, to the traveler intending to visit Mexico is—be vaccinated.

While temporarily disabled by vaccination it is a wise thing to study Spanish—not the Spanish of Cervantes or of Calderon—but those minor classics as presented by the Meisterschaft or any good Natural Method Primer, for it is very convenient, even if you cannot discuss abstruse subjects in the