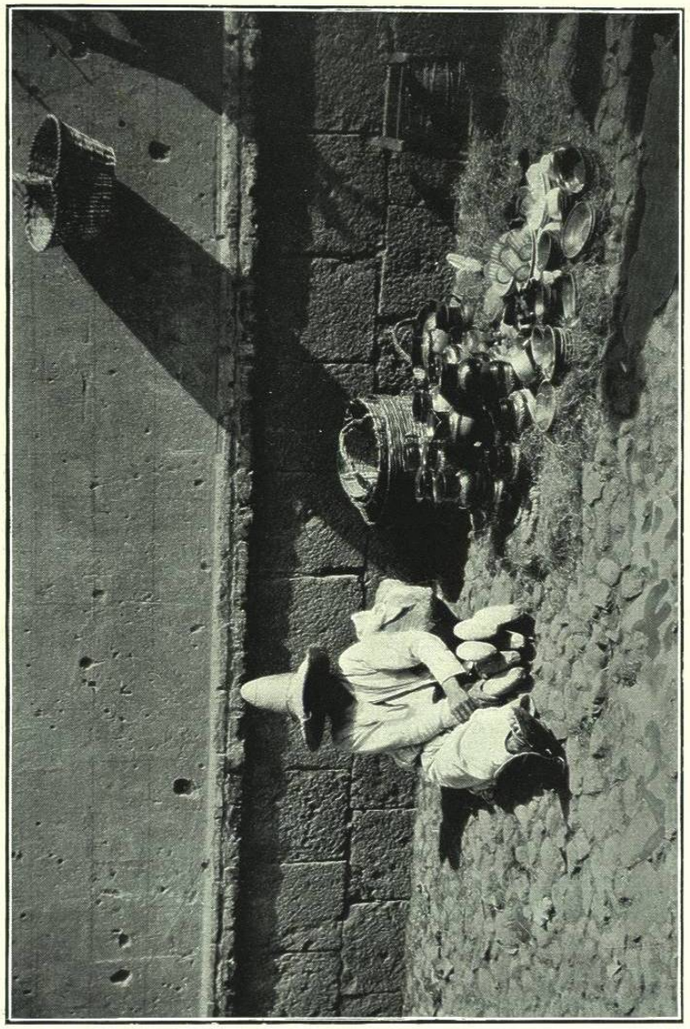

His little all. [*Page* 261.

or *jorongo*) through which they pass the head. This body covering, closely resembling a towel, simply hangs down before and behind, leaving the arms bare, and as it is not fastened in at the waist, the body can usually be seen. It is hardly a sufficient covering for a cold night. Yet these poor tatters are all the people possess, and whatever their poverty they are always picturesque.

Tied in a bundle on her back, every woman present had a baby. The number of babies at Guadalupe seemed extraordinary. Every female, whatever her age, appeared to have one slung on her, and, as if that were not enough to carry for miles, she generally had bundles two or three times the size of the child added to her burden. Of course, the infants cried; as an accompaniment to the music there arose a constant wail from babyhood in Church.

After the service was over, the church soon emptied. With solemn pomp a little blind was dropped over the famous picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, on which miraculous painting but a moment previously the glow of innumerable candles had fallen. The crown of jewels ceased to shine and sparkle; the solemn chants of the priests were hushed; the faithful knelt no longer on the bare stone flags. Night had spread her ebon wings.

Many persons have described that famous ride from the shrine of Guadalupe and Diaz' entry into Mexico City to me.

He was forty-six, just in the prime of life, health and strength. Well-mounted, sitting erect, his head raised high, his dark face bronzed with the rigours of camp life, he made a fine figure as he rode in front of his staff, well in view of the populace. He was dressed in his General's uniform, and was followed by a large contingent of the Revolutionary army.

People came out of the city and gathered along the roadside. The greeting was not unmixed with cries of dissent. The crowd cheered, the crowd hissed, for there were persons in Mexico City on that day who had no reason to congratulate themselves on the success of the victor. Hot spirits were roused,

and the populace fought amongst themselves. General Diaz rode on, taking small heed either of the cheers or the dissentient cries which rent the air.

As he left Guadalupe, with the queer little shrines on either side of the country road, and passed through the streets of the city, the demonstration was more friendly. By the time he reached the great square of the Zocolo endless cheers greeted him. The Plaza was packed in front of the cathedral. The best of the Mexican populace was gathered there. Indians of every tribe were squatting or standing, all feeling that something was to happen, though few knew exactly what. Women carried their babies on their backs, men dragged older children by the hands, or sat under the shade of the trees in front of the cathedral opposite the Palace.

Roars of welcome rose from the multitude. Southern blood mixed with the Latin race runs through the veins of the Mexicans, and once roused to excitement and emotion they lose control of themselves. Thus it was that day. Hats were thrown on high in the great open square, red rebozos (blankets) were waved overhead; men, women and children shouted in acclamation, while General Diaz, with the face of a stoic, acknowledged their greetings with dignity. Applause stimulates a strong mind just as it throws a weak one off its balance.

He paused to salute. Again and again he raised his hand to his sombrero, and then, turning to the left, entered beneath the porch of the Palace which supports the balcony, from which he was destined to ring forth the note of Independence for many a long year.

The crowd roared itself hoarse and then dispersed; the soldiers were dismissed, and General Diaz and his little band of followers were left in the old Spanish Palace. His entry was so powerful, so masterful, that many who had previously been against him were hypnotised by the manner of the man, and from that moment became his devoted adherents.

As night fell, the last shout died away, the roar of human voices ceased, and that wonderful stillness of the tropics overcame the heat and turmoil of the day. Darkness came on sud-

denly, a chilly feeling rent the air—the excitement of the day was over, and Diaz remained alone with his thoughts.

What had happened? Was he, the son of an Oaxacan innkeeper, the little boy brought up in poverty, who had practically educated himself, he the rough soldier lad, he the rugged officer to whom Castilian-Spanish was almost unfamiliar—as he had talked Indian in his native home, and still spoke a sort of patois with his men—was he to take up the reins of government? Was he to try and unravel the tangled skein of a century of misrule?