

mines, its cotton factory, and its aqueduct. I do not know just where the opal mines are; indeed I could not hear of any one who had ever seen an opal mine, or who knew just how, or where, the stones were obtained. It is sufficient for the non-elect to know that there are opal mines somewhere near Querétaro, and that, for a consideration, more or less satisfactory to the purchaser, the gems can be bought by the traveler. Buying Mexican opals is, however, like adopting a baby; it may turn out well and it may not. The only safeguard for an intending purchaser of the precious stones is to engage as traveling companion an expert lapidary.

The Hercules cotton factory in the suburbs of Querétaro is the largest in Mexico. All around the factory, in a climate wonderfully adapted to the raising of cotton, lie waste lands; yet more than half of the cotton used in the manufacture of the fabrics comes from the United States. The aqueduct, whose graceful outlines can be seen long after passing the town, was presented to Querétaro by a public-spirited citizen. It brings water from the mountains several miles away and distributes it to all the public fountains and reservoirs. It is unfortunate that the generous gift is so little appreciated by the people and the city government; certainly Querétaro's inhabitants are dirty and its streets are by no means clean.

CHAPTER VIII.

One of the interesting sights between Querétaro and the Capital is the great drainage canal of Nochistongo. It is called the drainage canal that does not drain, but it has in its time drained the Mexicans of both life and money. It was begun two hundred years ago. The first few years of the enterprise the lives of 75,000 Indians were sacrificed; but in spite of this price paid in blood and brawn, within twenty years of the beginning of the canal, the City of Mexico was overflowed to the depth of three feet, and the streets were passable only in boats. This flood lasted five years, and the Spanish king ordered the city to be removed to the higher ground near Chapultepec, but the order was never carried out. At the present day the canal, one of the greatest engineering works in the world, an enterprise which was begun by the celebration of masses, and with the blessing of the Church, is one of the magnificent ruins of Mexico.

It was not yet daylight when we crossed the double rim of the valley of Mexico, and saw before

us in the pink dawn the fairy basin with its shining lakes and its snow-crowned mountains. A short whirl through garden-like villages, and we were in the Capital. Our first introduction to the city of the old Aztecs could hardly be considered satisfactory. The town was crowded by an excursion party, and the few hotels were full. We drove to the Hotel Jardin in a cloud of dust raised by the brooms of the street-sweepers, and incidentally we were "dampened down" by the watering pots of the street-sprinklers. We were not therefore in a humor to view with favor the impossible rooms offered for our consideration by the urbane landlord of the Jardin. After applying fruitlessly at the Sanz, the Iturbide, and the Hotel del Opera, we were so fortunate at last as to find shelter at the Coliséo, where we had an elevator, electric lights, hot and cold water, and a charming balcony opening from our parlor upon the street. We have the pleasantest remembrances of the Coliséo, and always upon our return to the Capital we sought its friendly roof. Within two minutes' walk of the hotel there are three good French restaurants and numberless cafés.

Public transit in the City of Mexico is cheap, and fairly comfortable. The intricacies of the street-car lines are easily mastered. They all start from the principal plaza, and return there. The first-

class cars are painted yellow, the second-class green. In both classes of cars the men and often the women smoke continually, so that one who is sickened by tobacco smoke would do well to avoid them. The funeral cars, which are painted black or white, have a sad interest for strangers. The Mexican public carriages carry little tin flags, blue for the first-class, red for the second, and yellow for the third. As the first-class cabs become antiquated they drop in grade to second and finally to third class. The blue-flag cabs, which charge 75 cents a trip, or \$1.50 an hour, are as good as the best public carriages in New York or Chicago. The red-flag cabs, price 50 cents a trip, or \$1 an hour, are fairly clean and comfortable, while the yellow-flag cabs, 25 cents a trip, or 75 cents an hour, are the cheapest and the shabbiest things in Mexico.

We were in the Capital at the time of the destruction of the Maine. The Mexicans, as a nation, sympathized with the United States, and the jubilee over the affair held by the Spanish clubs was sternly frowned down by the general public. Nevertheless a large sum of money was sent by Spanish sympathizers to Spain, and the largest contributor to the fund was the landlord of a hotel which had been best patronized by the Americans all winter. American money does really "talk," but sometimes it talks on the wrong side.



A STREET IN THE CAPITAL.

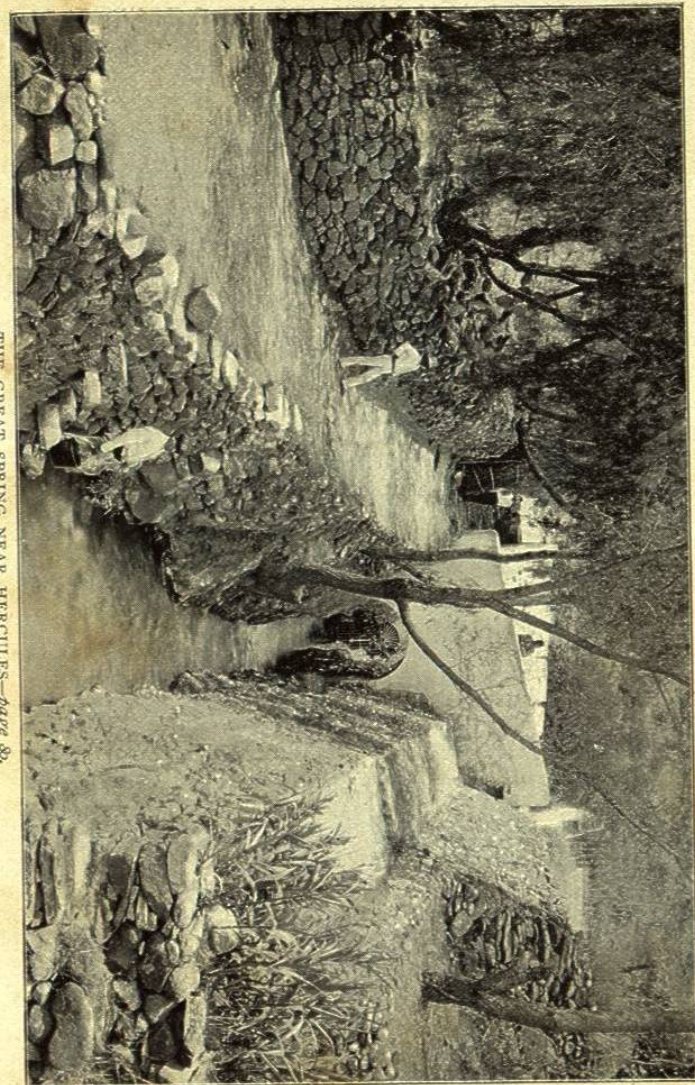
From politics to shopping is a sudden jump, but none too sudden for my agile sex. A day or two before our departure for Mexico Ahasuerus found me standing with a puzzled air before the empty trunks. "What are you doing?" he inquired, marveling. "Why don't you pack up?" "I don't know what to pack," I answered, disconsolately. "That's soon settled," he responded. "Take every garment we own, and then we can buy what we need in the City of Mexico." Ahasuerus, as you see, is an old traveler, but for once his experience was at fault. As I foolishly followed his advice and

neglected to stock up with the many trifles necessary to a tourist in a warm climate, I was always short of supplies, for I never found those shops so vaunted of the guide books, that are "equal to anything in Paris, London and New York." Doubtless the resident in Mexico who speaks the language fluently, knows where to go and understands the Mexican goods, can shop successfully; but for everything imported he will be obliged to pay at least as much as in the United States. Only native products are cheap in Mexico, and the soul of woman yearns for something besides drawn-work, feather-work, and Mexican pottery.

One of the best things in the City of Mexico is the Mexican Herald—a practical, wide-awake, philanthropic newspaper. Last winter it was making a brave stand for the work of the Humane Society, whose half-dozen members were fighting for the woefully wronged dumb creatures of Mexico. The puny, wailing, wan-eyed babies, the bleeding-backed burros, and the cruelly bitted and spurred horses, sicken and appall the tender heart. The Mexicans are sinfully prolific, yet out of a family of a dozen or fifteen children not more than a third attain maturity. A large percentage of these poor innocents is consequently soon out of misery, but who can estimate the sum of suffering endured by a long-lived animal like the burro? The Herald says,

and with justice, that it is impossible to influence Mexicans to treat animals kindly so long as they see American women, who claim to be not only civilized but philanthropic, crowd to the bull-rings and applaud the performance. It is a well-known fact, and Mexicans are not slow to appreciate it, that bull-fights are often gotten up for the amusement of the great excursion parties. The people of the United States should not forget that in this matter they are their "brothers' keepers," and clearly have a responsibility toward their neighbors.

Besides the professional bull-rings and cock-pits, which exist in every Mexican city, and to which admittance can be gained by every one who pays a small fee, there is a growing fashion among the clubs and societies of organizing amateur bull-fights. These are society functions and are attended by the fashionables only. Both the professional and amateur toreadors are generally men, but among the excitements of last winter were the achievements of the "señorita (young lady) bull-fighters." These women contrived by slow degrees to mangle and kill the hapless creatures pitted against them. The horrifying spectacle was taken by the audience as a good joke, and the admiring public flung balls of darning cotton and spools of thread at the fair señoritas instead of the usual offering of cigarettes.



THE GREAT SPRING NEAR HERCULES—page 86.

One of the most popular places of amusement in the City of Mexico is Orrin's Circus, where everything in the line of theatricals, from the minstrels to light opera, is presented. It is perfectly respectable and well-managed, and is a proper resort for women and children. The fashionable theater is the National, but the Teatro Principal is the favorite place of entertainment. As in Cuba, one buys tickets, not for the whole play, but for one act only. After the first act, the buyer is free to leave, or to buy again, as best pleases him. This sampling of theatrical presentations has much to recommend it to our own theater goers, who must often remain through wearisome acts, or lose the money they have invested.

My first experience in theater going in the Capital was an unhappy one. I went, as I should have gone at home, without head covering, for it never occurred to me, in that land of lace mantillas and rebosas, to do otherwise; but, to my confusion, I found myself conspicuous as the only unbonneted woman in the house. The Americans who complain so bitterly of the big hat nuisance in the theaters would be miserable in Mexico, where the women wear the most enormous picture hats I ever beheld. As usual their faces were powdered to ghastliness, and they had a tawdry, overdressed air, but at least there were no bleached blondes

among them, for the Spanish women all wear their own pretty black hair, which forms the proper frame for their dark, handsome faces; although, for some reason, doubtless on account of the dry air of the plateau, the tresses of the Mexicans, which are of the same beautiful blue-black color as those of the Cubans, are not so abundant.

On this occasion of our first visit to the theater, as the performance was execrable, we were ready to go at the end of the first act. The orchestra, had it chosen to play good music, was not so bad; but none of the company could sing, and our knowledge of Spanish was not sufficient for us to enjoy the repartee which seemed to delight the audience. In consideration of the unsatisfactory nature of the play, it is, perhaps, hardly patriotic to mention the fact that the actors, although they spoke Spanish fluently, had distinctly the air of Americans, and we were convinced that the basso was a Georgian negro. With the exception of this basso, the actors and the audience were all white.

When I related the story of my blunder in going to the theater without headgear to a sympathizing American woman, who has lived for many years in Mexico, she soothed me with the assurance that if I had gone the next night, I should probably have seen many uncovered heads. "They take their cue from the Americans," she said. "Doubtless the last

party of American excursionists who visited the theater wore bonnets, a fashion which no American until now has nullified by example." Although this comforting opinion healed my wounded feelings, I could not wholly accept it. The Mexican women have entirely too good an eye for the pretty coquetries of dress to depend for their models upon their neighbors. If this be a true view of the case, however, the stray American woman must certainly feel a crushing sense of responsibility in regard to headgear and other righteous examples.

CHAPTER IX.

If the traveler would thoroughly understand the City of Mexico he should have an intimate acquaintance with her history and be able to picture in imagination her ancient conditions. Cortés found the Capital floating, like Venice, upon the water, the houses supported by piles resting upon the bed of Lake Texcoco. According to Prescott, the city of 300,000 inhabitants was solidly and handsomely built, and was traversed by three main causeways of cemented rock. These causeways were intersected by canals, crossed by bridges. But Mexico no longer sits, like a huge water-fowl, upon the bosom of the lake. Owing to the great drainage canal, and to natural evaporation, the shores of Lake Texcoco have receded, and are now nearly three miles from the city; so that Mexico is compelled to float, if she floats at all, upon her smells. Certainly they are strong enough to bear her up. These omnipresent smells do not come from the streets, which are really kept clean, but

from the houses, whose sewers empty into the gutters. The city, from its situation in the very bottom of the basin, with the water lying always within three feet of the surface, must naturally be unhealthy. Great things are, however, expected from the new drainage canal, which, it is hoped, will do away with the unsanitary conditions.

As you will remember, Cortés was received with kindness by the Aztec emperor, Montezuma, who, in spite of the protests of his heir, Guatemotzin, and the murmurs of the people, loaded the Spaniard with gifts and marks of favor. The Spaniard, true to his nature, repaid the gentle monarch with insolence, robbery, and imprisonment. Montezuma, betrayed and heartbroken, died in six months, and Guatemotzin drove the invaders from the city. The Spaniards took their flight along the main causeway, but the bridges had been broken down and the canal was filled with the barges of the infuriated caciques. The cavaliers, weighed down by their armor and the treasure of gold and silver which they were endeavoring to carry out of the city with them, proved an easy prey to the exasperated Aztecs, who, in those few moments of mad slaughter, avenged the insults and the cruelties of many months.

Along this main causeway, down which the Spaniards fled, and which is now one of the principal

streets of the city, are many points of historic interest. At the head of the causeway is the Alameda, or the great city Park. The spot was, in the time of Montezuma, the Indian market place. Later on, in the time of the Viceroy, it was the place for the execution of criminals and the burning of heretics, and the Church of San Diego, at the west end of the park, was approved by an old writer as giving a "beautiful view of the burning place." The Alameda, with its flower plots and sparkling fountains, gives no hint of the former horrors enacted there; nevertheless there is a blot even now upon its beauty—the fine building erected by the Mexican government where the government lotteries are drawn. It is too much, perhaps, to hope that a Spanish-American will ever cease to be a gambler. At all events the United States will find the question a serious one in dealing with their new possessions—for Mexicans, Cubans, Porto Ricans, and doubtless Filipinos also are born gamblers.

As we stroll down the causeway we pass "Alvarado's Leap," the spot where one of the brave lieutenants of Cortés, finding the bridge down and all hope of escape cut off, to the awe and admiration of the pursuing foe, jumped the chasm. History does not record the exact length of this jump, but it is described as beyond human possibility. Nevertheless Alvarado's conduct, both before and after this

feat, is a guarantee that he was extremely human. Further down the causeway, where the loss of Spanish life was heaviest, is the pretty Church of the Martyrs, where masses are continually said for the dead. The spot is easily identified by the smells, for the dead and gone martyrs—or some of the living ones—still taint the air. Nevertheless the church is an interesting one, and contains some particularly fine copies of Murillo's Holy Family of the National Gallery, and the Immaculate Conception of the Louvre. Near the Church of the Martyrs is a monument to the patriot Morelos, the last victim of the Inquisition in Mexico. When we remember that Morelos was executed in 1814, almost within the memory of living men, the Inquisition seems very near to us.

The Mexican Pantheon—the Church of San Fernande—is also situated upon the causeway. In the little Campo Santo attached to San Fernande lie many of Mexico's greatest men. Here sleeps Juarez, under a marble canopy, entirely covered with bead wreaths. The monument of the great president is a figure of the Republic, holding in her arms the dying hero. This beautiful work of art, one of the very finest in Mexico, is by the brothers Yslas, who have shown a true appreciation of their subject. Other patriots who lie in San Fernande are Morelos, Guerrero, and Zaragossa. Miramon

and Mejia are also buried there, but there are no bead wreaths on their tombs, for Mexico, although she may forgive her enemies, does not honor them. Maximilian, who died with Miramon and Mejia, lies in the beautiful castle of Miramir on the Adriatic. In front of San Fernande, in the pretty park, is a monument to Guerrero, one of Mexico's favorite heroes.

At the end of the causeway, in the village of Tlacopan, now called Tacuba, is the great tree under which Cortés sat down and wept. All seemed lost; he had burned his ships, and every hope of escape was cut off. He was surrounded by an enraged foe; of his little army only a handful remained, and his heart sickened as he thought of the horrible fate of his captive comrades, reserved for the sacrificial fires of the Aztecs. Well might it be for Cortés a "sad night."

If the reader knows his Prescott as he should—for, whether authentic or not, it is a marvelous story—he knows that, in the end, the Spaniards were sufficiently strong and wily to conquer the country and make of it a Spanish province. Consequently it is the mixed blood of Spaniard and Indian which flows in the veins of the Mexican of to-day. This half-breed is not born to the inheritance of joyousness that the Cuban is, whose few drops of negro blood put quicksilver into his nature. The Mexi-

can has all the pomposity of the Spaniard and all the stolidity of the Indian. He wraps himself in his graceful serape and with a stately "Pardon me" walks the earth, believing himself its master. It is true that the upper classes in the Mexican cities have adopted the American dress—or some modification of it—but they keep all the old-time stately ceremonials of the Spaniard.

The hospitality of these lordly persons is almost oppressive. When the stranger enters a house, he is assured by his host, "It is yours, Señor, accept it"—and his it remains—in the assurance of the free-handed Don—as long as he chooses to stay, albeit his soul is never gladdened by the sight of the title deeds properly signed and registered. The same apparent generosity is shown in the matter of furniture, horses, and jewels. If the stranger admires a pin, a ring, a cane, "It is yours," again exclaims the gracious Mexican, and he urges its acceptance in terms so pressing that the admirer is at loss for words to refuse the proffered gift. But woe to the practical American who mistakes this pretense for real generosity. A certain countryman of ours, who had most unwillingly accepted a horse that was fairly forced upon him, because he no longer dared refuse it, was made aware of his mistake in the most disagreeable manner. "What sort of a man is that friend of yours?" inquired the

donor of an acquaintance of the recipient. "He must be a thief; he has taken my horse."

Every social relation, even the most ordinary forms of courtesy, is tinctured with this ceremonious insincerity. To the traveler the Mexican bows and grimaces, which mean nothing at all, are, at first, amazing. I watched one day in a horse car an interesting play. As two young men entered the car, one of them hastened to pay the fare for both, and presented his companion with the ticket. The companion, with a start of horror, and any amount of hand-waving and protests, refused it, and when he was, at last, prevailed upon to accept the favor, he did it with a succession of salaams and hat-liftings that made my neck ache. The recipient of the ticket then produced his cigarette case and proffered its contents to his friend, who, after many stately genuflections, consented to take one. They then lighted their cigarettes, and vigorously puffed the smoke into my face. However, a saturation of tobacco smoke is an advantage in a country infested with moths, and the Mexican cigarettes are so delightfully fragrant that I had no fault to find with them. On the contrary, when an American, who wished to be very Spanish indeed, puffed the smoke of a strong, fat cigar in my eyes I resented it, even in Mexico. The Mexican women smoke as much as the men, and many of the smokers seem to belong to

the better class; certainly they are not of the same class as the women smokers in France, whose example American women and girls sometimes make the mistake of imitating.

One who likes black eyes may have a surfeit of them in Mexico, for every one, from prince to peon, has beautiful dark orbs with curling, jetty lashes. Their languishing, sideways glances were, at first, very fascinating to me, but I soon tired of them, and in the end, even learned to distrust them. I had an adventure one evening that convinced me that the Mexican eyes are not the ones to inspire confidence in an emergency. I left the Hotel Coliséo, intending to meet Ahasuerus at the restaurant two or three blocks away, and, with my usual fatal facility for wandering, took the wrong turn, and soon found that I was lost. As the streets change their names every block, the street signs gave me no hint of my whereabouts, and, for once, the ubiquitous policeman was nowhere in sight. I wandered for an hour, and as it was getting dark, I began to be troubled. I looked at the ragged peons, and the gallant, black-eyed señors without any desire to address them, but I finally accosted a pretty French señorita, who, with her Indian maid, was hurrying like a frightened pigeon through the lighted streets. She, however, knew nothing of the city, and her directions sent me far afield.

All at once I espied, in the door of a shop, a familiar gray figure, with a sideways tilted hat, and hands in trousers pockets. I walked confidently up to the figure and said, "Pardon me; I see that you are an American. Can you direct me to the Hotel Coliséo?" The stranger looked right at me with his honest eyes—I don't know what color they were, but they were straightforward American eyes—gave me the required directions plainly and concisely, and touched his hat respectfully as I walked off, blessing the honest American eyes and the big American heart to which neither child nor woman fears to appeal.

Upon reaching the hotel I found Ahasuerus anxiously pacing up and down on the lookout for me. When I told him the story of my adventure he exclaimed, "Well, of all stupids I ever did see! Why on earth didn't you call a cab, and ask to be driven to the Coliséo?" And when I turned and looked at him little spurts of bright flame seemed to burst out, like a halo, all around his head, and then and there I fell down and worshiped the giant intellectuality, the unfathomable resource, of the American man.

CHAPTER X.

One of the interesting places in the City of Mexico, both on account of its beauty and for the historical associations connected with it, is the Cathedral. It is built upon the spot where formerly stood the old Aztec teocalli, or temple, in which the Indians offered sacrifices to their gods. The present building, which is upon the site of a former church, was erected in 1573, and is therefore 325 years old. It is of grand dimensions, but the beauty and the impressiveness of the interior are marred—as in most Mexican churches—by the choir, which is placed in the nave, and by the high altar, which is clumsy and inartistic. This altar is, at present, being redecorated with barbaric gilding and florid colors. Under the flashy altar of Los Reyes are buried the heads of Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama, and Jiminez, which were brought here from the prison hooks of Guanajuato. These men were excommunicated by the Catholic Church as heretics and traitors, and I do not know how the ecclesiastics explain their burial on consecrated