

dollars. Toward the back of the theatre is the old church and convent of Santo Domingo. This formerly was very large, and the centre of the Inquisition, as were all the convents of the Dominican order almost everywhere. The portion forming the city convent is now the city prison; the old church and the chapter assembly-room still belong to the order of Santo Domingo.

This church was the first one built in the state of Zacatecas, and was erected between 1560 and 1570. All that remains to show that it belonged to the Inquisition under the Dominican

order is the assembly-room, or "Sala de Actas." The decoration of the church is very fine. The next place of interest is the church and convent of San Francisco. The church is small and very poor; the frontage is of carved stone, and the interior decoration appears to have been very rich in former years. The convent now is almost in ruins, a small part being used as a *meson*, another as a dwelling-place for the poorer class, a small piece as a brick-yard, but by far the greater portion has become dilapidated with age and neglect. The old convent of San Augustin has been almost entirely turned into dwelling-houses, but the church, a very fine building, has been left entire, and belongs to the Presbyterian missions.

From the balcony of the Hotel Zacateno there is a magnificent panorama, the whole city seeming like one great fortress of stone. Huge stone walls and mountain-sides are everywhere, with patches of green here and there, making up a picturesque combination.

There are several silver-mines in the vicinity of Zacatecas, some of them exceedingly valuable. The principal mining districts in the

state besides Zacatecas are Fresnillo, Sombrerete, Chalchihuites, Nieves, Pinos, Mazapil, Ojo Caliente, and Mezquital del Oro. These furnish, in addition to large quantities of gold and silver, copper, tin, lead, iron, cobalt, antimony, cinnabar, arsenic, sulphur, and alum. The patio process is in common use, although calcination and the *tonel* method are also employed. The product of these Zacatecas mines averages yearly from five to six million dollars, the mint coining five hundred thousand dollars per month. The climate is perfect; no case of consumption was ever known.

In February, 1896, Zacatecas enjoyed the novelty of a snow-storm, during which the people gave themselves a holiday and battles with snow-balls became the rage. Students built snow forts and erected snow statues of General Escobedo and Minerva. Over three feet fell, and the sight was something almost unheard of, the climate usually being delightful all winter.

Having exhausted the sights of Zacatecas, Guadalupe, a suburb of about nine thousand people, some six miles distant, may be reached by tramway. The cars, operated by the "gravitation system," start slowly, but are soon whirling down the steep hills, passing by the queer



THE THEATRE CALDERON, ZACATECAS.

adobe houses, the track now crossing over a bridge beneath which are seen droves of burros carrying the ores from the mines, again through a gulch around some huge boulders, or past the yawning mouth of some mine; the magnificent views and the varied objects creating a thousand vivid impressions. Indeed, the experience of this tramway ride is one not soon to be forgotten by the tourist.

In Guadalupe the market-place, as in all other Mexican cities, is a point of interest, where every variety of vegetable is offered for sale, and the venders themselves are not the least attractive features of the scene.

The cathedral of Guadalupe, with its tiled dome and its beautiful surroundings, presents a delightful appearance as one approaches through the plaza, planted thickly with roses and



THE LITTLE PLAZA OF VILLAREAL, ZACATECAS.

countless varieties of flowers. As we enter the cathedral, we pause in astonishment. Upon the altar are life-size figures representing the crucifixion, and in the background is a painting of the hill of Calvary, with the attending Roman soldiers and Jews grouped around. Attached to the cathedral is an art gallery containing many magnificent paintings, the subjects drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and in their treatment showing the work of some master-hand. The new chapel, on the north of the cathedral, the gift of a lady of great wealth, is considered one of the finest in the world. The steps leading to the altar are of onyx, only the rarest kinds being used; the rail of the altar is of solid silver, and the altar itself in parts is constructed of solid silver and gold. The magnificent dome is beautifully frescoed, and one's eyes never tire of feasting on the many lovely figures so skilfully portrayed.

The remainder of the convent is now occupied as a school. In this school there are over

two hundred boys from the poorer classes of Guadalupe and Zacatecas, who are being taught the trades of wool-working and weaving, printing, bookbinding, carpentry, carriage- and car-building, blacksmithing, and shoemaking, as well as other trades. The blankets and wraps made in this school are equal in manufacture to any that may be bought either in the States or in Europe, and compare very favorably in price with them. This school was awarded medals in the Paris Exposition of 1887 and the Exposition at Chicago in 1893 for woollen and silk goods made on the premises.



THE CHURCH OF GUADALUPE, ZACATECAS.

There is a band of well-trained musicians connected with the school. The establishment is self-supporting, and certainly is well worth visiting. This is the pet institution of the governor, who manifests the deepest interest in the progress of the pupils.

Near Guadalupe is the establishment of Señor Don Serapio Galvan, Fábrica de Providencia. This factory is in the shape of the letter L, and occupies thirty thousand square yards. The street front is a handsome façade, with square tower and large entrance; inside is a handsome court, with offices for the various departments. The owner's private house is also here, and has a large court with covered galleries from which opens a suite of handsome rooms gorgeously furnished. Carriages and all sorts of vehicles are manufactured in this factory, to compete with the best American or European products.

The governor of Zacatecas is General Jesus Arechiga, under whose wise administration many improvements have been made in public and private enterprises. Among the achievements of his terms are the new theatre, costing nearly two hundred and fifty thousand dollars; a magnificent hospital, of rose-colored stone, fitted with all the requirements of modern science; an elaborate system of lighting; a beautiful school for girls with ample grounds and all the latest appliances known to educators, a scientific institute, a normal school for boys, and other public buildings and improvements of importance to the capital city. His efforts have not been confined to the seat of local government, however, as many useful public improvements have been made throughout the state, including new schools, city halls, public gardens, and markets. A word should be added in praise of the fine system of public schools in Zacatecas. The state spends nearly three million dollars in primary and higher public instruction. There are about twenty-five thousand students in these schools, with two thousand more in private schools maintained by the clergy and other individuals. With her vast resources, her educational system, and her public spirit, the state of Zacatecas has already become a power in the republic of Mexico.

CHAPTER XXVIII

AGUAS CALIENTES



ONE of the smallest states in Mexico is Aguas Calientes, having an area of only two thousand two hundred and sixteen square miles. It is almost entirely enclosed within the state of Zacatecas. According to the last census, the state of Aguas Calientes has four cities, four villages, forty-nine haciendas, three hundred and fifty-five ranches, eighteen thousand five hundred and two houses, besides three hundred

and eighty-one that are being constructed, sixty-eight Catholic churches, and two Protestant. The eastern districts consist of elevated table-lands, some five thousand to six thousand feet above the level of the sea. The western portion includes the sierras of Laurel and Pinal, spurs of the Sierra Madre or Cordillera. The table-lands produce abundant crops of cereals and a variety of fruits, including olives, figs, grapes, and pears. It is divided into four districts,—Aguas Calientes, Rincon de Romos, Asientos, and Calvillo.

The capital is Aguas Calientes, which means hot waters. It is a very attractive city of about forty thousand inhabitants, noted for its hot springs, well-appointed bath-houses, and healthy climate. At this point there is now being erected what will be one of the largest silver-copper smelting plants in the world. One of the most celebrated and largely attended fairs of the republic (the Feast of San Marcos) is held at Aguas Calientes in the month of April in each year, when thousands of people from all parts of the country throng the streets and plazas of this old and beautiful city. Aguas Calientes has especial attractions for lady tourists because of the beautiful needle-work (drawn-work) which is brought to all trains by the vendors, for sale at very low prices.

The city takes its name from the warm mineral springs in its neighborhood. The old roads



SEÑOR DON RAFAEL ARELLANO,
GOVERNOR OF AGUAS CALIENTES.