was taken to Chihuahua in the north and promptly shot, together with three of his fellow instigators of the revolt.

But he had struck the note of Independence.

For eleven years, until freedom actually dawned for Mexico, the four heads of these martyrs, stuck on pikes, were exposed above the walls of the fortress of that quaint, picturesque old town of Guanajuato, as a warning to all who dared defy the might of Spain.

The Spaniards indulged in most cruel reprisals. General Calleja del Rey, on retaking Guanajuato from the Independents, drove the whole population—men, women, and children—into the great plaza. All were indiscriminately butchered, and the dead piled in heaps. In reporting his handiwork, this blood-thirsty general actually took credit to himself that by cutting their throats he had saved the Vice-regal government the cost of powder and ball. Afterwards he himself became Viceroy.

Spain, warned by the uprising, offered in the following year some sort of Constitution. It was too late; concessions or reprisals were equally ineffective to stay the patriots. Morelos continued the revolt which Hidalgo had begun, and when he, too, fell there were others to take up his cause, which, though kept in subjection, was never entirely crushed. Mina, Bravo, Guerrero kept alive the germ of liberty. The country was stained with blood until Yturbide's "Army of the Three Guarantees"—which gave to Mexico her present national banner of green, white and red—finally triumphed, and in September, 1821, Mexico won her Independence.

There seemed at last a prospect of peaceful and better conditions under the Empire, which was the first form adopted by Mexico in her attempts to achieve self-government. The "Three Guarantees" were:—

Religion—the Roman Catholic Church to the exclusion of all others;

Independence;

Union—equality of Mexicans and Spaniards.

Yturbide was elected Emperor of Mexico. Though a man of many accomplishments he had, unfortunately, not the gift of

kingship, and before many months were over his Empire consisted only of the capital.* The country adhered to the revolt led by General Santa Anna for the founding of a Republic—a man who for sixty years was intimately connected with its history. Yturbide was banished, and returning to Mexico two years later was shot by order of the Republican Government: and on October 11, 1824, General Guadalupe Victoria took the oath as first President of Mexico.

It is not often realised that only a century ago Mexico, territorially speaking, was one of the largest States of the world. Its boundaries extended over what is now the United States of America as far as the Red and Arkansas Rivers to the Pacific Coast, and northwards, to the British possessions. A party of explorers sent out by one of the early Viceroys even penetrated to Alaska, though, of course, Spain's effective dominion never extended so far. Guatemala and all that is now the Republic of Mexico came also under the rule of the Viceroys.

For its contraction from a State of such enormous area and huge potentialities to the limits of its present frontiers—Mexico is still a huge State—two causes are accountable, the collapse of the power of Spain under pressure from Napoleon I., and the civil turmoil and strife which waged before the Republic at length found the secret of settled government.

Louisiana, a province nearly a million square miles in extent, was lost in 1801 to Mexico, by the weakness of Carlos IV. of Spain, who abandoned it to France. Napoleon, without occupying the territory, sold it to the new Republic of the United States for fifteen million dollars in cash. Florida, another sixty-thousand square miles, was taken from the Spanish Mexican Empire and bartered to the same purchasers by Fernando VII. in 1819.

Guatemala, nestling in a corner of the south, took Mexico's own cue when Yturbide, in 1821, founded his short-lived Empire, and proclaimed independence. This last was a matter of trifling

* The practice of giving a state and its chief city the same name—as Mexico, Puebla, Oaxaca—is apt to cause confusion. I have, therefore, used the appellation "Mexico City" for the capital, although in official letters and documents it appears simply as "Mexico."

importance compared with the subsequent loss of Texas and New Mexico, which deeply stirred the land of Montezuma at a time when young Porfirio Diaz was obtaining his first impressions of public affairs.

The early promise of the Republic was not fulfilled. General Guadalupe Victoria, the first President, performed with success the difficult task of keeping the turbulent political factions at peace, and the country prospered; but the election of his successor, Guerrero, was signalised by much bloodshed. A couple of years later Guerrero—betrayed into the hands of General Anastasio Bustamente, his own Vice-President, who had secretly plotted against him and seized power—was executed at Oaxaca.

Already, with the violent deaths of an Emperor (Yturbide) and a President, and with three revolutions to its account, the seven-year-old Republic had made but slow progress towards the ideal of liberty. In a few years' time, while General Santa Anna was climbing to power, Republicanism gave way to avowed despotism, and the last condition of Mexico was little, if any, better than when under the autocratic rule of the Spanish Viceroys.

Antonio López de Santa Anna was one of Mexico's most remarkable men. He was all-powerful at the time that Diaz first entered politics as a rebel against his authority. Imperialist, Republican, Autocrat, Dictator—everything in turn—he was at one moment the idol of the people, at the next the object of their most intense hatred, a refugee with a price upon his head. He violated every oath that he took, and was disloyal to every government which employed him.

Santa Anna was one of those men who "arrive" when young. A Mexican of Spanish descent, he fought against the Spanish Empire to put Yturbide on the throne. Yturbide had occupied that dizzy eminence but a little time when Santa Anna changed his tactics and became a leader of the movement to overthrow him and establish the Republic. The latter had been in existence but a few years when President Guadalupe Victoria had excellent reasons to denounce him as a traitor.

But such was the fickleness of Mexican character and the extraordinary personal magnetism of the man that in a few

days Santa Anna made himself the leader of the very army sent to arrest him, and was able to place his own nominee, Guerrero, in the President's chair.

Santa Anna was a political gambler pure and simple. The interest of his country were the stakes on the table. He played the game for the excitement it brought him, and the unlimited power which his usurpations placed in his hands. It suited his part to pose as the most ardent of Mexican patriots, sacrificing everything—but the goods were other people's—for the welfare of his native land.

A clever man, entirely unscrupulous, rapacious, cruel, of overmastering conceit, he dazzled the eyes of the Mexicans with his theatrical vain-boastings. He proved himself a soldier of courage. None knew better than he that the adhesion of the army was the first essential to any man who attempted to rule Mexico, and his popularity with the troops was at times phenomenal.

Part of his system while preparing the way for his Dictatorship was to place some other man in office, while he, the unrewarded patriot, retired from the scene—to pull the strings. Very soon his puppet-president was in difficulties, and Santa Anna came forward—the saviour of his country—to relieve the situation and receive universal homage.

It was his good fortune when his credit was at its lowest to lose a leg in fighting a French landing-party at Vera Cruz. This sacrifice by the hero in his country's cause was made the most of. He had the dismembered limb embalmed, and when at the height of his power directed its entombment in the capital with almost regal and ridiculous pomp. After his downfall the leg was torn from its resting-place by the infuriated mob, and dragged with every accompaniment of insult about the streets.

He had made overtures to give the Crown of Mexico to a European Prince in the early fifties. When Maximilian came he proffered his services—which the Austrian Archduke was wise enough to decline.

A schemer and a plotter to the last, one of his final exploits was to endeavour to foment a revolution in his own favour at

Vera Cruz when Maximilian's empire collapsed and the whole country returned to the Republican flag. A United States naval officer stifled his hopes by holding him prisoner on the gunboat *Tacony* and forbade his landing; an example of excellent tact entirely unjustified by any of the rules supplied for a naval officer's guidance.

Santa Anna had imposed a military oligarchy on the country in 1836, concentrating all power in the central authority. The Federal Republic as created by its founders was destroyed. Revolt broke out all over the land, but one State alone was successful in wresting its independence from the tyranny. That was Texas. Its immense territories and outlying position, as well as the antecedents of its people, favoured the struggle.

For fifteen years American colonists had been settling there, and the constantly changing government of Mexico had proved a great obstacle to development.

Santa Anna was furious at this state of affairs, and went to Texas determined to suppress the rebellion. He was guilty of horrible atrocities. The treatment the people received at his hands inspired the Texans with the courage of despair. Under General Sam Houston they made a great effort, completely routed Santa Anna, and captured the whole Mexican army with both its leaders, at Jacinto River. The Independence of Texas was recognised in a Treaty, and Santa Anna, whose military prestige suffered a severe blow, was only permitted to return to Mexico by way of the United States.

Later, Texas declared itself a separate Republic, and received recognition as such from most of the European nations and the United States.

In 1844, Santa Anna, once more in power for a season, put forward a plan for its reconquest, but as the Mexican Congress would only vote him $4,000,000 instead of the ten millions which he demanded, he gave up the enterprise.

A year later Texas made a request to join the United States. This produced intense excitement in Mexico. Troops were marched up to the Rio Grande, but General Taylor moving at the head of the United States army gained decisive victories.

General Santa Anna, who, meantime, had been deposed from his dictatorship, placed on trial for treason, and banished for ten years, was recalled from exile to take command of the Mexican army. He reached Texas only to experience repeated defeat, and was compelled again to fly for his life. By the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, signed in 1848 by Herrara, who, in the kaleidoscopic changes of Mexican politics had become President for a second term, Texas was finally ceded to the United States. This was twelve years after the first revolt.

Thus Mexico lost one of her most important possessions, for though Texas, as seen from the train, looks but a dreary, sandy waste of prairie, it has in reality beautiful spots in the oasis, notably San Antonio. This ancient town, where some of the severest fighting took place, is still very Spanish, and the old mission churches of the early settlers are to be seen almost intact. Texas is important, if only for its size, and now that irrigation is being vigorously pursued, those dusty miles of dreary flatness are being brought under cultivation.

The famous Rio Grande makes a natural division between Texas and Mexico. In some parts it is a beautiful stream running between deep ravines well overhung with foliage. The chief points for crossing are El Paso in the west, on the Texan side, with Cuidad Juárez on the Mexican frontier; and in the east, Eagle Pass, with Cuidad Porfirio Diaz on the Mexican side. Thus it will be seen that two of the gates which give access to the land of Montezuma from the north bear the names of the two men who have made modern Mexico. Laredo, with Nueva Laredo on the Mexican side, is the crossing-place of the Mexican National Railway, and is now the shortest route from Mexico City to New York—a journey accelerated lately so as to be accomplished in a hundred hours.

Now to return to Porfirio Diaz himself, after what has been a somewhat long digression. As a lad of fifteen he was, as we know, a scholar at the Roman Catholic Seminary at Oaxaca. A year or two later he started with all the unconquerable

enthusiasm of youth on a momentous journey. Mexico City was his goal.

He was too poor to ride the two hundred and fifty miles, so he walked the greater part of the way. It is a beautiful road across the mountains and through deep ravines of the Cañon de Tomellin, where, although there is practically no vegetation in places, the volcanic masses display a variety of warm colours—red, yellow, brown, grey or white. Those volcanic upheavals are so twisted and twirled that they look as though they had been swirled round and round in a boiling cauldron. Even with them alone the cañon would be a magnificent piece of scenery.

Further on the country becomes more fertile, and the land affords good pasture for cattle; all along the sides of the hills, right high up into the thickly-wooded mountains, are patches of brightest green. These are sugar-cane, which grows with great luxuriance in this damp, tropical region. Bananas cluster everywhere, and cocoa-nuts hang in bunches from the trees. Melon plants flourish on all sides; indeed, the tangled jungle seems to contain almost every kind of tropical plant and shrub. Antelopes, flights of turkeys, monkeys chattering incessantly among the bamboos which abound, and often attaining a height of sixty feet, are common sights.

Prickly mimosa, bougainvillea, red pepper and castor-oil plants flourish everywhere. Endless creepers and mosses hang from the trees, while below lie thick patches of jungle. A wonderful and useful creeper is common, twining up the tree trunks. It is not pretty, being merely a green stalk the thickness of a man's thumb. Cut in two places about three feet apart with a machete (native sword worn by nearly every peasant), the purest of water immediately gurgles forth from the stem. It is prized in a land of stagnant streams because of its purity for drinking purposes and for boiling for tea or coffee. This creeper is, indeed, one of nature's greatest gifts. Maidenhair ferns grow in fissures of the rock, and wild orchids abound, giving a strong note of colour among the pervading green and brown.

Each turn brings one to more and more beautiful scenes,

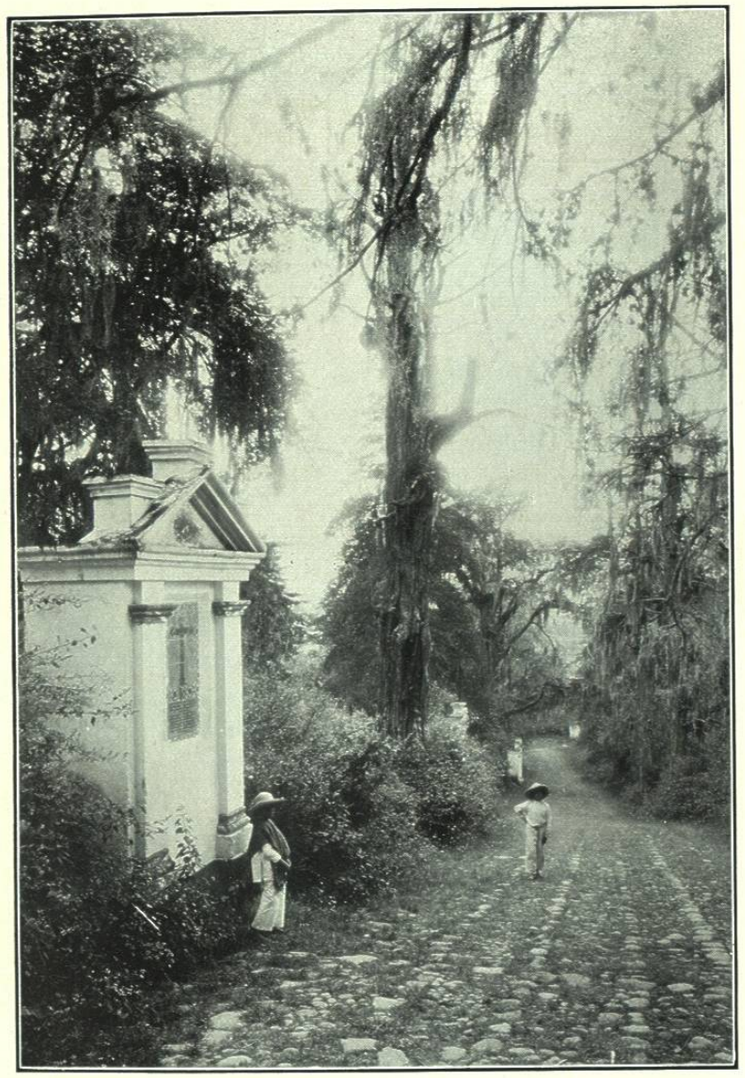

Photo by Cox.]

A shrine, showing moss and creepers on the trees.

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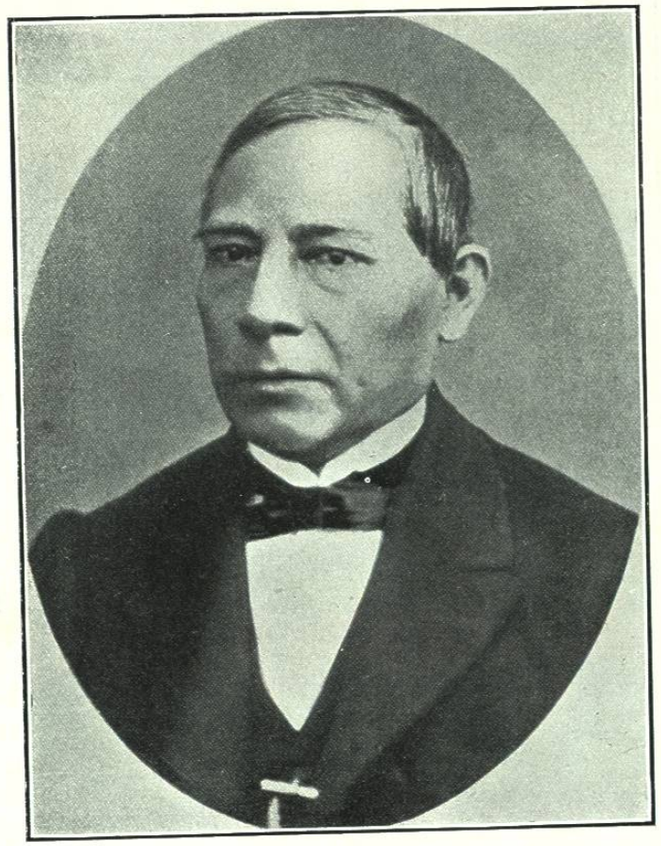

Beníto Juárez.

each more lovely and more wonderful than the last; but still it must have been a tiring journey on foot for young Diaz, for the damp heat is trying, although it is this very heat which makes everything grow so luxuriantly.

The purpose of his long tramp was not altogether Quixotic. The lad had heard about the loss of Texas to his country, and that American troops were at that time invading its northern frontiers. Men were needed if they were to be driven out. So considering himself a man at seventeen he determined to reach the capital and offer his services to the National Guard. But before time, or occasion, served to afford him opportunity to receive his baptism of fire, the brief, inglorious struggle ended in the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo; and finally the National Guard itself was disbanded. Thus the chance of his entering the army was for the time defeated.

Back once more at Oaxaca, and having renounced irrevocably the ecclesiastical career which it had been the desire of his mother and his *padrino* to impose upon him, Diaz set himself more seriously to the study of the law, to which he applied himself for the next few years. It must be borne in mind that he had no money, and not only this, but his mother was more or less dependent upon him. Consequently it was necessary for him to earn an income at the same time as he continued his studies. Although still a youth, those were years of hard work, much privation, and considerable anxiety. He was enabled to pay his fees at the Law Institute by himself taking a few pupils. Good fortune brought him under notice of Don Marcos Pérez, a judge of the district and professor at the Law Institute, who took great interest in his promising student.

Pérez was the means of introducing Porfirio Diaz to Beníto Juárez, then Governor of the State of Oaxaca, to whose patronage he was indebted for a slender, but welcome, addition to his resources which came from his appointment as librarian at the college. Without Juárez and his overthrow of the Church, Diaz would never have succeeded in making Mexico what she is to-day, and no one is more ready to acknowledge that fact than the President himself.