

the rock, and that a misstep might precipitate one into the midst of a plaza three or four hundred feet below.

This lovely, bewildering spot is full of lanes and archways and winding market-places, where the picturesque people seem to be selling every oddity imaginable. The upper balconies of the beautiful homes are gay with awnings and flowers; the old church of the Jesuits is magnificent in fine arches of soft pink stone and carvings like lace-work; the overhanging hills show brilliantly against the blue sky wherever one turns; through a hundred different arches some vision



THE CASTLE OF GRANADITAS, GUANAJUATO.

of slender-pillared inner courts bright with blossoms and fresh greenery continually flashes out.

In fact, such is the unevenness of the streets that in many cases the houses seem to have been built in an amphitheatre, and often the doors of one dwelling are almost on a level with the roofs of the next. Many of the streets are too narrow for a wheeled vehicle, and all the older ones are extremely irregular. A mountain torrent passes through some of the eastern ones, which sometimes rises to a flood.

The streets are for the most part irregular, precipitous, rock-paved paths, upon which a

wheeled vehicle is seldom seen, and down whose steep inclines half-naked men, women, and children of the peón class contest the right of way with gorgeously accoutred horsemen and droves of patient pack-laden burros.

The fame of Guanajuato, however, rests on her great mining industry, and a visit to one of her haciendas for the reduction of ore and to a mine is essential to even a cursory understanding of her resources. Many of the mines of Guanajuato are of comparatively easy access, some being entered by tunnel direct into the mountain, along which rails are laid for convenience in removing ore by horse-car, and others by steps cut in the rock. Should the would-be visitor be a woman, however, she will probably meet with obstacles, on account of the strange superstition in regard to the presence of a woman in a mine. But Friday is pay-day, and on Saturday the men frequently prefer to drink rather than to work; consequently, on the latter day she can visit the mine to her heart's content.

A visit to a hacienda or reduction-works where the whole process of milling ore is executed by mule-power is one of the curiosities of Mexico, and nowhere is this process to be seen to better advantage than in the Hacienda de la Purísima.

In addition to its other points of interest, Guanajuato can boast of a theatre building just completed after the expenditure of twenty years of labor and a million of dollars. It is surpassed in elegance by no other structure of its class on the North American continent, with the possible exception of the Auditorium of Chicago. The interior of the Juarez Theatre is mag-

nificently decorated, and is a dream of color. The proscenium arch is of the horseshoe form, in red, gold, and blue stucco relief. The noble parterre gives ample space to the large and comfortable seats, and these, with the three tiers of boxes, draped in old-gold plush, give a seating capacity of thirteen hundred people. The walls of the boxes and of the whole interior are stencilled in the Catalan style with dull reds and golds, which set off superbly the costumes of the señoritas and their lovely faces, for the ladies of Guanajuato are uncommonly beautiful and gracious.

A visitor who inclines rather to the curious than to the picturesque or practical will perhaps give the cemetery of Guanajuato, or "pantheon," precedence among the "sights" of the place. This burial-place is on the top of a steep hill which overlooks the city, and consists of an area



DAM MANUEL GONZALEZ, GUANAJUATO.

enclosed by what appears from the outside to be a high wall, but which proves from within to be a receptacle for bodies placed in tiers, much as the narrow confines of their native valley compelled them to live. The pantheon is enclosed by high walls, entered through ponderous gates. The dead are buried for the little time that the peculiar dryness of the soil and air takes to mummify them. Then they are filed away in pigeon-holes in the walls. Each pigeon-hole may contain the remains of a citizen, but it is not so occupied unless a specific rental is paid promptly. It is customary to pay this rental for a couple of years, but if the relatives of the deceased are particularly wealthy and have an unusually high social standing, they sometimes continue to pay the dues for five years, while if the relatives are correspondingly below the average the assessment may be paid for only a few weeks or months. When the rentals are no longer forthcoming, the partially mummified remains are taken out of the pigeon-holes and



corded up in subterranean chambers tunnelled out of the solid rock. Here the skeleton-guarded walls are musty, the light is pale and gruesome, and the air is laden with the odor of the decaying dead. On all sides are the spectral forms. They are arranged upright around the walls, and there they keep their silent vigil until disintegration proceeds so far that the bones are no longer articulated. Once they fall asunder, they are heaped up from stony floor to rocky roofs, and there are many tunnels full of these human bones.

They are often no more than skeletons, these corpses that fringe the walls of the vaulted passages. Eyeless sockets stare at one, and gaping mouths look as if death had come with pain, while a piece of dried flesh with hair, with now a boot and then a fleck of trousers, remain

attached to all that is left of what may once have been a prominent citizen.

Indeed, in many ways this old town of sixty thousand inhabitants is a very strange admixture of a new world and the centuries-old Orient. The walled streets, the white clothing, the public fountains, the stone balconies, the sandalled feet, the deep sky, all make one realize that yesterday is joining hands with to-day in bringing Guanajuato to the front as one of the most enterprising towns of the republic.

The dam "Manuel Gonzalez" cannot fail to interest the reader. The works of the



SILVER-MINE OF SAN XAVIER.

reservoir were commenced on the 5th of March, 1887, and completed in 1893. The amount of expenses, including prizes, was over two hundred thousand dollars. The material employed is a metamorphic rock, known in the locality as green rock, and exceedingly handsome. In the ornaments are used sandstone of different colors, called *loseros*, and the red stone from the Bufo quarry. The effect of these combinations is beautiful beyond description; and all these varied materials are the products of the immediate locality. A wall, containing over forty thousand cubic metres, has been built, measuring one hundred and sixty-six metres in thickness at the base or foundation and twenty-four at the upper part. The maximum height in the interior is thirty-three metres and eighty-eight centimetres. This dam contains one million six hundred thousand cubic metres of water. On account of the short distance from the capital—only five kilometres—and the difference in the height of the ground, the city of Guanajuato is supplied with water enough for all its needs, and it will be possible to establish hydraulic motors of incalculable usefulness.

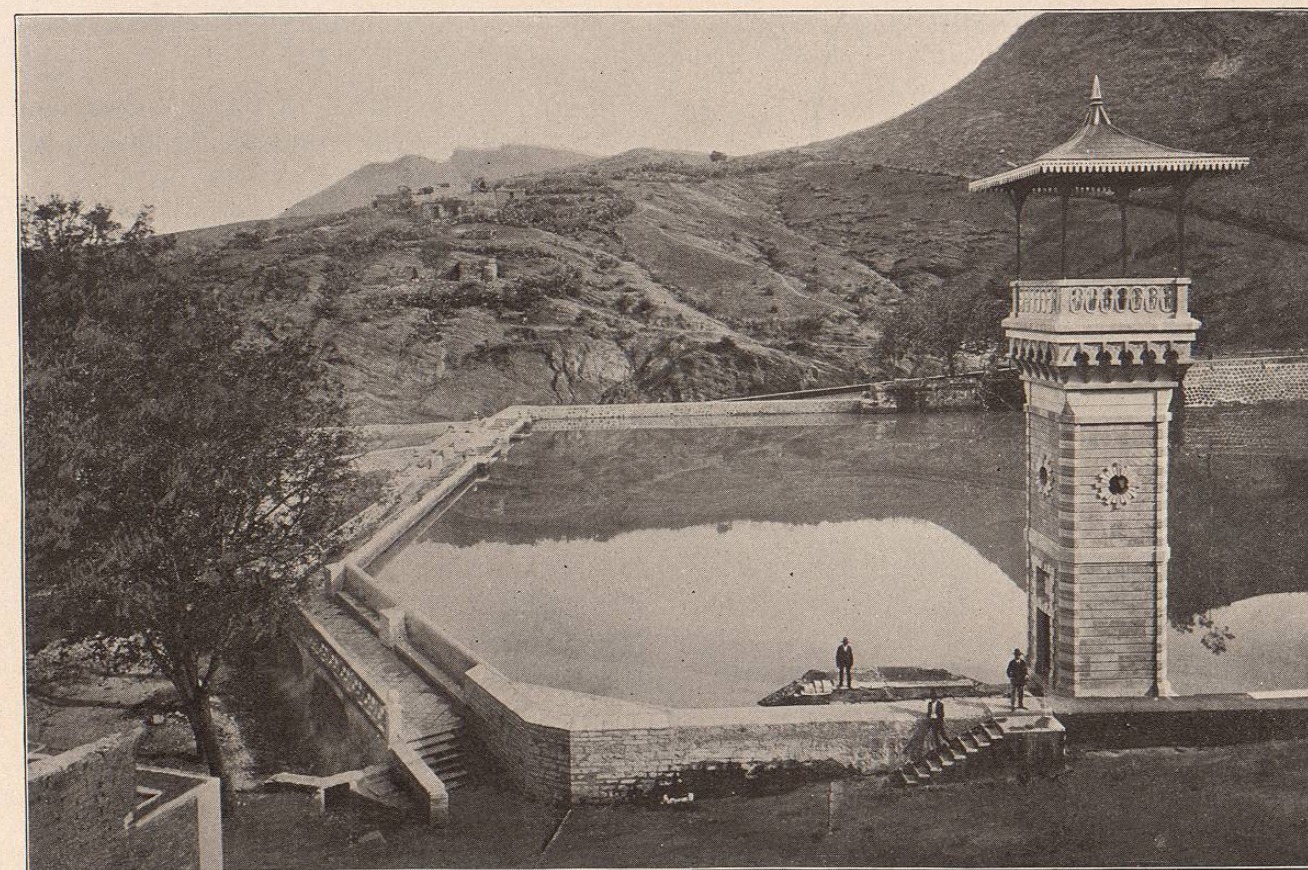
Public instruction has been pushed to the front, the systems of teaching being in conformity with the progress of modern times. The result has been the increase of the school population. There are now in the state no less than five hundred schools, with an attendance of thirty thousand pupils of both sexes. The cost of maintaining the schools of public instruction and of

employing teachers of high ability is over two hundred thousand dollars. There are five institutions, with all the requirements of modern times, devoted to the highest branches of teaching. The government of the state, attentive to the welfare of its people, issued a decree making public instruction obligatory, and assuming control of it.

While we were in the state of Guanajuato we were shown through the great woollen-mills of Soria, which are a short distance from Celaya. These are very handsome factories, belonging to the Gonzalez family. There is a very complete little village around them, and the mills turn out beautiful fine woollen goods, equal to the best produced by the manufactories of Europe.

Among other interesting towns of Guanajuato is Salamanca, a busy little city, celebrated for the straw and leather goods manufactured there.

San Miguel de Allende was named for, and was the birthplace of, the patriot Allende. The city is on the east side of the railroad and about a mile and a half from it. It is spread out on the sloping sides of a great hill,—one of the most picturesque towns in Mexico, and



THE PRESA, GUANAJUATO.

famous for its baths, where the water gushes from the rocks on the hill-side, and is conveyed fresh to the baths at a most comfortable temperature. These ever-running springs, furnishing an abundance of water, run down in sparkling streams and miniature cascades through the most lovely gardens of fruits and flowers. The plaza is a beautiful one, densely shaded by luxuriant trees, under which the natives, in brightly colored costumes, group themselves on market-days, when the band plays in the evening, making pretty pictures fit for a canvas. The hotels face the plaza, the windows overlooking the novel scene. On one side is the Casa de