

try, at least their burthens to me seemed to be equal in bulk to the heaviest articles, transported by such animals. The dress of this class differs materially from that of the decent people. Their upper bodies are covered alone by a *serapi* or blanket, with a hole through the centre, for a head to pass through, or else it is worn as the North American Indians do their blankets; his pants are made of leather, and do not reach below the knee; he is without leggings of any kind, and his feet are shod with sandals.

CHAPTER VI.

Visit to the National Museum and University. Bronze statue. Sacrificial stone. Curiosities of savage antiquity. Gallery of paintings. Library room. Museum proper. Paintings. Portrait and armour of Cortes. Helmet of Alvarado. Giant of Jalapa. A miniature representation of two silver mines. Indian relics. Conchology. Mastodon. Santa Anna's portrait. Former grandeur of the City of Mexico. Montezuma's Menagerie and Aviary. Floating gardens. Visit to Conde Peniaske's private museum. Philosophic apparatus. Paintings. Chinese transparencies. Carved picture. Bomb shell. Maquey book. Crystallization. Beautiful lady. Feast day of Guadalupe. Ringing of bells and firing of rockets and cannon. Going to mass. Flags. Picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Procession. Joseph, the Infant, the Virgin Mary. The multitude embracing the Infant. Origin of the Virgin Guadalupe. Pueblo of Guadalupe. Village of mounds. Multitude of people at Guadalupe. Commercial booths. Dealers of Monte. Gambling priests. Roman Catholics of the United States, Europe, and Mexico. Habits of the priests. Wealth of the Church of Mexico.

HAVING had my curiosity somewhat satisfied, in my cursory ramble over the city, I felt desirous of witnessing whatever might be considered scientific or displayed the remains of antiquity.

I accordingly, on the 9th of December, visited in company with Mr. Green, (a promising young American, and Secretary of the United States Legation at Mexico,) the National University, which also contains the National Museum.

The University is near the Government Palace, and upon entering the great door way, the first object that met my view was the equestrian and colossal bronze statue of Charles IV. of

Spain. Since the revolution the Mexicans, in their singular attachments and ideas for every thing republican, have denominated the statue the "Big Horse," and in the same spirit of patriotism, have removed the weighty construction from before the palace, its original position, at an expense of twelve thousand dollars, within the court-yard, the place it now occupies in the National University.

This statue is boasted to have been originally designed and cast by Tolsa, a Mexican statuary; yet with much apparent truth, it is contended that it was the workmanship of an Italian artist; be that as it may, it beyond doubt reflects much credit on the sculptor, whoever he was, and I have ever been impressed with the opinion, that nothing to be seen in Mexico can compare with it. The statue is said, with the pedestal upon which it is positioned, to measure about twenty-three feet. Charles IV. is represented mounted on the horse, with a wreath of laurel bound around his brow. He is in Roman costume, with a robe flowing over his shoulders reaching to the horse. In his extended right hand is a truncheon, and a sword on his thigh. The horse is represented as moving forward, with his right hind foot treading on a quiver of arrows. The design and execution of this colossal figure is said, by competent judges in such arts, to be as symmetrical and perfect as any to be found in any country. To me it had an imposing appearance, exciting more of interest than all the objects of the city together.

Under the corridor of the same court is the Sacrificial Stone of Montezuma, besides many of his gods thrown conspicuously together, but which are said to have belonged originally to the sacred temples of the heathen monarch.

Although this stone bears the name of the Sacrificial, yet it cannot be the one as described by some historians, which had its position on the top of the great temple of Teocalli, for that stone is represented as having a smooth oval surface, so that when the victim was extended upon it, his breast was protruded, and the priest thereby was the better enabled to make the fatal incision, and tear the heart palpitating from the body. The stone now seen, must have been used in some other temple than that of Teocalli, as its weight would have been an ineffectual barrier to its high elevation on the temple. The diameter of this horrid stone is above nine feet, and three feet through. It is sculptured all round with representations of demoniac Indian priests and unknown hieroglyphics, having some resemblance to those found in Yucatan by Mr Stephens of New York. The level surface of the stone has singular figures cut upon it. There is a hole in the centre of about

twelve inches in diameter and two feet deep; there were also trenches cut from this centre cavity to the outer edges of the stone. The hole, it is said, was intended to receive the blood of the human victim sacrificed on it; and trenches served the purpose of conducting the superfluous gore from the centre, over the sides of the stone, for the additional uses of the priests. While casting my eyes around me, I could only regret to behold so many valuable curiosities of savage antiquity so indifferently preserved—being heaped together in piles, as if they were but the fragments of stone from a fallen wall.

From the court we ascended a flight of steps, which carried us on the corridor; and the first room we entered, was a gallery of paintings.

The portrait likenesses of this room consisted chiefly of presidents, politicians, generals, bishops, and priests of Mexico. Some of these paintings seemed to my comprehension to have been finished by masters of their art, and all of them were hung in elegant gilded frames. I have been informed, that Mexico once contained paintings of the best artists ever known to the world, but the priests, who left the country after the revolution, took with them the larger portion. These acts resulted in causing the Mexican Congress to enact a law, prohibiting a painting of any kind from being taken out of the country. But that was locking the door after the thief had made his escape.

From the gallery of Fine Arts, I was conducted into a capacious apartment called the Library room. I found in this the librarian, as I imagined, seated at a revolving wheel, deeply absorbed in reading newspapers. On our entering the room we requested permission to examine the library, which he politely granted, but without leaving his seat to open the cases for our inspection, so intent was he in reading the news. As the case, however, had glass doors, we could easily read the titled labels of the books contained therein. The room was sufficiently large to have contained an hundred thousand volumes; yet the National Library so called, judging by the eye, did not possess more than two thousand. Nevertheless, some portraits and paintings were hung around the room, which exhibited appearances of great antiquity. The books, as far as I examined, proved to be mostly Latin and French works, for in an hour's inspection I did not meet with more than some half dozen Spanish volumes.

From the library room we entered the Museum proper, and it was a source of disappointment to find that that apartment likewise contained paintings which seemed as if they had

been hung around the room more for the purpose of ornament, than of establishing a gallery of fine arts. And notwithstanding I had become fatigued by looking at pictures, I determined to give them an inspection, for the fact of their antiquated appearance. They consisted of paintings of the kings and queens of Spain; the viceroys, and bishops of Mexico. Amongst them was pointed out to me that of Ferdinand, as also that of Isabella. But that which chiefly attracted my notice, was one of Hernando Cortes, with the high forehead, and the countenance expressive of that firmness which bore him triumphantly through a conquest unrivalled in the history of the world. Under this portrait was the armour of Cortes which he wore in the heat and shock of battle, and from under which he so much gloried in calling upon his favourite saint "St. Jago," and then rushing on to the charge and the slaughter. The helmet of the Alvarado was also close by. I would suppose that there never had been but one giant in Mexico, from the fact that a full length likeness of one was hanging in the room. This giant had his birth in Jalapa, and measured seven feet in height.

Besides the paintings in this room, there was a miniature representation of two of the profitable silver mines of Mexico. They not only had a rich appearance, but were exceedingly interesting, from the well arranged specimens of the different kinds of ore as found in the mines. These exhibitions not only showed the various strata of earth, stone and mineral, but intended to present the exact aspect of the excavations under the surface; and by an ingenious toy contrivance, the turning the wheel by which all the machinery used for bringing the heavy metals to the top of the earth would be put in motion—as also the labourers who were at work in the mines, with pickaxes and shovels; while, at the same time, the mules with their heavy packs would slowly move along like things of life.

By this happy construction, the looker-on could be saved the necessity and trouble of descending the shafts of the mines to examine the different specimens of mineralogy, and the modes by which such are disinterred. The mines intended to be represented are those of Rio del Monte and Friznillo. I have no-doubt that if some of our enterprising Yankees had them, they would be sure of making fortunes by pedestrianizing the Union.

The remaining curiosities in this room consisted mainly of Indian relics, conchology, and the helmets and armour of the early Spaniards, all of which were badly arranged, if they

could be said at all to have order. Among the Indian curiosities were vast numbers of stones, both great and small in size, said to have been the gods of the Aztics. Of that race of people it is said, that, besides the gods worshipped in their temples, every family, as well as every individual, was possessed of gods peculiarly their own, and regarded as the instruments through which only the greater divinities should be appeased. These gods are sometimes of the brute order, while others are of half human and half brute or reptile species. There was also to be seen every variety of rock, knife, and Indian point, besides as much fashion exhibited in calumet Indian pipes, as ever was seen in any one article. There were drinking vessels shaped like frogs, Mexican rabbits, birds and snakes, intended perhaps for *Pulque* purposes, cart-loads of which are found in the excavations of the city of Mexico, and which likely were buried by the Indians, as it is said they did their silver and gold, during the siege of Cortes.

In the fourth and last room, were the skins of many animals, birds, and snakes, stuffed in an imperfect manner, and not amounting to one-twentieth part the quantity of those to be seen at the National Institute at the city of Washington. And besides other exhibitions to be seen in this room, there were to be met with, in the cabinets of mineralogy, every variety of mineral ores as discovered in all Mexico, the precious metals of which, if extracted, would amount to no inconsiderable sum, besides its value and richness of appearance. It must have been arranged by some classic Frenchman, as the specimens were all habited in the French style.

After I had for some time investigated the bones of a Mastodon, and other fossils, which lay scattered over the floor of the room—on raising my eyes in search of other curiosities, the portrait of Santa Anna met my view, and on looking around to discover if there were any others in the apartment, and finding none, I could not but be impressed with the vanity of his friends, or of himself, in thus so conspicuously giving his portrait the entire room, instead of hanging it in the galleries with those of the other distinguished compeers in the country's service.

On retiring from the Museum and the University, I again reflected upon the former grandeur of the city of Mexico, when under the dominion of Montezeuma, whose name must ever be coeval with this great place—and contrasted in my own mind the flourishing condition of the barbaric arts and sciences in his time, with those the Mexicans of the present day enjoy, having the aid of the Christian religion, and the

example of the civilized world to instruct them in the labyrinths of philosophical research, and lead them through the archives of learning.

The conquerors found at the city of Mexico a menagerie and aviary, filled with every animal, creeping thing, insect, and bird known to their country. The animals, birds, and reptiles being confined in appropriate cages, by a suitable arrangement of large enclosures, were attended by persons appointed for that exclusive business. And what was not inconsistent with Indian taste, the Emperor also had a collection of living dwarfs, who were provided for in consequence of their diminutive size, peculiar physiognomy and singular shapes. I do not consider such an exhibition of dwarfs to have been more repugnant to feelings of humanity, and to public morals, and decorum, than the shocking and mournful sights to be seen of preserved infants, in many a jar of the National Museum. Such appearances should belong alone to the cabinet of the surgeon.

Montezeuma had also his botanic gardens, some of which floated on the lakes, and in them were cultivated with great care every variety of flower, plant, and shrub, to please the sight, and adorn his idols; nothing of which are to be seen at the present day. It is true that the old Spaniards did divert themselves in paying some attention to the cultivation of the refined ornamental arts and sciences, but all is now lost—for the Mexican of the present day is devoted to the art of resounding arms, and the desolation of his own country now marks his footsteps with kindred blood, and ruined civilization.

On the 10th instant, by the invitation of Mr. Green, I accompanied him to the Conde Paniaski's dwelling, to have a view of his private Museum, which has hardly ever escaped the notice of travellers in Mexico. On our arrival at the courteous Conde's, he seemed pleased to see us, and had the doors of his museum thrown open for our inspection.

The first room we entered contained a valuable philosophical apparatus, which at once demonstrated that he was learned as well as curious. He had in his collection in that apartment many paintings from the pencils of celebrated artists, together with curious and delicate ivory transparencies of exquisite workmanship, brought from China. Among these, that which most interested my admiration was a landscape view, said to have been cut with a penknife out of ivory. This carved picture presented a back ground of a forest, with a field in cultivation, and on the fore ground was a dwelling, garden, yards, and fruit-trees, all in the most per-

fect and exact representation. The whole picture was comprised in the small compass of four inches square, presenting the most singular piece of ingenuity that I had ever beheld. He had likewise a fragment of the French shell that blew down the cupola of the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, together with many iron and lead bullets that had been fired upon the battle-fields of his country.

He had also a book of fine fabric, of the magney, upon which the hieroglyphic writing of the aboriginal Mexicans was painted. Mr. Prescott has remarked—"At the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, great quantities of those manuscripts were treasured up in the country. Numerous persons were employed in painting, and the dexterity of their operations excited the astonishment of the conquerors. Unfortunately, this was mingled with other feelings more unworthy. The strange, unknown characters inscribed on them excited suspicion. They were looked on as magic scrolls, and were regarded in the same light as the idols and temples, as symbols of a pestilential superstition, which must be extirpated. The first archbishop of Mexico, Don Juan de Zummarago—a name that should be as immortal as that of Omar—collected those paintings from every quarter, especially from Tercuco, the most cultivated capital in Anahuac, and the great depository of the national archives. He then caused them to be piled up in a 'mountain heap'—as it is called by the Spanish writers themselves—in the market-place of Tlecelalco, and reduced them to ashes. His greater countryman, Archbishop Ximenes, had celebrated a similar *auto-da-fe* of Arabic manuscripts in Grenada, some twenty years before. Never before did his fanaticism achieve two more singular triumphs, than by the annihilation of so many curious monuments of human ingenuity and learning."

After having looked on many valuable and interesting curiosities in that room, we were shown into an adjoining one that contained his cabinet of mineralogy, which was indeed a rich collection. He not only had specimens of all the minerals in Mexico, but those of other countries in full contrast. His cabinet was arranged in classic taste, as every thing about his Museum and house appeared to be. His collection of coins were numerous, some of them having the stamp of Alexander the Great. The Conde had also in that room the monstrous sight of a preserved infant, with one body, and two well-formed and independent heads.

As my eyes ranged around the room, a collection of brilliant crystals attracted my attention, and as I became deeply engaged in beholding the splendid scene, for at the same time

my view was dazzled by the prism, the agate, the topaz, the sapphire, and the sparkling diamond, scintillating as it were, rays of light from their bright surfaces—when behold! in the midst of my admiration, my attention was suddenly diverted by the appearance of a young lady on the opposite side of the glass door near me. Slightly turning by the accident of the occasion, my eyes met those of the lovely fair one, and notwithstanding my whole soul, but the moment before, was enraptured with gazing on the splendid beauties of nature's gems; yet, I must in truth say, that the lovely, smiling young female who then met my view was infinitely more charming and more beautiful to behold, than all the rich and splendid diamonds of the cabinet of crystalization. Indeed, from the first momentary glimpse of her, there was not remaining a single impression on my mind of any of the curiosities of the Museum. While my thoughts were thus bewildered, the lady, like an angel, glided softly away, and I was roused to self-possession by the voice of Mr. Green, and in a delighted and happy frame of mind, we left the Conde Paniaski's mansion.

On the 11th December, the celebration of the feast day of Guadaloupe, the patron saint of Mexico, took place. The performances on that occasion were not intended as the great festival of the Virgin of Guadaloupe, but only as it were, a *Queriendo*, a wishing, as some called it, to begin a grand exhibition which was to come off on the 12th instant, at the temple erected for the worship of her shrine, three miles from the city.

I was aroused from my slumber, on the morning of the 14th, at 4 o'clock, by the never-failing and indefatigable bells, together with the firing of rockets, making rapid explosions, from all the churches in the city. It did seem to me that the quick volleys of ten thousand muskets could not have made more noise. I rose from my bed to look out, not knowing that the firing was in honour of a feast-day. But my first impressions were that a revolutionary action had commenced, that would make the Dictator tremble on his throne, by the hopeful issue of a new aspirant's attack upon the lion in his den—yet, by throwing wide my window I discovered that all was quiet and harmonious on earth, and above from the ramparts and towers of the celestial buildings, shot the streaming fire high in the air, which showed that the war was only in heaven, whilst men and women were smiling on the scene. But at the moment of the rising of the sun, the comba, deepened—for the firing of cannon was opened on earth, and

for all the day, in thundering tones, echoed back the small-arms of the skies.

The religious ceremonies of the day commenced by the inhabitants going to mass in crowds, dressed in their best attire for such occasions. The lazarones seemed, for the time, to have skulked from the streets, by the increased decency of the general public. All the houses of the rich had in front white flags floating from them, with their favourite saint, the Virgin of Guadalupe, pinned to the centre, while the high towers and belfries of the churches had the red banners of the cross streaming from them. As evening approached, the rich and the poor, riding and walking, all mixed in one common crowd, in the streets, to join the solemn procession of the occasion, which was to take place at four o'clock. Fire-works were erected at the crossing of the streets, while in every direction I beheld triumphal arches of flowers thrown over the streets, and the archbishop was drawn in his coach and six, attended by servants in crimson livery. In fine, every thing had the most gay and lively appearance.

When the appointed hour had arrived for the saints to make their glorious entry in public, and join the multitude, I saw Joseph, with an infant in his arms, mounted on a splendid car, drawn by men, enter from a church at the extremity of a street, followed by young boys, fantastically dressed, and holding bouquets of flowers in their hands,—then came the Virgin Mary, mounted on a car, similar to Joseph's, but borne on the shoulders of men, and having a golden wreath floating over her head,—and with her gown covered and glittering with precious ornaments. With meek humility, contrasting strangely with her rich attire, she seemed to smile benignly on the good people around her. She was escorted by a party of priests, a band of music, and a company of soldiers; and, as the pageant passed along, amidst the roar of the firing of the rockets, small-arms and cannon, the people uncovered themselves in profound respect to the glittering procession.

As I followed on after the crowd, and arrived opposite the gate of San Francisco, I discovered there a priest holding in his arms the wooden child, the same which I had seen Joseph bear. The eager multitude around were vying with one another in their embraces of the infant. In my own profession, in acknowledging my obedience of God and his Son, as known to mankind, through the means of the Old and New Testaments, not considering it necessary, in keeping the commandments and precepts inculcated therein, to declare homage or fealty to any Christian denomination,—the scenes of that day

impressed my mind with the folly and superstition of mankind in their attempt to worship with pomp and show the Supreme Head of the universe, instead of giving unto him that reasonable service which he requires at the hands of his creatures.

The fete of the 11th inst. was not to be compared to that which was to take place on the succeeding day, at the church erected in honour of the Virgin Saint of Guadalupe, three miles from the city. It will not be improper here to state the origin and history of the patron saint of Mexico; and I protest, that in so doing, my object is not to deride, or impose upon the minds of the credulous, but to relate the prominent features, so often recounted to me, with all the semblance of truth and hearty belief, by several Mexicans.

It is said that, on the 8th of December, 1531, an Indian, by name Juan Diego, was seated on a rock on the mountain Tepeye. Being overpowered with fatigue, (being then making a long journey,) while taking his rest, the Virgin Mary appeared to him, and directed him to go to the city of Mexico, and say to the bishop, that she desired him to worship her on the spot they then occupied. The Indian forthwith arose, and went into the city to obey the commands of the Virgin, but upon the following day returned, and informed Mary that he was but a poor Indian, and could not obtain an interview with the illustrious bishop. She commanded him to return, and insist upon being heard. In compliance, Diego returned the second time; and, on the following day, said to the Virgin, that the bishop required a token from her to give his statement validity. Whereupon she ordered him to go upon the mountain, and pluck some roses, and bring them to her.—The Indian, on going there, was surprised to find the roses growing on a mountain where there was no soil or vegetation. He presented the flowers to Mary, which she threw on his *serape*, and directed him to carry them to the bishop. The Indian, having presented the *serape* to the holy man, he unfolded it, and, behold, not only the roses were therein, but he also found a full-length portrait of the Virgin Mary. The bishop could no longer disbelieve, and the Indian informed him that the image on the garment should be called the Virgin of Guadalupe; whereupon the archbishop ordered that a splendid church should be built on the spot, to commemorate the *miracle*.

Having taken a coach, my route lay north from the city.—A great portion of the way was on one of the two causeways, which stretch over an arm of the lake, jutting between the city and the church. The ride was delightful, and I felt much refreshed by having to quit the noise and bustle of the city,

and at the delightful prospect of the lake, and the trees scattered along the margin of the causeway.

About midway to Guadalupe, I observed a small village of dirt mounds, where the inhabitants lived like burrowed rabbits, and, indeed, there was a chapel, built of the same mud and earth, having a belfry; and, having no shape of bricks in the structure of the walls, these dirt hovels presented a bold contrast with the city behind, and the wealthy church in front.

When I arrived at the celebrated temple of Gaudaloupe, it seemed to me, from the appearance of the crowd through which I had to pass, and the confusion which reigned there, as if all the world was about to congregate at the shrine of the Virgin. There was a vast number of padres and friars, who had assembled from all parts of Mexico, to worship at the feet of their patron saint. Canaliso, the dictator, *pro. tem.*, and all the members of his cabinet were there, dressed in complete uniform. All the diplomacy were there, dressed in honour of the great saint-day. The thronged and mixed multitude presented a most singular appearance, in contrast with the gaudy uniforms of the civil and military functionaries. The black, the grey, and the white habits of the clergy, with their long shovel hats; the foppish appearance of the arriero and the ladrone, with the broad-brimmed hats, with silver or gold bands, light laced jacket, large pants with buttons dangling down the seams, and red sash around the loins; the common citizen, unable to make any show; and last, though not the least in number, the Indian and greasy lazaroni, all mixed in one common herd, formed an unpleasing and distressing sight.

Besides the many shops in the row of buildings, which extends round the church, there were many booths all over the Plaza, in which commodities of all kinds were offered for sale, affording to the hungry means to satisfy his appetite, and to the pious, images of saints for their worship. But their business was not confined to these; many of these booths were filled with dealers of *monte*, a game resembling *faro*, and with casters of dice. In fine, every thing in the way of *game* was offered under the eaves of the sanctuary, and the protection of the Virgin.

Here was seen every description of character at play—the civilian, the soldier, the priest, and the citizen. It is not my interest here, to make fictitious statements of any thing I may have seen in my visit to Mexico; but, on the contrary, desire to please all people; and, if any Catholic should take exceptions to my remarks, he cannot deny that they are true, for the world has proof as strong, I was going to say, as holy

writ;—at least other testimony than mine. My purpose is to write a book of my travels; and whatever I have seen in church or state, I shall use my prerogative in approbating or condemning, as I may conceive it just and proper. However, be it said, of the Roman Catholics of the United States and of Europe, that they have not their holy religion corrupted by Indian rites and shows, to win the savage and uncultivated to the Christian faith.

It is now nearly four centuries since the Indians of Mexico were converted to the Christian religion, and surely it is high time that the church should be purified. But I not only stood and saw the fathers of this institution under the shadow of the shrine they worshipped, betting at cards and other games, but I was credibly informed, that the church itself was the holy owner of many of those gambling tables.

My first desire was to enter the church, and, having succeeded, I was impressed with the power of that religion which so extravagantly used the wealth of the world to decorate itself withal. All the banisters and railings, which met my view, were of silver. The large chandelier, which hung by a gilt chain from the dome, was also, I am informed, of the same precious metal. As I entered, the many candles it contained were about being lit by a man who had ascended by a ladder, and mounted the chandelier, walking with ease around it, until he had illuminated the tall tapers. The altar before the Serape, which contained the express image of the Virgin, so miraculously wrought by herself, was of silver, and was surrounded by a forest of gold and silver candlesticks.—The Serape was in a gold frame, five or six feet in length, and, besides a multitude of other diamonds, there were nine large stars worked with diamonds, supposed to be worth twenty thousand dollars. At the foot of the image are clusters of diamonds. Above the Serape is a solid dove of silver, suspended in the air, some three feet in length.

The arched domes of the chapel were highly gilded and painted with representations of angels flying in the clouds. The ceremonies were long and solemn, during which mass was taken. I was told that, on one of these festival occasions, a priest from old Spain was requested to deliver a sermon, and he refused, saying, that the Pope had never recognised the miracle of Guadalupe. The motto of the church is "*Non fecit taliter omnia nationa.*" The services being long, I spent a portion of my time in examining all within and without. To the rear of the church, but attached to the building, is a chapel erected over a fountain, and with the water the worshippers not only crossed themselves, but washed in it, believing that

its efficacy was the same as the pool of Siloam. Up the side of an abrupt mountain of rock above the church, a winding-path conducted me to a small chapel, where also religious services were performed.

During my rambles over the place, my attention was directed to an old padre who stood in one of the large doors of the church, and whose fingers were covered with diamond rings. My friend also pointed to his large gold shoe buckles, that were thickly set around with diamonds. The precious metal and brilliant stones bore a remarkable contrast to the old clergyman's black gown and shovel hat. By the way, I put myself to the trouble to ascertain the diameter across the brim of one of those hats, and it was precisely twenty-eight inches. The brim is rolled up at the sides, and the front and back parts present a shovel like form—hence they are called shovel hats. To those who have a vague idea of Mexico, and the religious ceremonies of that people, it will appear that it was a national festival, and that the President, *pro tem.*, and all of his cabinet were there in their elegant uniforms—consequently, when nobles come to worship, the priests must, for decency's sake, put on their fine jewels. I think I have heard it defended by Protestants, that religion should be dressed, to make it *respectable* in the eyes of the rich, and, if it should be right in them, ought it to be an error of the Catholic?

The priests in Mexico are numerous. They are to be seen at any time, and in every place. I observed that, day and night, many of them were loafing about the streets and bar-rooms of the city, in their long gowns, reaching from the chin to the heels. My having so recently left a land of temperance societies, it impressed me with some degree of horror to behold the heralds of the Cross taking their beverages, unrestrained by public opinion, in the *Restaurants*. This surprise was more especially felt, since I was aware that, through the instrumentality of the Catholic clergy, both in Europe and the United States, it was that the use of wines and ardent spirits were not only prohibited to that body, but that, by their sober example, and their eloquent denunciations of the habitual or other use of alcohol, they had won the approbation of the world, and restrained their laity as well as themselves from the brutal practices of intemperance. To my own mind, as also in the opinion of gentlemen of the Roman Catholic profession, the clergy of Mexico seemed to act in many respects independent of their brethren of the United States and the old world, and appeared to conceive the performances of their deportment harmless, which indeed in other countries would

shock the good sense of propriety of both clergy and laity. However, there is some degree of palliating excuse for the frailties of poor human nature in Mexico—for as the maxim is, that "money is the root of all evil," its abundance there has worked wonders in corrupting the habits and morals of the people of that country—and thus it is that, through the superstitions of the people, the reverend gentlemen had imposed upon their credulity, by impressing on their minds that contagions are atmospherical, and not the results of certain habits. I have been respectably informed, however, that tippling, gambling, and lewdness of habit, though they would appear to a stranger to be general, are not prevalent among all the clergy of Mexico—for perhaps there exists as much piety in some few of them, as in any of those of other denominations, and the Mexicans, of all other nations, are peculiarly subservient and constant in their own way to their religious rulers, and devoted to their worship.

From the best information I could obtain, the church has a fee simple titled right to one-third of all the real estate in the country of Mexico, and, as it is supposed, by money loaned, secured upon mortgage, have a lien on another third. The revenues of the church, derived from the rents of houses and lands, usury on money, profits from *monte*, donations and clerical fees, are said to amount to many millions, the (precise sum being unknown,) if it could be ascertained. The granaries of the church and the priests husband half of the crops in the land. The government of Mexico can with difficulty pay the interest of its public debt, and support itself; and whenever an instalment is to be liquidated, the money is raised by forced loans. Query, What becomes of the revenue of Mexico? The government in its extremity, in 1841, had all the landed estate of the church assessed, and it is said, by some of the priests too, that nothing but the bribery by the church of the government officers, has prevented the property of the church from being confiscated—it must come! Spain has set the example.

But all this will not avail in relieving the people, unless the government is administered by clean fingers. The revenue, as at present collected, would liquidate the debt of Mexico in two years—at least, it is so believed by some, but it falls short of doing so, by the mismanagement of those in power. What, then, becomes of the people's money?