

so that the same degree of undress is not expected or found in the Mexican as in the Egyptian shaduf-worker. I saw, however, in the neighborhood of Irapuato, two Indians as well-sweeps working side by side, who were dressed only in white cotton loin-cloths, and who looked like the twin brothers of shaduf-workers whom I have seen and photographed on the Nile."

And again he says, "The Mexican woman, with her baby at her back securely fastened in the rebozo, which throws the infant's weight on the mother's shoulders, is to be compared with the Egyptian woman, whose 'rebozo' covers her face while the child straddles her shoulders,



DRAWING PULQUE, IN TLACHIQUERO.

holding to her head and leaving her hands as unfettered as in the Mexican fashion. There are no Egyptian camels, but even more numerous donkeys, the patient burros. The Indian villages, whether of adobe or of bamboo, with thatched roofs and organ cactus fences, and whether alive with goats, donkeys, or snarling curs, are African in effect. There are Aztec picture-writings resembling the Egyptian, the paper being made from the maguey instead of papyrus. The Aztecs employed captives on great public works, as in Egypt. Mexico thus has pyramids, much broader based than those of Egypt, though not so high, and idols quite as ugly. Gold ornaments, beads, masks, and other highly prized antiquities are found on the tombs, as in Egypt."

## CHAPTER L

### GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

TO enable readers of these pages to best open and most profitably maintain social and business relations with Mexico and her people, some appropriate hints may not here prove amiss. Those here given have the advantage of having been inspired during actual residence and of being the result of wide travel and close observation.

It is remarkable how little not only Europeans but Americans know concerning Mexico. A great many know that there is such a country as Mexico, and that is about all. It is not long since that a very successful business man in the United States, on being told that the city of Mexico had a population of over three hundred thousand, expressed himself as incredulous on this point, saying he had always had the impression that it was not over twenty-five thousand.

Those who are seeking the trade of people speaking a different language from their own should accommodate themselves to the language spoken by the expected customers. This is the law of trade. English-speaking people who desire the trade of Spanish-speaking countries should pocket their pride or any theories which they may have as regards the genius or value of their mother-tongue as compared with any other. A knowledge of Spanish greatly aids one in opening out business with Mexico, whether he goes there or remains at home and transacts his business by correspondents, although English is spoken very generally throughout Mexico.

It is pleasant to note that in American towns which have commenced to have large business with Mexico Spanish classes have become quite popular among business men.

It may be interesting to all non-Mexicans to know what the laws are as to who are Mexicans and who are considered foreigners.

Those are considered Mexicans who are born in the national territory and of fathers who are Mexicans by birth or naturalization; those born in the national territory of a Mexican mother and of a father who may not be legally recognized as a Mexican, and those who are born of parents who are unknown or of unknown nationality; and those born outside of the republic of a Mexican father who has not lost his nationality. Should he have lost his nationality the sons shall be considered as foreigners, but shall have the right to declare their intention of considering themselves Mexican within a year following their twenty-first birthday. Those born outside of the republic of a Mexican mother have this privilege, supposing she has not lost her nationality. If the mother shall not have been naturalized her sons will be foreigners, but will have the right to declare themselves Mexicans as in the case before mentioned. A foreign woman who marries a Mexican is considered a Mexican, even during her widowhood. Those born outside of the republic but who resided there in 1821 and swore to the Act of Independence are also residents if they have not changed their nationality. Those Mexicans who lived in the territory ceded to the United States and have fulfilled the required conditions to keep their



nationality are also Mexicans. In a similar way are those in territory ceded to Guatemala. Those foreigners who were naturalized according to the present law; those who acquire real estate in the republic, provided they do not declare their intentions to preserve their original nationality; foreigners who have children born in Mexico, provided they do not prefer to preserve their original nationality; and all foreigners who serve the Mexican government officially, or who accept from it titles for public offices, are citizens of Mexico.

Those are considered foreigners who are born outside of the national territory and are subject to foreign governments and have not been naturalized in Mexico; the sons of a foreign father or of a foreign mother born in the national territory, and who have not declared their intentions; those absent from the republic without license from the government, on account of studies, of public interest, of commerce or industries, or the practice of a profession, who let ten years go by without asking permission to extend their absence. Mexican women who marry foreigners retain their character as citizens even during widowhood; Mexicans who are naturalized in other countries, or who officially serve foreign governments without license of the Mexican Congress; those who accept foreign decorations, titles, or offices other than literary, scientific, or humanitarian without permission from Congress are classed as foreigners. Every foreigner can be naturalized who complies with the requirements of this law.

It surprises those who visit Mexico to find that almost everywhere the methods of cultivation are the same as those employed by the ancient Egyptians. A Mexican plough has a wooden beam and a small iron shoe which scratches a furrow about five inches broad and the same depth. Its work is supplemented by a three- to five-pound hoe, and there is a saw-tooth sickle. The plough is practically nothing but a forked stick, the shorter fork being iron-shod and the longer one lashed with raw-hide thongs to the yoke of the oxen that draw it. With such primitive appliances it need surprise no one to learn that it takes about four men and four yoke of oxen to do the work that is done by one man and one horse in the United States.

The difference between the present Mexican way of ploughing and that prevailing in this country is even less marked than that between the two methods of threshing. There are few districts in which the grain is not threshed by simply driving horses or mules around in a ring into which the sheaves are tossed. As to winnowing, that is done by tossing the grain and chaff into the air with scoop shovels.

In the matter of local transportation of grains, there are employed on the farms ponderous two-wheeled carts, with three pounds of dead load for every pound of merchandise hauled.

The Indian population, taking into account the greater activity of which it is susceptible, and which will be the natural consequence of the increase of wages and of the demands which the development of civilization brings about, and also the economical transformations introduced by improved methods of tillage, can furnish sufficient working force to develop double the amount of lands and manufactories already worked.

The cultivation of tropical plants will certainly give considerable profit. The branches of cultivation in which peasants are past-masters—the culture of the vine, the olive, the mulberry, and the cereals—are also very lucrative.

In general it may be said that the cost of living in Mexico is low. In the interior towns and villages the necessities of life are cheap, although coffee and tea are dear. The latter is seldom used or even seen in the interior. Butter is very expensive, and but little used. The food is rich and highly seasoned.

Rents are high, not because the landlords are rapacious, but because house-building is

expensive, by reason of the annual tax of twelve per cent. on the rental of houses, in addition to the necessary defrayal of pavement, drainage, water, and stamp taxes by the owners of the property.

During the Spanish dominion the government of New Spain, as Mexico was then called, was systematically hostile to strangers, and after the independence the country was very much busier with civil war than in appealing for immigrants. It may be said that the period for immigration into Mexico is only now commencing, and if we consider that peace reigns in the country so completely that it seems to be permanent, every one will agree that there are very few countries which present to the immigrant the advantages which will be found in Mexico. No other country in the world offers to every comer one hundred acres of land absolutely free. Given the conditions of climate and fertility of soil which have been shown in these pages and the immense mineral wealth of which it has been impossible to give here more than an imperfect account, there only remains to address a few words of advice to those who may be tempted to partake of a part of Mexico's wealth.

It may be said first to the intending colonist or immigrant, if you have no money and only strong arms and good habits, do not come to Mexico, for you will find as rivals several millions of Indian workers, also with good habits, who have arms sufficient to work the farms there, and who will content themselves with salaries which would render you more miserable in Mexico than you would be in any other country.

In Mexico the torrid and frigid zones are in close proximity, and within a few hours of each other changes that represent thousands of miles north and south are encountered. Rice-fields and plains where thousands of cattle graze are near neighbors.

One of the greatest advantages, and one that will serve to advance its material development, is that labor troubles are unknown. Such a thing as a strike or confusion among laborers is never dreamed of. The best of labor is always available at a very low figure. Peon labor, which can be trained to accomplish very skilful work, can always be secured at from thirty-seven and one-half to seventy-five cents per day in Mexican silver. All labor and supplies are paid for in this metal, which is not at a discount in the country. This fact, taken in connection with the additional fact that all exports can be sold on a gold basis, gives still further advantage in the way of a successful and profitable investment of capital. There is hardly any section of the country that is not easily accessible to the principal trade centres. All towns not having easy water connection are within easy access of the railroad.

The old idea that the Mexican people can never be induced to change from the customs of their ancestors is fast losing its grasp. The people are finding out that there is more money to be made for themselves by the adoption of progressive customs; that the credit of their institutions can be greatly enhanced by the same; and that the civilizing influence of the American people can be made of great benefit to them and those who are to come after them. And the railway, while undertaken as an investment enterprise, is really bringing into the country a splendid revolution in the condition of affairs which no one can thoroughly appreciate who has not studied this system and the opportunities that it has opened up.

The various climates of the country resemble one another very much in some ways. There are no sudden changes, no extremes of heat or cold, no heavy prolonged storms, but a temperature between summer and winter.

It is a most erroneous opinion that health is more precarious and disease more virulent in Mexico than in the north. This idea is without the least basis in fact. Foreigners in Mexico who conform to the conditions of the country are as healthy as they would be at home. There



are thousands of families in the United States who would gladly settle in Mexico if they but possessed definite and reliable information about this republic,—if they only knew that there is no excessive cold, that on the same lands a thousand different kinds of produce can be raised.

A careful study of the business conditions and opportunities of the republic of Mexico develops two facts,—viz., that the resources of the country are almost illimitable and that the application of proper business methods will bring results that are most satisfactory. Mexico is, in short, the coming country.

Reciprocity, said Confucius, is the one word which sums up the whole moral life and coins moral sentiment into current exchange. In its modern commercial sense it indicates the line of moral action between nations; the line of reciprocal exchange or trade between two republics, like Mexico and the United States.

Blaine's watchword of the times—"reciprocity"—should be exemplified in Mexico. The United States is the elder brother among American republics, but Mexico is the closest and nearest of sisters, and in many ways their interests are identical.

Of little value to Mexico is the temporary presence of traders from across the Atlantic compared with the more permanent presence of thousands of Americans in that neighborly spirit which establishes personal relations. The trader from the older countries of the East comes to make what money he can and return with it. The American seeks out places for location, invites friends to visit him, who enter with zest into the opening up of the resources of the country, all of which helps on the desired interchange of ideas and experiences between the neighboring republics and cements their natural relationship. Mexico is in need to-day of many of the things which the people of the United States have already wrested from the hand of nature, while the restless spirit of the American is equally in need of the sphere of mental activity which many of the partially developed resources of Mexico offer.

How can this neighborly fellowship be brought about? Simply by greater knowledge of the resources and advantages of each republic. Knowledge must be distributed, facts must be made known, a mutual interest between the republics must be created, and then the harvest of mutual advantage will come.

The United States and Mexico mutually assisting in each other's development might become well-nigh independent of the rest of the world. They can produce anything that can be produced on the globe. All they need is to know each other better and then to work together according to the dictates of that knowledge. And this comprises the moral relations of nations.

Silver is adding to the permanent wealth of Mexico, because it pays for labor which is transmuted, under intelligent direction, into things that will outlast the currency question, which must some day be settled.

Mexico is on a silver basis, with the shield of the government's protection thrown impartially over all enterprises. A spirit of mutual co-operation between the people and the railways exists, and out of the fall in silver a great benefit has come to Mexico. As out of apparent evil good has come, Mexico will probably continue to stick to the efficient silver dollar which has served her so well. To-day the republic of Mexico is, without doubt, attracting more attention than any other country on the globe.

The explanation of the great interest shown in this land of the Montezumas can easily be made. The wealth of her resources is beyond the comprehension of the human mind; the climate is the finest under the sun. President Porfirio Diaz and his loyal cabinet, who so ably

manage the general government, together with a judiciary among the most scholarly anywhere on the continent, with governors and other officers loyal to their country, make Mexico the most stable and law-abiding republic under the sun.

When the first international railway was projected, alarm and apprehension were felt throughout the country. It was thought that the Americans were about to penetrate into the country through that opening, into which Uncle Sam would insert the thin end of the wedge that was to split Mexico from top to bottom. But a few years have proved the contrary, and shown that Mexico is strong enough to stand alone.

There is a deep prejudice among the better class of Mexicans against the average American who settles in Mexico. In this connection it is well to state that some of the Americans who are most prominent in Mexico by no means represent the best class of citizens in the United States. Many of them are there for the sole purpose of making money, and are lacking in the good manners and solid, fine qualities of the best people in the United States.

It is hardly fair, however, though it may be natural, for intelligent Mexicans to judge of the refinement, culture, and honest purpose of the average American citizen by the emigrants from Northern cities whom they too often see.

The predictions of Humboldt and Stevenson will soon be realized, and Mexico will become a great and powerful nation, the bulwark of Latin America against aggression from the north. Mexico, freed from the curse of recurring revolutions, her people devoted to the arts of peace, must inevitably maintain her sovereignty and fulfil her destiny as a nation of the first rank.

