

from an early antipathy of the Mexicans to the black man, but few have ever been imported into that country.

But to redeem my promise, as made in the second chapter of this book, I will now attempt to give some reasons for the great solemnity and sedateness of the Mexican's expression of countenance. Mr. Prescott remarks that, "In their faltering steps, and meek and melancholy aspect, we read the sad characteristics of a conquered race."

There is another reason assigned by historians for their gravity of aspect, which supposes it to have been imparted by the loathsome and revolting oceans of human sacrifices so frequently presented to the public view. And again, notwithstanding they had obtained the Christian religion, after the conquest, yet the introduction of the inquisition along with it, continued to keep among the people the oppression of spirit and dejection of countenance which has been engrafted upon posterity.

If I should venture to give my own opinion, I would say that this peculiarity of feature is to be mostly attributed to the climate; for in all nations of tropical regions the population exhibit a languid and grave appearance. And if an artist, judging from what I have seen of painting, attempts to represent a being oppressed by heat, he delineates very much of the same expression visible on the countenance of the Mexican.—A learned philosopher once remarked, that he would never have confidence in any one who could not blush; and I am of the opinion that he would find few in Mexico in whom to confide.

CHAPTER X.

Climate of the Valley of Mexico. The Climate of the Republic of Mexico. Plains without water. Artificial dams. Monopoly of Agriculture. Interference of the law. Landed estates of Mexico. Table of population. Wealth of the inhabitants. Majority of the people in poverty. Different causes. Want of confidence. Previous to the revolution. The golden age. Embezzlement of Canalizo. Products of the Mines. Solvency of Mexico. Forced loans. Anecdote. The people of Mexico easy to govern. A correct idea of the ministry of Mexico. Captain Cain. Deformity in Church as in State. The Bishop bribed. Matrimony.

THE climate of the valley of Mexico is considered to be the most delightful and desirable of any known region. The valley of Mexico is 7,550 above the level of the sea. The capital from its elevated position, and its being no more than 190 deg. north latitude, is never excessively hot in summer; but to the contrary, as long residents in that country informed me, it is agreeably warm—sufficiently so to make vegetation generate luxuriantly, as I observed it also will in the winter months. Yet it cannot be supposed to compare during the winter months with that state of perfection which the summer season produces. The nights are cool, sufficiently so to render the couch pleasant, was it not for the fleas and other insects.

The climate of the republic of Mexico is by no means universal. The plains have a temperature generally of 62 degs. Fahrenheit. The phenomena of climate that exist in Mexico are singularly peculiar to that country, not being known to any other regions of the earth; for the traveller cannot cross a mountain, without finding its opposite sides varying in temperature. This results from the higher elevation of some plains above others; and thus it is, that from the minimum of 62 degs., many of the valleys, as likewise the coasts on either side of the continent, vary in temperature to the maximum of 120 degs. of heat. Hence it is that the stranger in Mexico will hear of the tobacco—the sugar—the cotton—and the cocoa regions.

The best tobacco regions are said to be in Tobasco, and in the vicinity of the Orizava mountains. The sugar regions are principally in the valleys south of the city of the Mexico, adjoining the Popocatepe mountain, as also in the hot countries of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Cotton grows to its

greatest perfection at Paris, in the department of San Louis; while cocoa flourishes at Tampico.

The climate varies very much in regions adjacent to each other, and it often happens that products which are cultivated on one side of a mountain, cannot come to the same perfection on the opposite one. Wheat and corn produce admirably in any of those regions, where the land can be irrigated; and often much expense is incurred in conducting the water from the mountains over the plains. However, in some parts of the country, on the first elevation from the coast, nature has most accommodatingly performed the task without the aid of mountain streams; as I witnessed on the high lands between Jalapa and Perote. This economy of nature is owing to the descent of the clouds in that, as in some other regions, as I have understood, to the surface, and, as they gently sweep over the land, the vegetation and the earth absorb the *aqueous vapour* contained in them.

On plains through which no streams flow, and the mountains fail to supply water, the ingenuity of man has invented a mode by which the deficiency may be remedied. Where one plain has an elevation of one portion above the remainder, a dam will be thrown from one hill to the other, across the uneven surface, and in some instances across the ravines of mountains. During the three rainy months of the year, these reservoirs will be filled with water, and thus the farmer can in any month irrigate his crops, and have his land in perpetual cultivation. However, as such an improvement is costly, and but few portions of the country afford the facilities, at least two-thirds of the arable lands of Mexico are barren wastes that can only be appropriated to the purposes of grazing. And hence it is that that country has ever been famous for its abundance of stock, the proprietor of the soil being unable to derive profits from his estates, otherwise than by herding.

What must ever be a source of regret and oppression to the people of Mexico, that the government has grasped the monopoly of some articles of agriculture, at the same time they require its permission to grow their crops, and for this privilege they have to take a license or pay a bonus. Although the invaluable articles of maize, or Indian corn, and black beans are freely granted to be cultivated any where, yet by statutes of the land, or by the decrees of the Dictator, the cultivation of all other crops are prohibited, excepting to particular portions of the country, the farmers of those particular localities having to pay for the prerogative.

The government of Mexico is the purchaser of all the tobacco the planter has for market; and only through the

Stancer, an officer of the government, can the article be retailed to the people. It cannot be difficult to imagine the unhappy results of the interference of the law in regulating agriculture; for so far from the government acting with disinterestedness and good faith with the people—like individuals it seeks first its own emolument, then leaving them to take care of themselves, it abandons the doctrine of the fundamental principles of social compacts—that the law should have a singleness of purpose in protecting labour and the rights of property of its constituents, and not by its acts to trample upon the one, and speculate upon the other. Such has ever been the result of legislation in every country, where the avariciousness of the rulers of the good people has taken the management of their own, and properly, private affairs out of their hands.

In Mexico, by the restrictions imposed upon agriculture, the monopoly of the government has beggared thousands, who are obliged to indulge in their favourite propensity of theft and highway robbery—for the proprietor of the soil has not the want of their labour, and the factories have no employment for them.

One other remark I wish to make before closing my comments on this head. Out of a population of about seven millions of souls, it is believed by many intelligent gentlemen with whom I conversed, that less than five hundred thousand people are the owners of all the landed estates in Mexico; and the melancholy fact as presented by the face of the country is, that the unequal division of property among the inhabitants must unhappily be as lasting as it is a country. In consequence of its not raining for nine months in the twelve, and there being but few streams flowing from the mountains to the ocean, a small tract of land, of a hundred or a thousand acres, would be worthless to the possessor, unless it was located on one of the comparatively few lakes and rivers.

The man of moderate circumstances, separate from those choice spots of land, is effectually debarred from desiring or purchasing on the plains generally. For, in the first place, a small tract would be worthless to him—and in the next, his inability to buy an extent of territory equivalent in dimensions to any of the counties of our States, renders it impossible for any but the affluent in circumstances to enjoy landed property. In most places lands skirting the water cannot be bought, for if offered for sale, the extensive proprietor would be parting with the privilege of irrigation, which alone rendered the whole of any value.

The reader will readily imagine, in the heterogeneous mass

of the population of Mexico, the vast disproportion of lazarones and vagrants, who drag out a wretched and miserable existence, houseless, penniless and friendless, and who, when dead, unshrouded and uncoffined, are thrown into their shallow home, as if their mother earth spurned them from her bosom, to rot as beasts of the field.

The census of the population of Mexico, it is said, can not be accurately taken. From the various estimates made by those having the best opportunities of knowing, a table was furnished me by a gentleman who, from his long residence in the country, and by some attention paid to the subject, may be relied on as measurably correct.

Table of the Population.

Indians,	..	..	..	..	4,500,000
Other Castes,	..	..	..	..	3,000,000
Negroes,	..	..	..	..	6,000
Total,	..	..	..	..	7,506,000

From the consideration of the climate, agricultural pursuits, and the population of Mexico, it may not here be improper to devote a few thoughts upon the wealth of its inhabitants and its resources.

As for the wealth of the Mexicans, as already remarked, the great majority of them are in abject poverty, and subsist only by begging, or by their daily labour.

Four of the seven millions of inhabitants are Indians, and with very few exceptions they are not owners of property. The rich people of Mexico are very wealthy, being the proprietors of the soil, and the holders of the real estates in towns. Before the revolution, as now, agreeable to Spanish customs, money was hoarded by the rich in their houses, and never loaned upon interest—and not unfrequently do they run their gold and silver into bars and secrete them at their haciendas or palaces in town.

An instance is related that, during the revolution, the renowned Mina visited the hacienda of Jaral, who being informed that the Conde had secreted his money at that farm, ordered a search, which resulted in the soldiers finding two hundred thousand dollars in actual cash. This practice of burying money has resulted in the loss of millions to circulation—for in Mexico, owing to the *total want of confidence in the nearest relatives*, the father, or the brother often dies without communicating to survivors the place of the secret deposit of their hidden treasure.

I have heard it remarked that the earth of Mexico contained coin and bars of precious metals, equivalent in amount to the proceeds of all the mines for one year. Hence it is that the Spaniards of Vera Cruz, during the first revolution, conceiving of no other mode of preserving their valuables, buried their money at Mango de Clayo, which ultimately resulted in Santa Anna's securing eight thousand doubloons, and the shameful incarceration of six deluded men in a dungeon.

Previous to the revolution, when the country was under the more happy management of the old Spaniards, so considerable was the amount of bullion in Mexico, that some of the wealthy would gratify their pride, when going to celebrate the baptism of their children, in laying bars of gold and silver in a continued row from their houses to the very altar of the church, and upon the precious metals the holy priest would walk to the sanctuary to perform the baptismal services.

But the golden age of those days has passed away with the Mexicans, by the too often occurrence of revolutions, and the crippled commerce of their country; as also by the many profitable mines having gone out of their possession into that of English companies; as well as by the neglect of the working of others. Yet the private fortunes of some individuals are considerable; for I was assured that the Condesa de la Cortena, a rich widow, is in the constant habit of making a regular donation to her son of five thousand dollars monthly; and of her fourteen agents, one of them collects and pays her eighty thousand dollars quarterly.

So repeatedly did I hear, during my stay in Mexico, of a piece of slander, if slander it is, that I have no hesitation in giving it publicity. It is said that General Canalizo, who was appointed Provisional Dictator by Santa Anna, in two months after he went into power, purchased and paid for an estate worth two hundred thousand dollars; and that previous to his appointment he was not worth one half that sum. It is proverbial in Mexico, that to be a cabinet officer is to make a fortune.

The revolution of Mexico has yet to result in its beneficial effects to its people, for the mining interest has declined in the general wreck and ruin of the country. A table of the products of all the mines in the several departments, is here subjoined. It is a quotation from a new journal issued while I was in Mexico, in opposition to the present system of government.

Product of the Mines.

Mexico,	2,004,988
Zacatecas,	5,028,655
Guanajuato,	3,476,820
Durango,	876,287
Guadalajara,	908,052
Chihuahua,	568,056
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Total,	Dollars. 13,979,714

As for the solvency of the Mexican government, the British claims alone, without regard to any other liabilities, amount, it is said, to ninety millions of dollars. The government, under its accustomed bad management, has made forced loans from private individuals to pay the interest and instalments of debts; and notwithstanding this has so often been resorted to, yet the prodigality and individual grasping of the rulers, checks any improvement in the financial condition of the country.

Forced loans are made regardless of all remonstrance, and very naturally exasperated the minds of the public against the nation, for whose benefit the payment is to be made, instead of the tyrants who impose the necessity of it. An anecdote is related, that when Santa Anna was making up the first payment of the American indemnity, among other citizens whom he sent for, to levy his contributions upon, was one Senor Don Luis Alimeno, who had formerly been a foreign minister. Upon the arrival of this citizen, he was required to subscribe a liberal share of the idemnity; but he replied to the Dictator, that he had no money. The despot said, "put down the citizen's wife for ten thousand dollars; she is worth the property."

The people of Mexico are certainly the easiest in the world to govern, or else they would not suffer themselves to be oppressed in so grievous a manner by their government. Santa Anna being informed that the issue of copper coin was too abundant, hurled forth a decree, calling into the mints all of that currency. The holders, without delay, complied with the order, and received in return, not the cash, but government scrip. Although the copper coin in the hands of the people amounted to two millions of dollars, yet the holders of the scrip have not, nor can any one tell when they will receive the just amounts of their funds.

To give a correct idea as to how the government of Mexico

pays the honourable demands against it, I will relate a case, the claimant in which, I was acquainted with, and from whom I had, from day to day, a history of the transactions as they happened. While in the city, there arrived an Irish gentleman, a Captain Coin, from the city of Dublin. He had, some two or three years previous, sold to the government of Mexico a steamer called the city of Dublin, for which he never received the pay agreeable to contract; consequently, he was under the necessity of visiting Mexico to recover the debt. On his arrival at Vera Cruz, he visited Santa Anna, who was then at Mango de Clavo, and obtained an order from him on Senor Don Trigueros, the Minister of Finance, payable on sight to Captain Coin for the steamer. On the Captain's presenting the order to the honourable minister, he was informed by him that there was no money in the treasury; but that he would give him on his own account, fifty thousand dollars for his claim of sixty thousand eight hundred and fifty. Captain Coin insisted on the payment of the full amount, and proposed to accept an order on the collector of the customs at Vera Cruz for the sum. This was refused, and the Captain was obliged to suffer himself to be shaved by the minister of the treasury, or else wait for his money an interminable length of time.

There are things of deformity in the church, as well as the state in this country; carried on by bribery and corruption. And here I would take occasion to remark, that it has not been my design to hunt up matter far fetched and unauthenticated, for the purpose of exasperating the public mind against a nation already rendered sufficiently odious, alike for the want of honour, and the perpetration of barbarous cruelties. My only intention is, to give a few prominent features of the daily practices of those in high as well as low places; so that my readers may have some data by which to judge of the moral and political character of the Mexican people. Such an independent course, in my opinion, should be pursued by the journalist regardless of criticism or the hope of flattery. Nothing I would so much regret, knowing as I do the faithlessness and dishonour of the Mexicans, as to delude a seeker for information in regard to the true character of a people, whose country perhaps it may be his wish to visit or reside in. I shall, therefore, not attempt to seek the praise or encomiums of any, by vouching for the virtue of the few, hard to find, or dread the contradictions and anathemas of those who have never had the experience of travel, or who may otherwise be lucratively interested.

I therefore say, that there are Mammon discrepancies, in church as well as in state, emanating from the very throne

of their earthly divinity. The British government having neglected to insert an article in their treaty with Mexico, requiring of that government to make valid the marriages of British protestants performed in that country; and also, to give power to her consuls to administer the matrimonial ceremony,—Englishmen are subject to the inconvenience and expense of visiting the city of Mexico, and there by bribery to obtain the nuptial tie of the Archbishop; the marriage being null and avoid otherwise, both by the religious canons and the laws of the land. Of what avail are the high fiats of heaven, or the positive statutes of a country, if money is to set aside the one, and cover the other? Verily, the god of Mammon is supreme over heaven and earth—the Dictator, too, perhaps. An instance of the above described state of things came under my own knowledge; as the parties I became acquainted with, and a happy couple they were; where it cost the gentleman two thousand dollars to *illegally* marry his wife.

CHAPTER XI.

Gratitude to T. Ducoine. Left the city of Mexico the 8th January. A Mexican passenger. Attempted conversation. Chocolate. Arrangements. My first day's journey. Extensive plain. Mountain scenery. Volcanic eruptions. Valleys divested of forest. The soil generally shallow. The rocks. Haciendas. Stone walls. Orgono hedges. Fields without enclosure. The manure of a hacienda. Splendid scenery. No improved roads north. Natural ways. Mijico. Dined at Cula. Description of Dinner. Chille. My first night's lodging. When day dawned. Table land. Arroyo Zarco. The mother of the driver. Fast driving. Cross-bar broke. Ladrones. San Juan del Rio. Conversation and smoking of two Mexicans. View of Gueretero. Aqueduct. A priest and and the revolution. A walk at night. Plaza lights. Lost. Guitar. Moonlight. Starting of the diligencia. Ladrones. Escape. Celaye. Monument. Mexicans dressed as Indians. The Pope and the Catholic religion. Three Spaniards of old Spain. Language. Politeness. Landlord. Cotton goods. Third day's travel. Guanajuato. Conversation and entertainment. Departure from Guanajuato. Mines of Guanajuato. Magnificent present. Detection of fraud in the Mint. Level country. Siloa. Leon. Arrival at Lagos. Lake region. Loss of sleep. Settlements with my Mexican friend. Waked up alone. Chocolate. Letter of introduction. My difficulty. Fruitless efforts to be understood. Fortunate arrival of a Mexican. Attention of the inhabitants. Doctor Tesus Anaya. Interpreter. A large party of travellers. Tyler's message to Congress. Manner of warfare upon Mexico. No want of water at Lagos. Vegetables and fruits. Bathing. Walk. Paintings of the houses. American negro. Practice of medicine in Mexico. Angel Gabriel. Simon's wounds. The evening of the second day. Arrival of the diligencia. An American passenger. Proposed journey.

I SHALL ever feel grateful to Mr. Theodore Ducoine, a native of Philadelphia, of the largest American house in the city of Mexico, for the assistance he rendered me in forwarding my departure from the capitol; which took place on the night of the 8th of January; a day memorable in the history of my own country.

I left the city of Mexico in the diligencia for Lagos, a distance of four days' and nights' travel. When I was awakened to take my seat, I found that there was one other passenger, and that the individual I was destined to travel with, was a Mexican, and had all the appearance of a gentleman.