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SIX MONTHS IN MEXICO.

VOL. I.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY JAMES BULLOCK, WHITEFRIARS.

SIX MONTHS
RESIDENCE AND TRAVELS
IN
MEXICO;
CONTAINING
REMARKS ON THE PRESENT STATE
OF
NEW SPAIN,
ITS NATURAL PRODUCTIONS, STATE OF SOCIETY,
MANUFACTURES, TRADE, AGRICULTURE,
ANTIQUITIES, &c.

BY W. BULLOCK,
FELLOW OF THE LINNÆAN, HORTICULTURAL, GEOLOGICAL AND
OTHER SOCIETIES.

SECOND EDITION.

TWO VOLS.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

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TO

DON LUCAS ALAMAN,

MINISTER OF STATE TO THE UNITED FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO.

IN testimony of the valuable assistance derived from his distinguished countenance and support, by which the writer was not only enabled to acquire the information contained in these volumes, but also to collect and transmit to his native country those articles of antiquity and curiosity which have given the English nation their first insight into the manners and customs of the depressed but powerful people, with whom they are about to enter into close alliance, —these volumes, are in gratitude, respectfully dedicated,

by his obliged

and faithful servant,

THE AUTHOR,

 
distance from the left end of the beam.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

SOME apology is justly due to the public for the hasty and imperfect manner in which the first edition of this work was presented to their notice.

The simple fact is, that a journal rapidly thrown together in a distant foreign country, under every disadvantage, was even more precipitately hurried through the press, upon my return to England. To account for this haste, and to apologise in some measure for the defects which were the necessary consequence of it, it may be only requisite to state, that the dawn of those important re-

lations, which have since been progressively and rapidly developing themselves, had scarcely broken upon the sight of my countrymen ; when I returned from Mexico, I found however the public most impatient to see all I had to show, and to hear all I had to say, respecting regions that were hitherto almost unknown, so that I was pressed, with equal solicitude, to publish the result of my observations, without a moment's delay, and to exhibit, with an equal degree of promptitude the collection of ancient antiquities and modern curiosities which I had been fortunate enough to collect during my travels.

To effectuate both purposes in a manner perfectly satisfactory to my own wishes would have required as many years, as the impatience of the public appeared disposed to afford me months, and the consequence was, that both necessarily appeared before them in a crude and imperfect state. Yet, notwith-

standing all these obvious imperfections, the public has crowned both objects with their sanction, and have kindly overlooked those omissions and defects which I was not exclusively the cause of, for my humble performance has experienced a sale extraordinary for its rapidity, and I have seldom offered an exhibition which has been more generally popular and satisfactory: time has since enabled me to revise the former, and to mature and consolidate the latter, so that I flatter myself, in their present improved state, both will now be found more worthy of meriting approbation. Such has been the intense eagerness of persons to obtain the most extended knowledge of these regions of promise, that my time has also been severely taxed in answering inquiries, both verbally and by letter, from innumerable persons, of whom I had not previously the slightest knowledge, and though, as may easily be sup-

posed, these demands upon me have frequently occasioned no inconsiderable inconvenience, yet have I, on that account, in no instance withheld giving with honesty and candour the fullest information it was in my limited power to communicate.

W. B.

*Egyptian Hall,
Piccadilly, August 1, 1825.*

PREFACE.

THE habits of my life have been so little of a literary nature, that I should have ventured to obtrude any work upon the public with extreme diffidence; but I feel still more sensibly how much I stand in need of indulgence, when I offer the present volume to notice, collected as its facts have been during the toils of travelling, where few conveniences were to be found, and entirely the fruit of a journal kept under every disadvantage of

hurry, fatigue, and superabundant demands upon my attention.

But the jealousy of the government of Old Spain had so fully succeeded in shutting out Europeans from the knowledge of Mexico, that, since the period of our Charles the first, I am acquainted with no book of travels by an Englishman in that country. There is, consequently, much of novelty to attract even the most indifferent visitor; and I have simply endeavoured to relate what fell under my personal observation in the plainest manner. The rising interest attached to this portion of the world, and the growing importance of Mexico to the commercial enterprise of Britain, will, I trust, give that degree of value to my statements

which they may want on the score of authorship. I have looked most at those objects which are most intimately connected with the new relations springing up, and daily strengthening between the two countries ; and relying solely on the patriotism of my intentions, I humbly submit my best endeavours to that public, through whose kindness and patronage I have been enabled to perform this voyage —thus adding another to the many efforts I have successfully made to obtain its countenance and favour.

W. B.

London, June 12, 1824.

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SIX MONTHS IN MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

Voyage.—Jamaica.—Campeachy.—Orizaba.—St. Juan de Ullua.—Isla de Sacrificios.

ON the 11th of December, 1822, I sailed from Portsmouth in the Rawlings, a fine merchant vessel, of three hundred and fifty tons burthen, twelve guns, and a crew of twenty men, commanded by Captain James Quelch. It was chartered to carry out a cargo of the manufactured articles of Germany, on account of the Rhenish Company of Merchants, then about to establish themselves

in Mexico. Four gentlemen, as supercargoes, were on board, to whom I hold myself greatly indebted for their politeness; and take this opportunity of publicly making my acknowledgments. A few days sail carried us into quite another climate; for although when leaving Portsmouth we were shivering with cold, we were now walking the deck without our coats. Passing in sight of the Azores, we entered the Carribean Sea, having scarcely had occasion to shift a single sail. Monserat, St. Eustatia, Porto Rico, St. Domingo, came successively in sight, and we entered the harbour of Port Royal, after a voyage that had all the character of a trip of pleasure. On our arrival we anchored in the midst of several small piratical vessels, which had been captured by his Majesty's ships; the trials of the crews were expected soon to take place; and, indeed, on the morning of our leaving, thirteen of these daring marauders

DS1

were executed. During my stay in Jamaica I made several pleasant excursions into the interior of the country and to the mountains. I likewise visited the romantic scenery called the Falls, which is scarcely surpassed by any thing I had ever hitherto witnessed. By the politeness of Mr. John Wilson I was enabled to gain much information; at his estate called Good Hope I spent some delightful mornings, in rambling among the huts of a Negro village belonging to that gentleman; and although an enemy to slavery, must bear testimony to the contented and comfortable appearance of these poor people. I was surprised at the familiar manner in which Mr. Wilson was always accosted by them: they are not deficient in the comforts, and possess even some of the luxuries of life; every house has its neat garden, its pig-sty, and its stock of poultry. The vivacity and gaiety of the negroes formed a great contrast to the almost melan-

cholic character of the people with whom I was afterwards to become acquainted, the native Mexicans. I ought also to mention my obligations to Mr. Miller, of Kingston, who is forming a collection of the fishes, birds, &c. of the island; from him I experienced much civility.

The seas had been so much infested by pirates, that we waited three weeks for a convoy; and, finally, sailed under the protection of the Grecian, Lieutenant Crawley: we touched at Trinidad de Cuba, and passing Capes Corrientes and St. Antonio, entered the Gulf of Mexico. Anchoring near Campeachy, we saw a fine schooner under Mexican Imperial colours; here we landed in four boats, accompanied by our commodore, under the British flag; but going on shore at a place where strangers are not permitted to land, we were all taken prisoners by the Spanish soldiers, and marched to the go-

vernor's house. That officer, however, treated us with much respect, ordered refreshments for us, and we spent the day very pleasantly. This was the first Spanish town we had seen in America, and its beauty, regularity, and fine situation, filled us with admiration: every house had its garden, and the view from the principal church was truly picturesque.

Our passage through the Gulf of Mexico to Vera Cruz was rather tedious, owing to our being frequently becalmed. But the number and variety of the finny tribes, the sea birds, the shoals of whales, the multitude of flying fishes, which support themselves for a considerable time above the water; the bonitos, the dolphins, and the glorious evening appearance of the sky, were constant sources of interest and of entertainment.

On the afternoon of Monday, the 24th of February, we expected to see the coast of Mexico; and our anxiety increased as sun-set

approached. All crowded to the deck, and every telescope was in requisition; distant mountains had been in sight some hours; it was not, however, till a sudden clearing of the mist, that a general cry of "Orizaba" burst from the quarter deck. I called to my son, who was looking out from the mast-head, he replied he had been viewing it with the same wonder as ourselves; but on directing his eye more to the west, he observed a part of the sun that was considerably above the clouds, obscured by something that gave it the appearance of being eclipsed, when, in a tone of astonishment, he exclaimed, "Orizaba is between us and the sun." On a sudden, its towering peak, black with its own shadow, and appearing in the mid heavens, became distinctly perceptible to the naked eye, whilst its base, and three-fourths of its height, were invisible from the distance. Thus enveloped in clouds, one of the most solemn effects I

ever beheld, was produced by this giant atlas.

The height of this mountain is estimated at 17,000 feet above the level of the sea, and the distance at which we saw it was about 150 miles. In a few minutes it disappeared from our strained and wondering eyes, and we remained like persons just awakened from an extraordinary dream. The light-house of Vera Cruz came soon after in view, but the wonder we had seen, occupied all our thoughts and conversation till bed-time. My rest was disturbed by my anxiety to witness what would be the effect at sun-rise; and long before day-light we were on the alert to observe the Peak of Orizaba. It was, however, some time before its snow-capped summit could be distinctly discerned from the white clouds by which it was surrounded, and then only by observing that one part of what appeared clouds remained stationary and unaltered in

shape; but so little was the real solid mass distinguishable, that we every minute expected to see it dissolve into the thin transparent air, and "leave not a wreck behind."

Expectation was now at its greatest height, for we calculated on setting foot on land this day, but unfortunately we were becalmed, and that too upon a dangerous shore; we did not therefore see Vera Cruz till noon, when its numerous towers, cupolas, domes, battlements, &c. caught our view, as well as the strong Spanish castle of St. Juan de Ullua, and the shipping moored under its guns. As we had still little wind, and were uncertain into whose hands the government of the country had fallen, caution was necessary. Contradictory opinions were formed, but most agreed that it was the Spanish flag that was flying on the fort of St. Juan and on the shipping. Our commodore, who had approached nearer than ourselves, at length

made the signal to follow, and sent his boat for one of the supercargoes. They went on board the English frigate, *Ranger*, Captain Fisher, which had arrived a few days before, direct from England, having on board Dr. Mackie, intrusted with a special commission from the British government, but who, on discovering the unsettled political state of the country, determined to sail for the Havannah, there to wait for further orders.

The captain of the *Ranger* informed our commodore, that the city was in the possession of the Republicans, under the command of Generals St. Anna and Vittoria; who were on friendly terms with the garrison, and had lately sustained a siege from Iturbide, then Emperor of Mexico, who had retreated with his army beyond Puebla, in consequence of which, that city and Xalapa, were in the hands of the Republicans of Vera Cruz. Mr. Sultzer, the principal supercargo of the

Rawlings, soon returned on board with a pilot; but as symptoms appeared of an approaching Norte, or north-east tempest, which is frequent and dangerous on the coast at this season, we endeavoured, though ineffectually, to anchor near the Isla de Sacrificios. In the morning the gale raged with such violence, that it drove us off the coast, and it was a full week before we regained the same place, during which time we were nearly lost on some reefs, having been saved only by the extraordinary goodness of our cable and anchor, which brought us up when but a few yards from the land.

On Sunday, the 2d of March, we anchored between the Isle of Sacrificios and the main land. This little island, not more than half a mile in length, is now a mere heap of sand, with only one wretched Indian family living upon it. It was named by Grizalva, who found here a temple, in which a human victim

had been sacrificed the day before he arrived, —hence its appellation. There are still vestiges of the ruins. The island is strewn with the bones of British subjects who have perished in this unhealthy climate, and whose remains are not allowed to be buried in consecrated ground. Yet, “one frail memorial still erected nigh,” indicated the spot where a recent interment had taken place (only a few months since).

When the vessel was secured, the boat was lowered, and several of the passengers, myself among the number, left the ship and proceeded for the town, about three miles distant. On our way we were met by the boat of the port-officer, bearing Spanish colours, who, in rather a peremptory manner, ordered us to the Castle of St. Juan, for which we steered, though against our inclination. We passed round the guns of the front facing the town, and landed on the north-west; and were im-

mediately surrounded by a crowd of people of a motley appearance, mostly Spanish soldiers and females from Vera Cruz ; for, being Sunday, the place was crowded with visitors from the main land (as the fort is open to all, without exception, from sun-rise to sun-set). We were conducted by several gateways, passing a canal through the interior, into a great square, in which were many shops and standings for fruit, &c. &c. the area being occupied by various groups of persons in different costumes. The whole had the appearance of what an ancient wake is described to have been in the feudal times in this country ; and so much were the parties engaged that we passed to the governor's apartments almost unnoticed. His excellency, who commands the last important hold of all the once immense Spanish possessions in North America, was a lively little man, past the prime of life. He received us with great civility, but told the

captain that he must immediately bring his ship under the guns of the battery, or he should send the gun-boats out to fetch her; adding, that the goods were already liable to the same duties to the king of Spain as if they had been landed at the castle. He then inquired my business and that of the other gentlemen; told us we might cross to the city whenever we pleased, and made an offer of his services in the true Spanish manner.

We returned by the same route, and found our boat surrounded by a crowd of inquirers respecting us, our ship, cargo, &c. amongst whom was the holy friar of the garrison, who had treated our sailors with segars, lighted from his own. Entering our boat we steered for the city, about half a mile distant, and which, from its red and white domes, cupolas, terraces, convents, hospitals, churches, &c. with the regularity of its walls and batteries, had a splendid appearance from the water;

but, alas ! it is but a painted Golgotha, the head-quarters of Death, for I believe it to be one of the most unhealthy spots on earth ! M. De Humboldt has given a most frightful statement of the number of deaths in this charnel-house of Europeans, taken from incontrovertible documents.

SOUTH SIDE of VERACRUZ, from the CASTLE of SAN JUAN DE ULUA.

Drawn on the Spot by W. Bullock Jun^r, 1823.

SOUTH SIDE of VERA

CHAPTER II.

Vera Cruz.—Almeida.—Generals St. Anna and Vittoria.—
Posada, or Inn.—Markets.—Vultures.

WE landed on a low pier of solid masonry ; I had scarcely put my foot upon it when I observed with surprise that it was partially paved with bars of iron, bearing the broad arrow of the king of England ; these I afterwards learnt, were part of the ballast of an English frigate, left in order to enable her to return with a greater quantity of specie. Thus upon the first step an Englishman takes in New Spain he alights on the product of his native land ; may this indication of the identity of the two nations be an auspicious omen of the future good understanding and

free commercial intercourse which in all human probability is destined to subsist between them. We passed the custom-house at the water-gate, unquestioned and unexamined, and were conducted to the principal inn or Posada.

We walked out to see the town, and deliver our letters of introduction, with which I was well furnished; but the English traveller who trusts to letters of this description, will find himself wofully disappointed; for of thirty which I carried out, not one procured me even an invitation to dinner. This, as future experience taught me, is the universal practice of the Spaniards towards the English. Being Sunday evening, we were recommended to see the public walk on the outside the gate, south of the city. It is tastefully furnished with seats for the promenaders, but the company was by no means gay. Here, however, we had an opportunity of seeing the Repub-

lican generals, St. Anna and Vittoria; they were on horseback, in splendid military costume, and well mounted, but the troops they were reviewing did not make a very military appearance, being principally recruits, and most of them Indians, or of Indian extraction. At the hour of evening prayer, for the Angelus Domini, the bell rang, and instantly every person was uncovered, and seemed to join in the supplication. We returned to our hotel, if such it deserved to be called, where we could not even be accommodated with a bed. With some difficulty I procured a kind of bedstead, on the sacking of which a sheet was spread, and over that a small piece of baize: this constituted the whole furniture of the room, which had no window, but merely an opening that communicated with a billiard room, whose noisy visitors were alone sufficient to prevent the possibility of repose. On preparing to lie down, I discovered that the

solitary sheet was absolutely wet; yet upon making my complaint to the landlord, he replied, he knew it, but that he had no other. I told him that wrapping myself in my great coat, and sitting in a chair all night, would be preferable to such a bed; to which he rejoined with the utmost *sang froid*, that he thought it would, and left me to pass a sleepless night, tormented with the intolerable noise of the billiard room, with an oppressive heat, and with the additional annoyance of the mosquitos.

A ramble at day-break in the market-place, made some amends for my miserable lodging. It was filled with Indians, and people from the country, whose diversity of costume, and variety of character, formed an interesting spectacle. The vegetables, however, were few and not fine; and the fruits much inferior to those of Jamaica. The meat-market was a most disgusting sight, the flesh being

cut into stripes like ribbons, and sold by measure. It was exposed to the air, and dried without salt; so that one of my companions, a German gentleman, mistook it for the entrails of the animal placed round the bone. The show of fish, however, made some amends, for it was such for variety and beauty as I had never before witnessed, nor even conceived. I was aware that the finny race presented more resplendent hues and varieties of forms, when fresh from their element, than birds and insects, but now I became more fully convinced of this truth. Hundreds of various species, glowing in all the colours of the prism; surpassing the lustre of precious gems and all the brilliant tints of the humming bird, covered the stones of the market-place of Vera Cruz. How greatly did I regret that my time was so short, as only to permit me to prepare a few specimens of the more extraordinary. Of the whole number the mullet (*Mugil Ce-*

phalus of Linnæus) was the only one I recollected, as belonging to Europe; most of the rest being new to me. The Indians had likewise, several kinds of tortoises, armadillos, and a considerable variety of water fowl, amongst which I observed the shoveller duck (*Anas Clypeata* Lin.—*Souchet commun* of Cuvier) and the common teal:—there were also a few deer. I returned to the inn to breakfast, after the only pleasant morning spent in Vera Cruz. In the forenoon we rambled into the principal church, which is large, but of indifferent architecture; its side altars abounding in bad carving and gilding, and decorated in the most paltry style, with inferior paintings and painted statues; the large silver candlesticks and tripods were so dirty as to have more the appearance of lead than of the precious metal of which they were composed.

Many of the houses of Vera Cruz are large, some three stories high, built in the

old Spanish or Moorish style, and generally enclosing a square court, with covered galleries. They have flat roofs, glass windows, and are well adapted to the climate; most of them have balconies of wood in front, the interior arrangement being the same as in Old Spain. The whole town, as well as the castle, is built of coral, (the *Madrepora meandrities*) and the lime that forms the cement is of the same material, and is also used for the roofs and foot pavement; it is so hard that, in some places, it receives from friction a polish like marble. There is one tolerably good square, of which the government-house forms one side, and the principal church the other. The foot-paths are frequently under piazzas, a great accommodation to passengers, protecting them from the sultry heat of the sun, and the heavy rains, which descend in torrents in the wet season.

Sixteen *Cupolas* or *Domes* may be counted

from the sea, though only six churches are now in use. Indeed, nearly all the churches, monasteries, and nunneries here, have been abandoned, and are fast falling into decay, since the town has been lost to the Spaniards. Nothing is more repulsive to strangers, accustomed to the bustle of European cities, than the gloomy death-like appearance of this place. Of any other city it is considered a disgrace to say that grass grows in the streets, but here it would be a compliment, for no vegetation* is to be observed, even for miles around; and fish is the only article of provision that is not brought from a distance. The only water fit to drink is what falls from the clouds, which is preserved in tanks; that from the castle and the convent of Franciscans being the best. Though the markets are tolerably well supplied by the Indians, living

* On my arrival it was the dry season, but on my return I found some little verdure.

at the hotels is expensive and very uncomfortable. Provisions are dear, with the exception of fish, which, as already stated, is in abundance and good. Some beautiful and curious Mangrove oysters were the largest and finest flavoured I had ever met with. Milk is scarcely to be had, as not a cow is kept within miles, and what is, perhaps, peculiar to Vera Cruz, there is not a garden near it. The absence of vegetation attests at once the poverty of the soil, and the insalubrity of the climate. I know not whether prejudice may not have influenced my decision, but to me Vera Cruz appears the most disagreeable place on earth; and its character of being the most unhealthy spot in the world, naturally makes the stranger shudder every hour he remains within its walls, surrounded by arid sands, extensive swamps, and savannahs, the exhalations from which are dissipated only by strong winds. Its rainy season, from May

till October, which is also the hottest, proves fatal to a great proportion not only of strangers, but of the Mexicans themselves; for not to mention the many other afflictions to which frail nature is heir, that scourge of man, the black vomit, would alone, it might be thought, defend the city from the intrusion of visitors, particularly such as myself, whom motives of curiosity only had carried to explore the celebrated capital of the empire, and the wonders of this, to Europeans, almost unknown country;—the source of such immense mineralogical riches, and the scene, rendered interesting by our recollection, of the marvellous feats of Cortez, and the melancholy fate of Montezuma.

Society here, as may be anticipated, is extremely confined, and morality at a very low ebb. Few European merchants, whom the hopes of gain have allured to reside here, are married. Of the females I can say no-

thing, for during my stay I never conversed with any of them.

I had several letters to the first houses, both English and Spanish ; but as I brought no cargo nor consignment, and had not any speculation to offer, those to whom I had presented them, after a few questions, generally left me with marks of surprise, that a man in his senses could venture so far from home to such a place, with motives so inadequate ; this remark occurred so frequently, that at last they almost persuaded me to be of the same opinion !

Vera Cruz contains about 7000 inhabitants, as I was informed by every one of whom I made the inquiry, and they were persons likely to possess the most correct intelligence. Humboldt, who was there in 1802, states the habitual population at 16,000 ; but the city appears to me as large as many places that contain 20,000 people.

One class of the occupants will excite some surprise in those unacquainted with tropical regions, I mean the carrion vultures; they are as tame in the streets as domestic fowls, and like the dogs from the mountains at Lisbon, act as the scavengers of the place, very speedily clearing away whatever filth may be left. Their senses of sight and smell are very acute: whilst I was preserving some fishes in an apartment at the top of the Posada, the surrounding roofs were crowded by anxious expectants; and when the offal was thrown out, it was, after much contention, greedily consumed. They are on *good terms* with the dogs, and the two animals may be frequently seen devouring the same carcase. They pass the night on the roofs of the churches, where I have sometimes observed several hundreds, but I never saw them breeding.

When I left England it was understood that New Spain had a permanent government

under the constitutional Emperor Iturbide. I had provided myself with letters to his ministers; and took out as presents such articles of British manufacture as I considered would be most acceptable, and at the same time convey some idea of the wealth and greatness of our country; but on my arrival at Vera Cruz, affairs were so different from what I had anticipated, that I was yet doubtful whether strangers could in safety visit the capital, as the armies of the contending parties, the Imperialists and Republicans, lay between Vera Cruz and Mexico. With a view of acquiring information on this subject, I solicited and obtained an interview with the Republican General St. Anna, although at the time confined to his room by indisposition. I stated to him my motives for visiting the country. He no sooner understood that my journey was solely to acquire scientific information, than he liberally refused even to

examine my letters or papers, and immediately gave me an assurance of his protection and passports for Xalapa, where he advised me to remain till circumstances justified my proceeding, observing at the same time that he had no doubt but that either party, on being assured of the objects of my travels, would do all in their power to forward them; as, contrary to the policy of Old Spain, they now wished Europe, and particularly England, to become better acquainted with Mexico. On leaving the town-house I was accosted by Colonel Barbabossa, a distinguished officer in the cause of liberty; he had already learnt the nature of my business, and offered me his protection as far as Puebla, to which city he was proceeding next morning with an escort. After expressing my thanks for his kindness, I acquainted him that our setting out so early would be impracticable, as my companion had not yet com-

pleted his preparations. He jocosely observed, "I suppose when you return you will publish an account of us—if so, do not forget the offer I make you."

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Vera Cruz.—Sandy Desert.—Vera Agua.—
Puente del Rey.—Puente del Reyna.—San Rafael.—Inns
on the Road.

I HIRED a carriage, drawn by eight mules, and in company with Mr. Vandries, an intelligent French gentleman, my son, and a servant who spoke both French and Spanish, departed, nothing loath, on the 8th of March, for the city of Xalapa, on the road to Mexico, and distant from Vera Cruz about twenty-two leagues. It took us four long days to accomplish that which an English stage-coach, on English roads, would have performed, with double the weight, in seven or eight hours. On leaving the gates of Vera Cruz, a

tract of sandy desert immediately presents itself, without road or vegetation, without habitations, or any signs of living nature; and, excepting the skeletons of horses and mules, we could discern no other traces of its having ever been traversed. Our course lay along the sea-shore, on which were some tolerable specimens of flat Echini: within a few miles distance we arrived at a bridge and a stream of water, termed Vera Agua, at the mouth of which were several Whimbrels and other waders (the *Scolopax Phæopus* of Lin.) quite tame. At this place we left the coast, and proceeded to the interior, through sandy ways, almost suffocated with heat and dust, passing over a spot where the Imperial army had lately encamped. Towards the end of this day's journey, the road became rather better, and we halted to take some refreshment at a place, consisting of a few huts, called Santa Fè; here I shot several

birds, amongst them the crested Meadow-Lark of America, a large and fine bird for the table; these were as tame as fowls in the poultry-yard. Through the rest of the evening the birds, hares, &c. were very numerous, and we might easily have killed sufficient for a large party. The hares are very small; considerably less than our rabbits, but in other respects they are like our own. The country, too, began to be improved by vegetation before we arrived at San Rafael, where we intended to pass the night.

Here we found nearly as *good* an inn as any on the road, and a description of it and of our treatment, may serve as specimens of the whole, no doubt to the surprise of those who have believed what some writers, not travellers, have asserted respecting the ample accommodations to be found in these parts. The Posada, is a large shed thatched with leaves or reeds, partly enclosed, like a bird-

cage, and freely admitting the air ;—so little barricadoed as to allow whatever passes within to be seen from without ;—and the roof projecting very considerably over the sides. Under this projection, and in the open air, several travellers had laid themselves down for the night. Our baggage was placed in the interior : and when we inquired where we were to lodge, we were conducted to the same place, and told that unless we had beds of our own, we must repose on the floor ; indeed nothing was furnished but shelter from the rain, and Indian corn for the cattle. For ourselves, we with difficulty procured some planks on which to place our mattresses, and after making a scanty meal of what we had brought, for bad water and a little bread were all the house afforded, we prepared to go to rest, hoping that the fatigue we had gone through would act as a soporific. Several persons of both sexes, with some children,

were in the same room with us, in a sort of gallery that projected over the enclosure. Our mules and those of other travellers were fastened on the outside, while numerous dogs belonging to the house, as well as those attached to the different conveyances of the travellers, were mingled with their masters, and kept up such an incessant barking as rendered sleep impossible. We had the horses close to our heads, champing Indian corn; the mules kicking and fighting; the muleteers cursing; intolerable and suffocating heat; the braying of asses; the singing and stinging of mosquitos, and the biting of myriads of fleas completed the *comforts* of what has been called an inn. How did I pray for a glass of water to moisten my parched and feverish lips; how did I long for an English barn or hay-loft; for either would have been a Paradise to this *infernal* spot. To leave it, however, would have been to have incurred the risk of

being devoured by the surrounding dogs. Day-light at length brought us relief, and, clearing our persons from the deposits of the poultry that had roosted over our heads, we reloaded our carriage, and proceeded on a better road than heretofore, it having in some parts been carried at considerable labour and expense, over morasses which would otherwise have been impassable. This was the dry season, so that the ground and many of the trees were quite bare ; but where the waters remained (and we travelled over such a tract for some miles) the most luxuriant and magnificent plants appeared in full vegetation, and formed the strongest contrast to the sterility we had passed. In several beautiful situations, at short distances from the road, we observed Indian huts neatly built, covered with the leaves of the palm, and lined with mats, making a very different appearance from those on the way side where aguardiente

(brandy) was sold. Near one Indian hut we saw hanging the skin of the Mexican cat (*the felis paradalis of Lin.* and the *ocelot of Cuvier*) recently killed; and near another that of the *felis discolor of Lin.* *le cougar of Cuvier*, commonly called the Puma or American Lion, which shows that it would not be quite safe to travel through this country unarmed or in the night. The birds throughout this day's journey were very tame, and we shot some, but as we had no means of preserving them, they were lost. We passed several districts which had been set on fire for the purposes of destroying the rank grass and fertilizing the land, and the flames spread with great rapidity;—on the outskirts we observed several vultures waiting for the animals which might be driven out by the fire, and upon their appearance pouncing upon, and devouring them with their characteristic voracity. We saw many different

species of eagles, numerous and beautiful hawks, various crows, orioles, cuckoos, &c., &c., all of which suffered us to approach them within pistol shot. The Virginia nightingale (*loxia cardinalis*) with plumage much more resplendently scarlet than is found in the United States, was constantly passing like a meteor across our sight, and the contrast of its rich colours with the fine green foliage was very striking. On this day's journey we also observed several tumuli or mounds of earth, but they are of such frequent recurrence, and so much resemble natural hills, that they have escaped particular observation; though I imagine them to be *teocalli*, and of the same kind as those found in the interior.

About one o'clock we arrived at rather a considerable Indian village, in which was a church thatched like the houses. We took shelter from the burning sun, on the outside of the posada, under the roof, and unpacked

the provisions we had brought from Vera Cruz. Mass was just over, and we were surrounded by Indians of all ages and of both sexes, whose curiosity was greatly excited by our appearance and dining appurtenances. They seemed an innocent and harmless people, behaved themselves with great propriety, and were highly delighted with some provisions and wine which we gave them. One old man, in particular, showed great inclination for my hat, and made me an offer of four dollars for it. In this village was an unfinished building of considerable size and some architectural beauty: all that I could learn of it was, that it was called the fabric, that it had been begun by a gentleman a few years since, and left uncompleted. The road in this quarter, has been made at vast expense; it is part of the great undertaking mentioned by M. de Humboldt, who says, it will soon be finished; but, alas, after immense sums had been expended

upon it, the attempt was abandoned, and it is now a ruin. If, however, it had been carried to an end in the same manner in which it was begun, it would not have been surpassed by the famous route of Napoleon over Mount Simplon, nor by any of the great designs of the ancient Romans. Should the English establish a communication with the mines of Mexico (as it is sincerely to be hoped and expected they will), this road will be of the greatest importance; little is wanting towards its completion but the M'Adamizing system, and a portion of that spirit of enterprise now existing in England, as the most difficult part has already been accomplished, and materials are very abundant in the vicinity.

We afterwards passed along a very indifferent road through a country miserably sterile and burnt up; but upon descending a hill another sudden change appeared, the country became again fertile in vegetation,

and the road good, being cut through a rock, and having a regular and substantial foundation of masonry. The magnificent bridge called Puente del Rey (the King's Bridge) now presented itself. It crosses a rapid river of considerable size rushing through a deep ravine, bordered on each side by high precipitous rocks, which being crowned and flanked with cannon, make it one of the strongest military posts between the Atlantic and the Capital of New Spain. It was at this time occupied by the republican army of Generals St. Anna and Vittoria. The troops crowded the village at which we were to stop; but after some difficulty we found a place to deposit our baggage, and pass the night. From the unsettled state of the country, and the little intercourse the Mexicans have had with foreigners, we were under some apprehension, as in the cage-like apartment in which we were to remain we were exposed to

general observation. We experienced, however, nothing but civility; and some officers who spoke French gave us every information we required. We had a pleasant ramble along the borders of the beautiful river in which we bathed with that delight those only can appreciate, who, like us, had been long pent up on ship board, had then landed at Vera Cruz, and traversed a sandy tract, parched by heat, and with only bad water to quench our choking thirst. Grateful for the refreshment the delicious stream afforded, we would willingly have recorded its name, but the only designation the inhabitants could give was that of River of the Bridge. Passing rather a better night than before, we departed at day-light by a good road; and at the end of the village saw some fine cows, the first we had seen in America. On a rising hill, a couple of large deer crossed our path within half gun shot. At two o'clock we reached a

respectable village, with a river and a bridge called Puente del Reyna (the Queen's Bridge). It possessed the best house of accommodation we had yet met with ;—a building with stone walls and tiled roof, and we were shown into a room in which was a table and some chairs. As our provisions were nearly exhausted, we procured a good omelet of eggs and bacon. The house had some pretensions to elegance : a cloth was spread, which (though not the cleanest) was a luxury we had not seen before ;—on removing it, the good lad who waited put us all to the blush, for, bending in the act of adoration, (which we had neglected to do) he deliberately returned thanks to the Supreme Being for the repast. The landlord, who keeps a little shop, appeared to be a man of considerable dignity, and probably held some commission under the government, for in the room in which we dined were arranged about twenty muskets,

of various ages and forms, some with bandoliers, and others with cartouch boxes: upon examining which, we found that most of them bore the mark of the Tower of London, and were told that the majority of the army were equipped with arms from the same source. From hence the country was wretched, and in some places the travelling so exceedingly bad that our jaded cattle could scarcely move the empty vehicle (from which we were obliged to descend), till at length we reached a paved road. But even with this advantage, we were obliged to stop short of our intended place of rest, and to put up with such wretched accommodation, that even the water was not fitted to quench our thirst, after this day's toil and suffering from intense heat. In the morning, however, we had the satisfaction to procure some milk, the first we had tasted for three months.

As we proceeded, the country greatly im-

proved in appearance, the air was perceptibly better, our spirits began to revive, and soon to our very great satisfaction, we discovered woods of oak, which we knew to mark the boundary of the dreaded black vomit and yellow fever district. The face of vegetation was now also entirely changed, and we were reminded of the finest parts of Europe which the prospect here would have rivalled but for the want of water, for neither river nor lake were to be seen. We passed along a fine paved road, bordered by the most luxuriant trees and shrubs of every form and hue, the whole of which were new to us. It might be compared to a ride through an extensive park in Europe, having its roads bounded by a succession of the finest exotic trees and plants to be found in our hot-houses and conservatories. On reaching the summit of a hill we discovered the beautiful city of Xalapa before us. Its white churches and buildings have

a very pleasing appearance, standing at the height of 4,264 feet above the level of the sea, commanding a very extensive view, and having a grand back ground formed by Perote, Orizaba, and other volcanic mountains.

CHAPTER IV.

Xalapa, formerly the Mart of New Spain.—High Mass.—
Religious Procession.—Washing.

WE were driven to the principal inn, and, as usual, found only empty rooms for our reception; a table was, however, supplied, and benches were placed for our beds. We were served with a good Spanish dinner, and felt as much at home as our situation would permit.

Mr. Vandries having brought a letter of introduction to a widow lady here, she consented to receive us into her family; preferring which to a posada, we took advantage of the opportunity, and experienced the greatest civility and attention. Our apartments were

Drawn in the Spot by W. B. Woodcock Junr.

Published by L. Mearns, London, 1845.

L. Mearns del.

EAST SIDE OF XALAPA.

Drawn on the spot by W. Bullock Junr.

airy and pleasant, on the ground floor, looking into the square court stocked with blooming flowers and roses as fine as those of Europe, the latter being the only plant with which we were acquainted.

Xalapa or Jalapa, from which the well-known drug takes its name, was till within the last century the great mart of New Spain for European goods. All merchandise arriving at Vera Cruz (the unhealthiness of which prevented merchants from stopping there) was brought on mules to the great annual fair held in this city, and attended by all the mercantile interests of this part of the world. The opening of the grand mart took place amid much form and religious ceremony; prayers and processions were made by the clergy for the success of trade, but they expected some remuneration for this service—and the numerous churches and rich religious establishments amply attest the liberality of

the merchants. The city at present is said to contain 13,000 inhabitants; but at the time of the fair it was crowded to excess. It is probably decreasing in population, though still a very handsome place. It has many two-storied houses, built after the old Spanish manner, forming a square, and enclosing a court planted with trees and flowers, and having a well or fountain. The roofs are tiled, and not flat as in Vera Cruz, but projecting from the sides, sheltering the houses from the sun in hot weather, and keeping them dry in the rainy season. Many are furnished with glass windows, and most have an ornamental grating in front of such as are on the ground floor—these admit a free circulation of air, for the climate is so delightful as seldom to require their being closed. There are still eight churches, built in a mixed style of architecture; they are kept clean—and the interiors highly decorated with

carving, gilding, and painting. The high altar of the Cathedral is of silver, and the walls are covered with gilt ornaments. There are eleven other altars; and the service is performed in an orderly and impressive manner. I attended high mass on Sunday, which was very splendid: all the females above the very lowest class wear black, and are dressed alike, with a handsome lace veil thrown over the head, though it is seldom permitted to cover the face; in this respect retaining less of the manner of the mother country than is still to be found in Antwerp and in the Netherlands, although so long a period has elapsed since those countries were subjected to the dominion of Spain. A great proportion of the congregation were Indians, who had come to market, and it was really a pleasing sight to observe with what attention and devotion this simple and innocent people, the descendants of cannibal ancestors, per-

formed their fervent acknowledgments to the Creator. All the convents and religious houses, excepting one, are now closed, and will probably so remain. We met yesterday, it being Lent, a religious procession, carrying a figure of Christ bearing his cross. The streets through which it passed had been swept, watered, and strewed with orange leaves and flowers; and many of the houses, decorated with flowers and drapery, had small crosses placed over the doors.

The shops and warehouses do not make a showy appearance, as it is not the custom to expose articles of merchandise in the windows. The barbers' shops, however, form an exception: they are very numerous, and have a very respectable exterior. Mambrino's helmet is exhibited as a sign over their doors. All articles of European manufactory are dear, being three or four hundred per cent. above the cost price, and generally of the very

worst description. This is probably owing to the policy of Old Spain in compelling the province to receive all supplies from the mother country.

Xalapa is justly celebrated for the excellence of its washing: I never saw linen look so well; indeed many of the inhabitants of Vera Cruz send hither their linen to undergo the cleansing process. Near one of the entrances is a fountain of the purest water supplying a public washhouse, called Tetchacupa, in which 144 persons can be employed at the same time. Each laundress is supplied with a constant stream from this fountain, conveyed by pipes to a stone vessel in which the linen is first soaked, added to this there is a flat stone on which they wash, and this constitutes the whole apparatus. The operation is performed with cold water and soap, and the linen is rubbed by the hand as in England. I observed that the women had

occasionally a cut lemon with which they rubbed the clothes.

Of the people I can give no very satisfactory account. They are the very patterns of politeness, full of compliments, and profess that their houses are at your service, though they seldom ask you in. Of the ladies strangers see but little: they do not often appear in the public streets, when they do, they are in the same habits as at church; but in their houses they are gay, sprightly, and affable. They have a character for intrigue; I can only say, if this character be deserved, it never came within my observation. Those whom I met seemed to maintain a cheerful unembarrassed demeanour, but I never noticed the smallest approach to impropriety.

Both men and women in general are not well informed with respect to the state of Europe. Many believe the whole continent to be under the dominion of Spain; that

England, France, Italy, Holland, Germany, &c. are only so many paltry states or provinces to which the king of Spain appoints governors, who superintend the manufactories, &c. for the benefit of that country. I found it dangerous to contradict this flatly. One lady asked me where a muslin dress had been made? I answered "in England." And how came it here?" "Probably through Spain," I replied. "Well, then," she added, "what is England but the workshop of Spain?" Many of them think that the riches of Spain, drawn from Mexico, enable the other, and as they call them, the *poorer* parts of Europe, to live.

Of the wars in Europe they know as little as of its general state; and even the name of Wellington seemed scarcely known in Xalapa, though they had heard indeed, of the buccaneers, and spoke of our illustrious Drake, and Sir Walter Raleigh, as pirates.

Being in this contented state of ignorance, it is not therefore surprising that they viewed with wonder my walking-stick gun, portable chair and table, camera lucida, and other specimens of English ingenuity. Nothing however gave them more pleasure than a volume of the plates of Ackerman's Fashions, which I had carried out with me; it was in prodigious request, and they looked with astonishment at some prints of the public buildings of London. But their wonder was greatly augmented when they were informed of the purposes for which those buildings were designed: we heard them exclaim in amazement to each other, "and yet these people are not Christians,"—"what a pity they are not Christians!" But the day, I would feign hope, has at length arrived, when Spanish policy can no longer keep its American subjects in this utter darkness, and when the obscuration of the Mexicans will

vanish before the light of English civilization. On the other hand, Europe has much to learn respecting America. Even the very names of some of the finest cities of the Mexicans are almost unknown to her; and therefore we ought to pause before we laugh at the ignorance of the American Spaniard. How very few of the inhabitants of Great Britain have heard of Puebla or Guatemala, yet they are superb, populous, and wealthy cities; and is it not from New Spain that Europeans principally draw the coin which hourly passes through their hands, and which contributes so largely to the ease and elegance of life.

We were introduced to several respectable families in Xalapa, and spent many pleasant evenings with them: lively conversation, music, and dancing, filled up hours, that might otherwise have passed heavily. On the first evening of my being in their society,

I observed a smoke rising above the head of a lady who was playing on the piano forte; and on going round to ascertain the cause, I found that, notwithstanding her engagement at the instrument, she did not forego her segar, but was puffing the fumes away in volumes from mouth and nostrils. I never saw females in any country on such good terms with each other; expressing the greatest delight in meeting, and embracing most affectionately at parting. The lady and gentleman of the mansion are always reminding you that the house and all that it contains are at your disposal, and if you express your admiration of any thing that belongs to them, they immediately assure you it is at your service. These are, it need scarcely be again repeated, mere words of course, hyperbolical compliments, which almost go beyond the old Spanish salutation: "May you live a thousand years."

I accepted the invitation of Mr. Hall,* an English resident of Vera Cruz, to see a new establishment for the distillation of brandy. It was nearly five miles in the country, and we found a party of about twenty persons invited to a rural dinner and a day's amusement. We were shown the process of distillation, which was very simple, and promised amply to repay the proprietor. The juice of the sugar-cane, fermented in large open bags made of skins of oxen, was distilled in a slight copper alembic covered with wood, and a plentiful supply of spirit obtained, which much resembled Irish poteen whiskey. The visitors consisted of nearly an equal number of ladies and gentlemen, mostly young persons, and several of them officers in the army. A plentiful repast was served up in the Spanish style, in a house built of sticks. Of

* He unfortunately fell a victim to the black vomit during the bombardment of the city.

the greater portion of the dishes, I could not learn the component parts; but one *striking feature* was a pig three months old roasted whole, and stuffed with walnuts, which I thought an excellent dish, and well cooked. There was a great want of knives, only one being allowed to each table; and I was told this was the common practice in Spanish America. Before dinner had terminated, a species of childish play, something like what is practiced during the carnival at Rome, commenced. A gentleman, rolling a piece of bread between his fingers to the size of a pea, would, with great dexterity and privacy, fling it in the face of some one employed in eating; the party struck generally had his suspicions of the quarter from whence it came, and watched his opportunity of returning the compliment. The more surprise was excited, the more this sort of hostility was practised, till the battle became general,

and at last whole cakes were expended in this ridiculous kind of sport. The fair part of our company retired to a plain before the house, and were followed by the gentlemen, the game still continuing. Other missiles were then sought for, and when every thing else had been exhausted, what had been left by a number of mules, that had been feeding hard by, was sent about in all directions by the combatants.

To this succeeded dancing to a guitar, strummed by a pretty little girl about twelve years of age, and some of the ladies accompanied with their voices the movements of their feet. Whilst this amusement was going on, a fine young bull was brought and tied by a long cord to the stump of a tree: the beautiful little animal seemed for a while to enjoy the noisy sport as much as any of the company, till he had received several very marked insults, when he lost his temper, and

with considerable violence ran at an Indian, against whom he had already shown symptoms of hostility. Several persons now joined in the attempt to work him up to the highest point of irritation; the young men advanced in front of him, first with merely a pocket handkerchief in their hands, and when they had provoked him to attack them, they would step aside, and leave the handkerchief covering his face. The contest had continued without any one being endangered, till in a furious charge at his Indian *friend*, the bull broke the rope; but the sable adversary very dexterously turned short round, seized him by the tail, and contrived so to hold him, till another rope was passed round his body, and he was again secured. A soldier next leapt on his back, but after a few efforts, the animal threw him to a considerable distance, and he fell with great violence. The animal now became quite furious, when an Indian sprang upon its

back, clasping his sides with his legs, and resisting every effort of the bellowing brute to dislodge him finally galloped off into an adjacent wood.

It was the first time I had ever witnessed any thing like a bull-fight, even of this mimic kind; and as the parties did not seem to apprehend any peril, the laughter, in which the females bore no inconsiderable share, was occasionally very boisterous and long continued. Leap-frog and other rustic sports followed, till some of the ladies remarked that the sun was low, when a general retreat was made to the house. I concluded all was over, but a long old table was brought out, and the friend by whom I had been introduced, whispered to me, that I was now to witness the conclusion of all Spanish parties.

Cards were produced, the table was immediately spread with doubloons and dollars, and considerable sums were won and lost in

a few minutes. I was shocked to observe the change which took place, and in so short a time, from boisterous but innocent mirth, to a display of passions of the very worst description, and in which the ladies took a still more deeply interested part than in the former sports. Those beautiful beaming black eyes, which, but a few minutes before, had sparkled with life and joy, were now overcast and lowring with expressions of avarice and discord: not one jest or even smile occurred during the whole of this short scene; for it only continued whilst the horses were preparing, when our cavalcade, consisting of twenty-two persons,* took a narrow path through the woods. It was some time before hilarity resumed its sway, when some cur-

* The ladies in Mexico ride on the same horse with the gentlemen or servants; but reverse our obsolete English style of riding double. The lady in Mexico rides in front, sitting on the contrary side to that used in England, and supported by the arm of the male companion.

vetting and racing took place among the sprightly little chargers. We entered the city of Xalapa in a body soon after sun-set, and I was much pleased with what I had seen ;—the entertainment, in its leading features, carrying my ideas back to the days of our good Queen Bess.

CHAPTER V.

Former Volcanic Eruptions.—Los Vegas.—Perote.—Agava Americana.—Pulque.—Mirage.—Ocho d'Agua.

March 20.—WE left Xalapa and travelled along a pleasant road to San Rafael, passing a fine Hacienda or farm. The whole way abounded with lovely and romantic scenery; the trees constantly varying, and differing from any we had yet seen. The Nopal, or prickly pear, grows here to the height of twenty-four feet, and as many in diameter. I observed many fine birds, amongst which were a few resembling pheasants, with numerous hawks, and vultures. The road was steep but good, and continually presented a change of scene.

Mountains similar to those of Cumberland

and Westmoreland, covered with tropical vegetation and magnificent trees, produced such an enchanting effect, that no words can convey an adequate idea of it. About seven or eight leagues from Xalapa we entered the region of Pines, and travelled through a volcanic crater; the whole country for leagues was an entire mass of cinder, scoria, lava, and pumice, piled up in every form that can be conceived, and still remaining in the same state, as when first left by the dreadful explosion of some unknown volcano: in some places, huge pinnacles threatening to fall and crush the passing traveller; in others, the liquid lava seems to have burst like an immense bubble, leaving arches of solid crust, from sixty to eighty feet high, and three or four thick, all hollow underneath, and spread at the bottom with loose cinders. This valley is bounded on the left by a ridge or wall of immense height, as if the great flood of melted matter had been

chilled and stopped in its course. In some parts, it seemed as if the lava and scoria had been in part decomposed; and in these, several species of aloes, yucca, dracinæ, and other strange and picturesque plants, were thriving luxuriantly. In other places, thousands of trunks of huge trees dead and crumbling into dust, added still greater wildness to this scene of desolation.

Still farther on the left, the mountain of Pines, of extraordinary size, and other mountains covered with stunted oaks, served by contrast to exhibit the picture of this tremendous looking and savage region with greater force.

After travelling about four miles over this bed of eruptive matter, which was constantly varying in its features, we came suddenly upon a clay and sandy soil, and soon after, to the Indian village of Las Vegas, built with planks and logs of wood, and covered with

shingles, in the same manner as the mountain-villages of Norway and the Alps. As we passed from hence, the air became cold, and we observed the first plantation of the aloe or pulque, but other vegetation seemed once more to decline ;—the fine prospect was lost ; till we ultimately reached the elevation of the Table-land, and found ourselves in a different climate. A large sandy plain, after passing a hacienda, brought us to the town of Perote, which is of considerable extent, having a strong fort on its right.

Perote is a substantial place, built of stone ; but from the mode in which it is constructed, it has more the appearance of a prison than the usual abode of man, there being scarcely a window or chimney to be seen. The law term familiarly used in England, that “a man’s house is his castle,” is here literally true, as from the state of society and the local situation,

security from attack is, in erecting a house, the first consideration.

Perote is 12,000 toises above the level of the sea, and just under the mountain of that name. We were driven into the court-yard of an extensive Posada or inn, but very different indeed from houses of accommodation of this description in England, though a large square, surrounded by a colonnade, seemed to bespeak a place of some comfort. We arrived shivering with cold, though wrapped up in our great coats, but no landlord nor waiter greeted our arrival; we were at last shown several apartments, and had, indeed, our choice; but not an article of furniture was visible, except benches to sleep on, and a huge table, that seemed coeval with the building. We procured a candle, but the luxury of a candlestick was out of the question: a hole in the table, round which the melted

grease had amply accumulated, pointed out to us, however, the means of remedying the deficiency. But though, probably, many a hungry appetite had been appeased off this table, yet I doubt whether it had ever received a tablecloth, or undergone the purification of washing, since its first construction. We were, however, fortunately in some degree independent of our situation, as we had brought provisions with us; and after our meal, our mattresses being spread on the benches, the night *was heaven* compared to what we had experienced on the other side of Xalapa.

A few miles before we reached Perote we had come to large plantations of the great American aloe (*Agava Americana*). It is grown in considerable quantities, but this was the first plantation of it we had met with. From it is made the favourite liquor of the Mexicans called pulque. Intending to examine it more at leisure, we rose before the

sun the next morning, and found it growing in the streets and round the town. It attains a size which surprises those who have only seen it in European hot-houses. We measured some of the leaves and found them ten feet long, fifteen inches wide, and eight thick : many of them were in blossom ; their flower-stalk twenty feet high, and their arms expanding, like rich candelabras, clustered with yellow flowers. As this is an article of great importance, and forms the principal beverage of the people, I determined to obtain all the information I could concerning it, and shall give an account of it hereafter. Mr. Vandries and myself left our inn on foot before sun-rise, and were amply repaid by a most pleasant morning's ramble. The rest of the party had another proof that gaming is a prevalent vice of the common people in Mexico : for when they were about to leave the town, they were informed they must delay their departure,

till the cattle had been fed, as the drivers had gambled away all the money which had been given them to purchase provender.

Near the inn is a fine fountain of very excellent water protected by a statue of the angel Gabriel; and not far from it grew some of the largest Nopals I had yet seen: they were trees twenty-four feet in diameter, with leaves perfectly smooth and round, eighteen inches across, the fruit and blossom made a very singular appearance. The environs of Perote, with its castle and Indian suburbs, having the mountains of Orizaba and Perote for their back ground, are highly picturesque, and would be a very desirable subject for a painter.

Before us lay the parched and volcanic mountain of Pizara. It reminded me of St. Michael's mount, in the bay of Penzance; and a thick fog, resting on its base, looked at a distance like the ocean. We walked

through cultivated fields of poor sandy land to a hacienda, a rich farm; but, though a fair building with a church,* we could not procure any refreshment, not even milk. Our carriage overtook us at this place, and we entered a desert of arid sand, bounded on the right by high rocks, or broken volcanic mountains, similar to those we had seen the day before. We observed here thousands of dead and decaying trees of considerable dimensions; which gave the idea, that this dreary tract had not long since been covered with large timber. We continued our route for five leagues, and came to a house, where we intended to breakfast, but could procure no provisions of any kind, and were therefore obliged to proceed three leagues

* By the laws, whoever builds a farm-house is compelled to erect a church. These haciendas are of great extent; we here saw one single drove of pigs, consisting of (we were told) 4000, and all belonging to one of these farms.

further, when we found good bread and pulque, or fermented juice of the aloe. This drink is not pleasant to those unaccustomed to it, as the smell is disagreeable; but it is generally considered to be very wholesome, and accordingly there is a great consumption of it.

Our route proceeded through desolate and parched plains, and we were often deluded by what appeared to be water; the deception being so great, that images of the objects around, were reflected in a very extraordinary manner.* We observed in this day's journey,

* This remarkable optical deception occurs under particular states of the atmosphere, on the verge of the horizon, and particularly in warm climates, on extensive plains, &c. Objects often appear with extraordinary elevation, double, or inverted. This singular phænomenon is obviously caused by refraction of the rays of light passing through the atmosphere, the lower strata of which have different densities. When this effect is confined to the elevation of an object, our seamen call it looming. This play of vision has received the appellation of Mirage from the French, and by the Italians it is called Fata Morgana: for further information

several whirlwinds passing in different directions, and carrying along the sand and gravel to an astonishing height. They looked like smoke in the air, and some of them appeared to be so near that they rather alarmed us: a gentleman informed us that they often overtake the traveller unawares, and that he had witnessed hats thus lifted from the head and borne away for miles.

At one period we noticed two or three of these whirlwinds following each other like columns of smoke, and losing themselves in the clouds. As we came to the close of our day's journey, the road approached near to the volcanic rocks, vegetation again began to appear, and we observed a number of the trees that produce the gum dragon, and various aloes; we also saw several eagles, hawks, and

on this subject, see the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, under the head *Meteorology*; and in the *Philosophical Transactions* of 1800, are some pleasing experiments on the subject, by Dr. Wollaston.

other birds of prey, some of which came so near our carriage as to be easily shot without our getting out. Towards the end of the desert, and while occasional verdure was to be seen, we noticed a house, with a row of cypress trees; and found a rivulet of water, of which all our party drank freely. Mr. Hall informed us that near this spot was a lake, much frequented by aquatic birds, and he and my son went off to endeavour to shoot some. They had not left us many minutes, when we observed two armed men galloping across the plain, and making for our vehicle; they were in appearance military, and as the present disturbed state of the country rendered travelling very unsafe, we prepared to defend ourselves and our property in the best manner we could. After they had reconnoitered, they retired however, perhaps upon observing that our companions were at a small distance, and that they were armed.

We arrived at Ocho d'Agua, and found the inn tolerably good, and pleasantly situated; here a fine warm spring rises in front of the house, and forms a river. The abundance of birds in this part was prodigious; consisting principally of the black and red Oriole, on their northern migration; their number was such at sun-set as partly to obscure the light. Here we also observed large assemblages of horses, mules, and sheep; and, at the house, many hundreds of pigs, that were shut up in an enclosure for the night and turned out at day-break, when men, with sacks of barley, commenced feeding them, by scattering it along the banks of the warm stream, followed by the hungry herd, and by many thousands of the Orioles. Had these birds been in such numbers in Italy, there would not only have been sufficient taken for present use, but a supply for some months laid up; here, however, though they consume large quantities of

grain, they are suffered to depart unmolested. At half a league distance, the river spreads itself into a marsh, and is covered by flocks of aquatic birds, ducks, herons, and snipes, which are likewise but seldom disturbed by the inhabitants.

The next morning we set off early, and breakfasted at Napaluca, where there is a pretty church, built in a good style, and where we found the best pictures we had yet seen in Mexico. Here it was thought requisite to procure an escort to Puebla, and our guard consisted of the mayor, or chief officer of the place, and five others, who stipulated to attend us completely equipped with fire arms, but on their arrival we found that they had but one old musket for the whole party. When we complained of this, his worship informed us that arms were unnecessary, as the robbers knew him well, and would be very careful to keep out of his way. Most of this

day's journey was passed over bad roads, such as no English carriage could have ventured upon, yet we reached Puebla in the evening, having performed a distance of nearly fifty miles, without our mules once tasting food or water on the way. As we approached Puebla, we met several groups of Indians, making a much more respectable appearance than any we had yet seen; they were provided with candles, fire-works, artificial flowers, shrubs, &c., it being the eve of Palm Sunday, these were in preparation for the approaching festival of Easter.

SUPERIOR INDIANS in their HOLIDAY DRESS .

Drawn on the spot by W. Bullock Junr 1825.

Published by J. Murray, London, 1825.

L. Clark del.

NORTHERN EXTREMITY of PUEBLA DE LOS ANGELOS.

Drawn on the Spot by W. Bullock Jun^r, 1823.

NORTHERN

CHAPTER VI.

Puebla de los Angeles.—Its Streets.—Pavements.—Houses.
—Cathedral.—Churches.—San Filipe Neri, or House of
Religious Retreat.—Police.—Manufactories, &c.

ABOUT eight o'clock in the evening we arrived at Puebla. We entered by the bridge of San Francisco, with a fine convent on one side, and the Almeida or public walk on the other, and went through the crowded and busy streets, the bustle and hurry of which presented a new scene to us. We crossed the grand square or market-place, and passing the cathedral, a few minutes walk brought us to the house of a merchant, on whom our friend, Mr. Hall, quartered us during our stay. Here we had every reason to be

satisfied with our entertainment : our table was well served in the true Spanish fashion, with five meals a day, and all was hospitable, respectable, and polite.

Early on the morning following our arrival, we commenced our rambles in the vicinity, and my son fixed on an eminence at a short distance from Puebla, to the south-east (on which stands the beautiful church of our Lady of Guadalupe), for the purpose of taking a general view of the city, which is seen to the greatest advantage from this point. In the afternoon we ascended the high tower of the cathedral, and enjoyed the splendid view of Puebla and the neighbourhood. Several of the most distinguished volcanic and other mountains are in the vicinity, but from this view, Popocatepetl loses much of its grandeur. The pyramid of Chollula is only six miles off, and is distinctly seen,—its base exceeds that of the

great pyramid of Egypt; but the work of man, when standing in comparison with the surrounding pyramids of nature, whose tops are covered with eternal snow, dwindles into insignificance. The labour of ascending the Cathedral tower is amply repaid by the view of this regular and beautiful city, the foundations of which were laid by the Spaniards in 1533. It now contains about 90,000 inhabitants, many of whom are wealthy, and live in good style. It is from the splendour of its churches, and other religious edifices, and in the richness of their endowments, that Puebla must take the first rank in the Christian world. In the profuse ornaments of the altars, the sacred vessels and vestments, the expensive carving and gilding of the interior of the churches—in the pompous religious processions and other ceremonies, it yields to no city in America or Europe. The antiquarian will here feel a peculiar gratifica-

tion:—he will find himself removed to the period of our Henrys and Edwards, not only in the style of building of those times, but even in the similarity of customs and manners; the same religion and ceremonies, the same observance of holydays, with the religious processions that at once were the solace and amusement of our ancestors, prevail here at this day. In the churches he will see (as though the work of yesterday) the same profusion of sculpture, painting, and gilding, which is now only to be found in the fragments of our most ancient temples. The statues, balustrades, candlesticks, candelabras, &c. of massive gold and silver, which have long disappeared in England, are here in daily use, and the very dresses and accoutrements of the country gentlemen strongly remind us of the period of the discovery of America, the costumes having undergone very little alteration from their first introduc-

tion by the Spaniards: the same high fronted military saddle, with its defensive cantlets and covering for the horse, that was worn by Cortez, and the enormous spur of our Henry the Seventh, are now in constant use here by the paysanas, or country gentleman.

The streets of the city are straight and broad, crossing each other at right angles, and dividing the whole into squares of considerable size. They are paved with large stones, in a peculiar and highly ornamental manner, of a chequered or diamond-shaped pattern, being first formed of large thin stones, placed edgeways in beds of sand, and the interstices filled with square stones, set as nearly together as possible; afterwards, very thin fragments of stones are firmly wedged in, rendering the whole compact, durable, and handsome; and I am decidedly of opinion that this method is greatly superior to that now used in England, both as to durability

and appearance. The annexed drawing may elucidate this description.

There are broad flagged foot-paths on each side this pavement, which are kept remarkably clean.

The houses are spacious, mostly three stories in height, with flat roofs, and many are covered with glazed tiles, of delft of various colours, some forming pictures, (principally scriptural subjects), and having the appearance of rich Mosaic. These produce a fine effect, and differ from any thing I ever saw in Europe. Some of the houses are painted in fresco, similar to those of Genoa, and most of them have iron balconies in front, very elegantly constructed, with projecting roofs, lined with porcelain tiles. Each

house usually forms a square court in its centre, with open galleries passing round; the balustrades of which are covered with China pots of growing flowers and plants, producing a most refreshing coolness. Their walls are either plastered or painted in distemper, but I saw none papered; the furniture is not elegant, at least to the taste of an Englishman; but each drawing or sitting room has a wax model of the Infant Saviour, or some Saint, or the picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, a Magdalen, or the Crucifixion, the frames of which are often of silver. The floors are tiled much like those of France, and uncovered, carpets not being in use, nor indeed necessary in such a climate. Most of the residences in the city have a fountain of fine water, which is conveyed in earthen pipes—a great luxury in the warm season. The family of the proprietor usually resides in the upper story, the ground-floor being occupied

by shops, warehouses, offices, &c., and the middle by the tradesmen or servants.

Puebla de los Angeles contains sixty churches, nine monasteries, thirteen nunneries, and twenty-three colleges, the minute description of which might occupy volumes, and yet leave much undescribed. They are the most sumptuous I have ever seen. Those of Milan, Genoa, and Rome, are built in better taste, but, in expensive interior decorations, the quantity and value of the ornaments of the altar, and the richness of the vestments, are far surpassed by the churches of Puebla and of Mexico.

In a hurried and general work, such as I have undertaken, it would be impossible as well as inconsistent to enter into minute details of the history, architecture, &c. of each particular church; and, indeed, I confess my incompetency for the task, which probably the generality of my readers may not regret.

Much, too, in the minute account of a Catholic church, would not be generally understood in a Protestant country: I shall content myself, therefore, with giving a sketch of a few of the most remarkable edifices which the short time I staid in the city allowed me to visit.

The Cathedral, which forms one side of the great square, is a large pile of building, with little architectural ornament in its exterior, but its interior furniture, if I may so call it, is rich beyond description. So much is it overpowered with ornament, that the fine effect of it as a whole is considerably diminished. The centre of the body, for example, is so overloaded as to obstruct the view of its length.

Towards the south is placed the high altar, a most superb temple, of exquisite workmanship, and in elegant taste, lately finished by an Italian artist, from Roman designs, but

executed in Mexico, and of native materials. It is of such size as to occupy a considerable part of the Cathedral, and to reach into the dome. Its fault is that it is too large, being disproportionate to the building in which it is placed, and also too modern to harmonize with the surrounding objects. The materials are the most beautiful marble and precious stones that can be found in New Spain: its numerous and lofty columns, with plinths and capitals of burnished gold, the magnificent altar of silver, crowded with statues, &c. have an unequalled effect. I know nothing equal to it in Europe; and only regret that it does not belong to a building more worthy of its possession.

The side-altars are all crowded to excess with statues, carving, gilding, silver candelabras, balustrades, gold chandeliers, &c. Amongst the numerous paintings that are deposited in panels, set in superb frames, are

several which appear to be of the first-rate quality of art, but all approach to them is so guarded by railings, and so little light is admitted, that they are lost in the obscurity. It was Holy-week, and in the evening I accompanied Mr. Furlong with his lady to the service of *tenæbræ*, and never witnessed such a splendid scene:—it certainly surpassed in magnificence all I could conceive of the pomp of Courts. The whole cathedral, with all its costly appendages, and fretted golden roof, were displayed and illuminated by thousands of wax-lights, reflected from gold and silver chandeliers of the finest workmanship; an altar covered with massive plate, as fresh as from the hands of the artizan; a host of officiating clergy, arrayed in the richest vestments; the waving of banners; the solemn music, and a powerful and well conducted band! that heart must have been cold indeed which could have remained inanimate amid

such a glowing scene :—he who would wish to see the gordious pomp of religious ceremony should visit Puebla.

Mr. Furlong, to whom I had letters of introduction, and who is respectably connected in the county of Wicklow, and a magistrate, accompanied us to the church of San Felipe Neri, which, excepting the cathedral, is one of the largest buildings in the city. The architecture of the interior is good, and the decorations are in fine taste. As it was (as already stated) Holy-week, the altars were dressed out in their richest ornaments, but of them I shall take another opportunity of speaking. The brother of Mr. F., being the Superior, procured me a sight of the noble establishment belonging to and adjoining the church. It is a place of religious retreat, called a house of spiritual retirement, in which persons of either sex, desirous of leaving the bustle and confusion of the world, the better

to prepare themselves by prayer, in silence and solitude, for the sacraments and other duties required by the Catholic religion, may retire, free of expense, for the space of eight days. The building appropriated for this laudable purpose is admirably calculated to withdraw the mind from human affairs, and to fit it to receive divine inspiration, by the abstraction from all sublunary and temporary concerns; and it has been amply endowed with revenues greater than those of most of the charitable institutions of Europe. The structure itself is magnificent, and of larger dimensions than any of the palaces of Great Britain. It encloses two squares, one having a fine garden, into which the windows of the apartments occupied by the penitents open. Each person has a comfortable room, containing a small well executed crucifix, and other emblems of religion, a wooden bedstead, chair, and table. I noticed seventy-one apartments,

which were all numbered, and here the penitents pass their time, except when they meet at their short and frugal meals, or at the appointed hours of public devotion in the chapel. The long galleries in which they enjoy exercise are of the greatest splendour, furnished with solid silver and golden crucifixes, and other religious ornaments, forming a striking contrast to the sombre cells in which the solitary spends the greatest part of his time. They are also decorated with excellent paintings, mostly of the old school, the subjects taken from the Holy Scriptures, or illustrative of the lives of the most remarkable Patriarchs, Saints, and Martyrs. Appropriate quotations in Spanish, from the Psalms of David, and other portions of the sacred writings best adapted to excite the soul to gratitude for the mercy of the omnipotent Creator, and after seclusion to return the penitent to the world improved and amended, are interspersed. The

apartments are generally occupied about twelve times in the year, and some oftener, so that upwards of one thousand persons annually receive the benefit of this pious institution.

It is inhabited alternately by male and female occupants, the abode of the clergymen being in a separate court of the building. The reverend brother of our conductor was from home, but we walked into his rooms, and found them well furnished, having some good Flemish pictures and prints, of sacred subjects. I was rather surprised to find several well bound modern authors, and amongst them Volney, Voltaire, and others, who must be considered by the church of Rome as inculcating latitudinarian principles; but on taking these up we found every leaf torn in the middle, lengthways, and it turned out that they had been delivered up by the recluses to their spiritual directors from scruples of conscience.

The following circumstance was afterwards related to me by the reverend Superior, and also by his brother. It occurred about forty or fifty years since, that a Scotch gentleman, of the name of M'Taggart, had been shipwrecked on some part of the coast of Mexico, and had by some means found his way to this city, collecting as he travelled plants and herbs, and stating himself to be a botanical collector for a society in Edinburgh. He was detained here many years, eventually embraced the Catholic religion, gained considerable esteem by his piety and knowledge, and died in this establishment, regretted by the whole city. He was most probably a man of taste in the fine arts, as may be surmised from the cabinet of rich gems, antiques, and some first-rate pictures which had been in his collection, and which he bequeathed to this house of spiritual retirement.

From the Rev. Mr. Furlong, who is a man

of much information and great urbanity, I received the most polite attention and hospitality. He has a good private library, to which he kindly granted me free access, but not a page could I find descriptive of this noble city, nor has there yet been a Spaniard, that I am aware of, who has written on the subject.

One of the clergymen took us to the Library at the Bishop's Palace; it is a handsome room, two hundred feet long by forty-five feet wide, and well furnished with books, mostly in vellum bindings, and in the Spanish language, though some are in French, and a solitary one, the life of one of our kings, is in English. A Bible in Spanish, with plates, was shown us as a great curiosity, but there were none of the illuminated manuscript Missals so common in our libraries. On my inquiry for the *manuscript writings*, or Hieroglyphic Pictures of Ancient Mexico before

the Conquest, I was told there were thirty-two volumes of them; but on pressing the matter further, they said they were locked up, and could not be seen, and afterwards, "that they were removed to Mexico." One part of the library consisted in controversial divinity, but this was not permitted to be read even by the clergy. Nothing could exceed the attention and civility of the librarian; and in the usual Spanish phrase he told me the whole was at my disposal. He opened a large window to show me the bishop's garden, and I was delighted with a glorious specimen of convolvulus, which grew in the centre; it was trained so as to cover the whole of a large tree, its shining rich crimson flowers spreading over the dark foliage, from the very ground to a commanding height. It was one of the most elegant vegetable productions I had ever seen; and being promised some of the seed, I hope to see this fine plant in

England.* We afterwards visited one of the colleges near the library: it contained many apartments, and large halls for the professors, &c. the whole reminding me strongly of those in Oxford.

The church of La Spiritu Santo—belonging to the Jesuits, is a large and fine building; and, like all the edifices erected by that learned body, is in good architectural taste. It had before the suppression of the order two colleges attached to it; one immediately adjoining, and laid out in various schools and apartments for the professors and lecturers, as large as the palace of the Thuilleries, with long galleries and corridors, having inscribed on each door the branch of learning to which it was appropriated. The walls are still covered with pictures, and, notwithstanding

* It has been planted, and is now growing under the care of Mr. Tate, of the Botanical Garden, Sloane-street, as well as many other ornamental and undescribed flowers and shrubs of Mexico which I brought with me on my return.

its present dilapidated condition, this college gives a grand idea of the wealth of the suppressed order, the most learned and enlightened portion of the Catholic clergy.

The apartments of the fathers, when the institution was in its prosperity, had been laid out in a similar manner to those now existing in Rome, consisting of two rooms, the one a library, containing some works of science, and a small collection of botany, mineralogy, and conchology: the other, which was appropriated to the general purposes of life, was neatly and comfortably furnished.

Each of the fathers was formerly attended in silence by two young students, who by their demeanour showed the veneration in which they held their instructors, whilst the superior generally spoke to them in the affectionate style of a parent.

We then visited the church and monastery of St. Augustine, one of the first class, with a

[7] and at the same time more kind and atten-
square high-raised altar of silver, ornamented
with marble statues as large as life, the sa-
cristy large and superbly decorated, one of
the pictures being 40 feet in length. The
monastery is spacious, but at present contains
only twenty friars, with an income of 2000 dol-
lars, though it once had a revenue of 100,000.
One of the brotherhood joined us, and being in-
formed we were *Brittanicos*, which to him con-
veyed the idea that we were not Christians, he
put up a short prayer for our conversion, and,
perhaps as a first stage to so desirable an ob-
ject, showed us every possible attention, ex-
plaining to us a series of pictures illustrative
of the life of St. Monica, and her son St. Aus-
tin. He then took us to his cell, introduced
us to the young men studying under him, and
explained the rules and regulations of the
house.

I have never met with clergy more humble,

if the same belongs to the

H 2

tive to strangers, than those of Puebla de los Angeles.

The windows of this, as of many of the monasteries and churches, are formed of a large single slab of very hard and transparent alabaster, which admits a mild pure light, resembling the best effect of moonlight, and quite adapted to the studious and devotional aspect of the place. The baptismal font and other sacred vessels used in the churches, which are in general very large, are composed of a single piece of this stone, which being cut very thin, is thus rendered transparent, and admits the light through the sides. It is found a few leagues from the city, and blocks of it could be transported to Vera Cruz at a trifling expense: thence exported, it would certainly be a valuable commodity in England, in France, and particularly in Italy. For the windows of a library I know of no substance through which the light is more

equally and pleasantly diffused,—scarcely a shadow is perceptible.

The church and monastery of St. Dominick, —like that of St. Augustine, is large and plain in the exterior, except the dome of the sgrario, which is covered with painted and gilt tiles. The interior is very spacious; the high altar (which is placed on a flight of steps), with its rich ornaments, is entirely of silver, and near the rails are two dogs, of the same metal, the size of life, on pedestals of silver and gold. The sacristy, on the left side of the church, is one mass of carving, painting, and gilding, in the richest style of some of our ancient buildings. The tabernacle, in the centre, is 30 feet high, the materials of which are gold, silver, and marble, the balustrades or rails are entirely of silver, and the walls of the cloisters are covered with pictures of the miracles of the patron Saint.

It being Maunday-Thurseday, a great holiday in the Catholic religion, I attended at the cathedral, and saw the ceremony in commemoration of Christ's washing the feet of his disciples. The bishop was out of town, but the same usages were gone through as though he had been present. After several prayers and ceremonies, twelve poor men, in new clothes, were escorted each by a gentleman of the city to where the dean, attended by his clergy, knelt and washed the feet of each in succession in a large silver vessel. The whole was conducted with much religious pomp, and, at the conclusion, each poor man was conducted home by the gentleman who had clothed and introduced him, and who undertakes to maintain him for the year.

The little church of the convent of St. Monica, for the richness of its vaulted roof, and walls which are entirely encrusted with elaborate carvings, deserves to be mentioned.

It likewise contains a few pictures, statues, and silver ornaments.

Puebla is governed by four Alcaldes or Mayors, (and sixteen officers under them), who may be considered as corresponding with the aldermen of our cities. The police seems to be good, and well regulated. Handsome hackney-coaches, drawn by mules, are standing ready for hire in the great square. Here too the market is held, which is well supplied by the Indians with every article of food, excepting fish, which is very dear and scarce, owing to the distance from the sea, and the want of rivers or lakes. Even fish, however, is often received from great distances, enclosed in coarse paste pies, half baked to preserve it. The markets here, as in most Mexican cities, commence with the dawn of day, and it is an interesting sight to a stranger to see them thronged by the various Indian tribes, busied in arranging and displaying their different

commodities to advantage ; the whole placed on the ground, and protected from the sun by umbrellas of a rude construction. The Indian women, clean, and neatly dressed, surrounded by their children, expose for sale the fine tropical fruits and vegetables, which are often brought a long distance from the warmer districts (*Tierras callientes*). The poultry, which is plentiful and cheap, occupies another division of the market, and the cooked meats a third—here the Indians, with fires of charcoal, prepare in large quantities, and in a variety of ways, meat, poultry, and vegetables ; their cooking is in general highly seasoned with chili, the favourite ingredient of the natives. Great quantities of earthenware are also exposed in the markets, and the stranger will be pleased to observe the beautiful way in which the Indian women expose a variety of liquors, of every colour and flavour. A vase, much larger than any made in Europe, of

red earthenware, much resembling the Etruscan in form and decoration, is filled with water, and nearly buried in wet sand. A variety of flowers, principally poppies, are arranged among the glasses which contain the showy-coloured beverages, with chocolate, pulque, and ices, which are served out for a trifle by clean and respectable-looking females. Bread is prepared of a variety of forms and materials, and Europe cannot produce better than the wheaten which is found here: indeed, the necessaries of life, and most of its luxuries, (fish excepted) are to be had at a reasonable rate.

Puebla was formerly celebrated for its manufactory of coarse woollen cloths, but it has now fallen off in this branch of industry. We visited the manufactory of earthenware and glass; at the former we saw large ornamental pieces of delft, in colour and pattern much resembling the china brought from the

east. The machinery for grinding the flint used in the glaze, and for turning the ware, is very simple and rude. They were much pleased with our visit, and without hesitation explained the whole process. They were aware how greatly they are behind the manufactories of Europe, and told us, that no clay fit for the *fabrification* of porcelain or fine earthenware had as yet been found in Mexico; but in the coarse red ware they excel, both as to the elegance of the forms and patterns, as well as in regard to the size and lightness. The whole of their cooking utensils are formed of earthenware, metal vessels being unknown in their kitchens; to which, indeed, the former is preferable, and so cheap that a few shillings will furnish all the requisites of a gentleman's *cuisine*.

The manufactory of glass has been lately much improved, and it is probable that shortly, with the adoption of some of our

machinery in the preparation of the materials, the importation from Europe will be discontinued. They copy the forms well, and in the texture and colour of their glass they already rival us.

Soap is a considerable article of traffic in Puebla, being sent from thence to most cities of New Spain. It is made in the shape of birds, fishes, beasts, fruits;—indeed they give it a thousand fantastic forms.

The Mexican confectioners excel in their sweetmeats and cakes, which are articles very much in request at Spanish tables. I was told that, at the coronation of the late Emperor Iturbide, upwards of five hundred kinds of dulces or sweets were served up in the desert.

That many of the inhabitants of Puebla are wealthy is attested by their equipages and retinues: handsome carriages, drawn by mules richly caparisoned, and attended by

servants in showy liveries, parade the streets, and almedas, or public walks, particularly on Sundays and holydays; but the promenade is not worthy of so fine a city, and loses much of its interest in the eyes of Europeans by the almost total absence of females, excepting such as are in carriages; indeed, it is only in processions, and in going to and from church, that the higher order of women are to be seen in the streets,—which, on the former occasion, are crowded to excess by all ranks. Temporary seats and elevated standing places are let for money, and though these showy and imposing ceremonies are by no means unfrequent, yet their interest and attraction remain unabated.

Intelligence was now received that the Emperor had resigned the government into the hands of the republicans, and we left the city for Mexico in a coach, drawn by eight

mules, and driven by two Indian postillions, father and son. We avoided the direct road for the purpose of visiting the ancient city of Chollula, distant about six miles.

CHAPTER VII.

Chollula.—Its Pyramids.—St. Martin's.—Rio Frio Ayotla.

WE arrived at Chollula after a pleasant ride over plains covered with corn-fields, interspersed with plantations of the *Agava Americana*. This city was, before the Conquest, one of the most considerable belonging to the Ancient Mexicans. It was famed for its idols, its sanctity, and its pagan worship. The Teocalli or Temple is composed of alternate layers of clay and sun-burnt brick, forming an immense pyramid, divided into regular stages, or platforms; but time, and the growth of the prickly pear, the tuna, or nopal, and other vegetables, have left but

little of its original form visible, and it now resembles a natural hill; the high road from Puebla is cut through a part of it, which serves to show its internal structure. Some writers have conjectured that it was used as a cemetery or burial-place; others, that it was intended as a place of defence, or for the performance of public worship. We ascended by a steep winding road, partly cut into steps, to a level area of 140 feet long, on which stands a very neat church, 90 feet in length, with two towers and a dome: from this exalted platform, the spectator enjoys a most lovely landscape. The city of Cholula, its great square, or market-place, crowded with Indians (resembling what it was in the time of Cortez), with its numerous churches, gardens, &c. lay at our feet, and as the delighted eye ranged over the extensive plain, countless churches, haciendas, plantations of aloes, and corn-fields, met the view, which

was bounded by the blue mountains, in the midst of which arose the gigantic Orizaba, and the majestic snow-crowned Pepocatapetl. After enjoying this delightful scene as long as our time would conveniently permit, we visited the neat place of worship, built in the shape of a cross, and kept remarkably clean. Its silver and gilt ornaments were surrounded by a fine display of living flowers, (amongst which the carnations were the finest I had ever seen), the peace-offerings of the poor Indians, by whom the place was crowded, as mass was celebrating at the time. The fervent piety and decent behaviour of this little congregation would have formed a striking contrast with the gaily dressed bustling assemblages in some of the churches of France and Italy. Before the building are two noble cypress trees, of great size and antiquity; at the top of the steps of the entrance is a richly sculptured cross, of stone,

with the date 1666 inscribed on it, and near it is a short hymn, in Spanish, to the Virgin, engraved on a tablet.

We descended with reluctance the side of this pyramid, whose base is more extensive than that of the great pyramid of Egypt. It is covered with trees of great variety, some species of which I had never before seen, but they had evidently been planted there. On our descent to the plains we visited two detached masses, constructed, like the great pyramid, of unburnt brick and clay. The one to the north-east had been cut or taken away; its broken sides were so perpendicular as to prevent access to its summit, on which a cross had formerly been erected. The other was of easy ascent, and appeared to me to have been a fortified place, with a ditch and a wall on the top, forming an enclosure nearly resembling in form the figure , and about 100 feet in length; here I found among the

loose earth many human bones; pieces of red earthenware; and fragments of obsidian—the knives, spears, and arrow-heads of the ancient Mexicans. An excavation of this pile would probably prove an object of high interest to the antiquary—I know of no engraving of it: the other detached piece has been engraved by Humboldt; whose figure of the great pyramid conveys an idea of its ancient rather than its present state, nor is the church on its summit like the original.

After my son had finished his drawing we returned, and found our travelling companions so impatient of our stay, that they had sent messengers in search of us.

We were told of a fine picture in a church half a mile distant, and we walked to see it, but found its merit principally consisted in its grand frame and plate glass. The churchyard was, however, neatly planted with cypress, orange, rose, and other trees, an example that

might well be imitated in our own country. On our return to the Posada, I inquired of our hostess the number of inhabitants which the *village* contained;—but my designation of the place, it seemed, was indignantly repelled, and I was answered that it had always ranked amongst the first of Mexican cities:—that all the world knew it was the warriors of Chollula who assisted the great captain in subduing the pagan capital, although at the present time the number of its population did not exceed 6000.

Chollula stands on an extensive space of ground, and contains many regular and broad streets, the houses being mostly of one story, and flat-roofed. I think it probable that it retains much of the original appearance it presented at the time of the Conquest. It was here that Cortez, on his first advance, was welcomed as a liberator and brother; but having accidentally discovered that this deceptive

salutation arose only from a deep-laid plan to assassinate him and his followers, he, with his accustomed presence of mind and decision of character, secured the chief persons of the place; and, in order to strike dread into the remainder, made a terrible example, by putting to death, at least, 70,000 of the inhabitants. This city afterwards united with the Tlascallans in assisting to bring the ancient capital under the subjection of the Spanish yoke.

On quitting Chollula, we passed for a considerable distance under triumphal arches, formed of palm trees and flowers, which had been erected only a few days previously for the purpose of adding to the splendour of a religious procession. Our road or rather tract lay through extensive plantations of the maguay, or great Mexican aloe, which is here raised in abundance for the supply of the inhabitants of Puebla, with their favourite

liquor pulque. After a drive of about two hours, we joined the great road, and, passing a few tracts of cultivated land, arrived in the evening at the town of St. Martin's, where we found a tolerable clean floor to sleep on, and a better supper than had generally fallen to our lot when unprovided ourselves with the materials. Before retiring to rest, our drivers came in, and respectfully informed us, that, though we had a very long journey to perform the next day, yet, it being Easter Sunday, they could not possibly proceed till they had heard mass; and our landlady also gave us to understand that no breakfast could be prepared till her family had been to prayers. We were therefore called up before daylight, and left the house soon after five; at which early hour the gates of the elegant church were thronged with people, principally Indians. Having breakfasted, the director of our mules, smiling as he mounted, said, "we

have lost no time gentlemen, and shall now have good luck for the day." We passed over a great variety of country, partly cultivated, and well watered. Near Rio Frio we shot several beautiful birds, and saw a cay-jotte, or wild dog, which in size nearly resembled the wolf. He stood looking at us at a short distance from the road, and it was not till a gun was fired at him that he deliberately moved off.

Rio Frio consists of only a single house and shop, with a few Indian huts, constructed of boards; here we partook of refreshment, and then proceeded through some fine woods of fir and oak. In the afternoon, after a long ascent, a sudden opening gave us a view of the valley of Mexico, with its grand lakes and bold outline of volcanic mountains, spread like a map before us. It is indeed a glorious sight for the traveller, who, like us, has quitted Europe and crossed the Atlantic almost pur-

posely to enjoy it. The city itself is at first concealed from the view by an intervening volcanic mountain. The descent was now rapid, but all our attention and admiration was absorbed by the extended and ever-varying prospect before us.

We reached Ayotla, our place of rest, before sun-set, and immediately strolled out with our fowling pieces; we saw a great variety of aquatic birds on the lake of Chalco, and shot several; amongst them the common snipe, which is in great abundance here, though little disturbed by sportsmen, as field amusements of any kind are not sought after by the gentlemen of the country.

We were now within a few miles of the city of Mexico, and, full of the thought of reaching it in the morning in time for breakfast, we retired to rest.

Before sun-rise we were on foot in advance of our carriage. On leaving the village a

small conical* volcano obtrudes itself on the view, apparently near the road, but this we found to be an optical deception, as after walking nearly two miles we appeared not to have advanced any nearer to it; but we observed the scoria and lava that had issued from it, and the road for some distance is heavy and bad from the loose volcanic matter with which it is covered. This somewhat impeded our progress to the celebrated and splendid capital of New Spain, which when first seen is discovered to be situated in a swamp of considerable extent. We proceeded over what was formerly a causeway across the lake, but still this ancient and imperial city offers no ostentatious appearance—all is

* Most volcanoes are conically shaped, a circumstance evidently arising from the matter that has been thrown out, and which gives them this regularity of form. When I speak of the volcanic mountains of Mexico, the reader must not imagine that any are still burning, for I could not find that any one now living had ever seen a volcanic eruption.

dismal and solitary—we had passed but one miserable hut in several miles, so that the country in its immediate vicinity more resembles the worst parts of our Lincolnshire, than any other locality it occurs to me to point out.

CHAPTER VIII.

City of Mexico.—Surrounding Country.—Its Streets.—Houses.—Plaza Major Government House.—The Account of the City by the writers of the Seventeenth Century.

NOTHING around giving any idea of the magnificent city to which we were approaching, all being a dreary silence and miserable solitude; can this, thought I, be Mexico?—have I then for such a place left home and all that is dear to me?—have I for this left all the comforts of England, between which and me, half the world at present intervenes? and what have I gained in the exchange? We arrived at the barriers, and, passing through a division of the troops that surrounded the city, entered the suburbs, which were still

mean and dirty, the people inhabiting them covered with rags, or merely wrapped in their blankets. So great was my disappointment, that I could scarcely bring myself to believe that I was in the capital of New Spain, the great mart of the precious metals, from whence they chiefly flow to all parts of the habitable world: a few minutes more, however, brought me into the city, and whatever I had hitherto seen of regularity and largeness of streets, size and grandeur of churches and houses, was here, I confess, surpassed, and I felt at once, as by magic, amply repaid for all the dangers and troubles I had undergone. Many of the streets are nearly two miles in length, perfectly level and straight, and with the ends terminating in the view of the mountains that surround the valley. The houses are chiefly of a uniform height, generally of three stories, highly decorated, and ornamented with two rows of balconies of wrought

iron, painted or gilt, and some of bronze. The stories are very lofty, the apartments being from fifteen to twenty feet in height. The first or ground-floor is entered by a pair of large folding gates, ornamented with bronze, often thirty feet in height. These lead into the court-yard, surrounded by the house, filled with trees and flowers, producing a very pleasing effect, and having a gallery to each floor, offering so many separate promenades under shelter from the sun and rain. The lower apartments are generally occupied by the porter and other servants; the floor above is often let off; but the highest, which is the principal, is occupied by the family themselves, having a separate stone staircase of great magnificence leading to it. Nothing can be better calculated than these residences for the delightful climate of a country where change of temperature is scarcely known, where perennial spring for ever reigns, where

fire-places are never seen, and where it is even scarcely necessary to have glass windows to exclude the night air from the bed-rooms. All that is requisite is a strong roof to protect you from the heavy rains that occur at certain seasons, and lofty rooms to afford a free circulation of the air; and certainly nothing can be better adapted for this purpose than the style of architecture introduced by the Spaniards into Mexico.

The fronts of the houses are in general either white, crimson, brown, or light green, painted in distemper, and having a pleasing appearance; and the dryness of the atmosphere is such, that they retain their beauty unimpaired for many years. Many of these fronts have inscriptions upon them taken from Scripture, or stanzas addressed to the Saviour or his divine Mother.

Numbers too are entirely covered with glazed porcelain, in a variety of elegant de-

signs and patterns, often with subjects from scriptural history, giving the whole a rich and mosaic appearance, quite different from any thing of the kind in Europe. The walls of their great staircases are frequently covered in the same manner, and mixed with a profusion of gilding, which, in contrast with the blue and white porcelain, has really a splendid effect. I am inclined to think that this mode of ornament was borrowed from the Moorish palaces and mosques existing in Spain at the time of the discovery of Mexico, and introduced into this city and Puebla de los Angeles, when the wealth of the mines of the New World was such as to render it impracticable for the proprietors to spend their immense revenues in household expenses, equipages, or servants.

The porcelain was probably the manufacture of Holland and the Netherlands, then under the Spanish yoke. The walls

of several of the churches are finished in the same manner. The roofs are all nearly flat, and bricked, and many of them are covered with flowers, affording a pleasant place of resort in a fine evening, as the prospect is delightful, and the air refreshing and uncontaminated by smoke. Owing to this species of ornament, the city, seen from an elevation, presents a far more beautiful appearance than any of those of Europe, where the red-tiled deformed roofs, and shapeless stacks of chimnies, are the principal features in the prospect. Indeed, no place I ever saw affords so many interesting points for a panoramic view, independently of its own intrinsic beauty, its interesting architecture, its houses with their light balconies, covered parterres of shrubs and flowers,—its situation in the grand valley of Mexico, with its sea-like lakes, surrounded by snow-capped volcanic mountains, the highest in

New Spain. But the furniture and internal decorations of most of the houses ill accord with their external appearances. The closing of the mines, the expulsion of the rich Spanish families, and sixteen years of revolutionary warfare, with all their concomitant miseries, have wrought a melancholy alteration in the fortunes of individuals, and in the general state of the country: of which the capital bears no inconsiderable share. The superb tables, chandeliers, and other articles of furniture, of solid silver, the magnificent mirrors and pictures, framed in the same precious metal, have now passed through the mint, and in the shape of dollars are circulating over Europe and Asia; and families whose incomes have exceeded half a million per annum can now scarcely procure the means of a scanty existence.

But I hope these calamitous times are nearly at an end, and that the period is fast arriv-

ing when Mexico will again raise her head among the greatest cities of the world, a rank to which she is entitled from her own intrinsic merits, and as the capital of one of the finest portions of the globe. The liberality and wisdom of her counsellors, under the new order of things, will enable her to break the trammels in which she has been so long confined, so that intelligent strangers may be induced to visit her, and bring with them the arts and manufactures, the improved machinery and great chymical knowledge of Europe; and in return she will amply repay them by diffusing through the world her immense mineral wealth.

The Plaza Major, or grand square of Mexico, is one of the finest areas that exists. The east side is occupied by the grand cathedral, and segrario, or parish church; the north by the splendid palace of the Viceroy; the south by a fine row of houses, in the

centre of which is the palace built by Cortez, and now called the Casa de Stada ; and the west has a range of buildings with a piazza in front, consisting of many good shops, the public offices, granaries, &c.

About the centre of the square is a fine equestrian statue of Charles V., erected by a Spanish artist, Signior Tolsa, of Mexico, about twenty years since, and it is highly creditable to his talents. It is doubtless the finest specimen of casting in the New World, and would not disgrace the name of Michael Angelo, Cellini, or John of Bologna. At the time of my arrival, the Ex-Emperor had erected a temporary amphitheatre of great size for the purpose of giving bull-fights ; and this statue, which formed the centre of the arena, was enclosed in a large globe of paper surmounted by a figure of fame.

The pleasing effect of this grand square is however much injured by the introduction

of a paltry building called the Parian, a kind of market or bazaar, held principally I believe by the Spanish shopkeepers. This erection is a disgrace to the taste of the government which permitted it to spoil one of the noblest squares they have, but the revenue it brings to the city is at present so necessary to the wants of the state, that its speedy removal is I fear hopeless.

The palace, or government-house, is a truly magnificent building. It is nearly square, its front measuring several hundred feet. In its interior are four large square courts, over which most of the public offices are distributed, as well as the prison, the mint, the barracks, botanic garden, &c.

But the present state of the city exhibits a shadow only of the grandeur it once possessed. The period of its greatest splendour, wealth, and luxury, may be placed within the first century from its conquest by

Cortez. The present internal decorations but ill accord with the magnificent houses and palaces on which so many thousands must have been lavished, and prove at once the poverty of the present Mexicans and the wealth of their predecessors. The massive silver tables, staircases, and chandeliers, &c. have all disappeared; the profusion of jewels and extravagant equipages are no longer to be seen in the streets, and the *ensemble* even of people of the highest rank of the present day reminds us in nothing of the authenticated descriptions of the inhabitants of the same place by writers two centuries ago. In the year 1625, an English Dominican friar, called Thomas Gage, found means to get himself conveyed from Spain (with a number of Religious who were going to the Philippine Islands) to the capital of Mexico, and thence to several of the provinces. After a stay of nearly twelve years he returned to his

native country, became a puritanical preacher, and chaplain to Sir Thomas Fairfax; he gave such an account of the country he had visited as induced the Protector Cromwell to attempt to add New Spain to the British dominions; and an expedition under the command of Penn and Venables sailed for that purpose, which, though unsuccessful in its principal object, captured the invaluable island of Jamaica on its return. Gage is the only native of this country who has published an account of what he has seen in New Spain, and his work is now become very scarce. It is called the “English American, his Travels by Sea and Land; or a New Survey of the West Indies, printed in London 1648;” and contains much curious information. He describes, in a quaint and humorous manner, Mexico as it then was, which corroborating my preceding remarks, and, being calculated

to amuse the curious reader, I have transcribed the passage.

“ The streets are very broad, in the narrowest three coaches may goe, and in the broader six may goe in the breadth of them, which makes the city seeme a great deal bigger than it is; in my time it was thought to bee of between 30 and 40,000 inhabitants, Spaniards, who are so proud and rich, that half the city was judged to keepe coaches, for it was a most credible report that in Mexico in my time there were above fifteen thousand coaches. It is a by-word, that in Mexico there are foure things faire, that is to say, the women, the apparel, the horses, and the streets. But to this I may adde the beauty of some of the coaches of the gentry, which doe exceed in cost the best of the court of Madrid and other parts of Christendome, for there they spare no silver, nor gold, nor pre-

tious stones, nor cloath of gold, nor the best silkes of China to enrich them. And to the gallantry of their horses, the pride of some adde the cost of bridles and shooes of silver: —the streets of Christendome must not compare with those in breadth and cleannesse, but especially in the riches of the shops which doe adorn them. Above all, the goldsmiths' shops and workes are to be admired. The Indians, and the people of China that have been made Christians, and every yeere come thither, have now perfected the Spaniards in those trades. The Viceroy who went thither in the yeere 1625 caused a popingay to be made of silver, gold, and pretious stone, with the perfect colour of the popingay's feathers (a bird bigger than a pheasant), with such exquisite art and perfection, to present unto the King of Spain, that it was prized to be in riches and workmanship halfe a million of duckats. There

is in the cloyster of the Dominicans a lampe hanging in the church, with three hundred branches wrought in silver, to hold so many candles, besydes a hundred little lampes for oyle set in it, every one being made of severall workmanship, so exquisitely that it is valued to be worth 400,000 duckats; and with such-like curious workes are many streets made more rich and beautiful by the shops of goldsmiths. To the by-word touching the beauty of the women, I must add the liberty they enjoy for gaming, which is such, that the day and night is too short for them to end a primera when once it is begun; nay, gaming is so common to them, that they invite gentlemen to their houses for no other end:—to myself it happened that, passing along the streets with a fryer that came with me the first yeere from Spain, a gentlewoman of great birth knowing us to be chapetans (so they call the first yeere those that

come from Spain) from her window called unto us, and after two or three slight questions concerning Spain, asked us if wee would come in and play with her a game at primera. Both men and women are excessive in their apparell, using more silkes than stuffes and cloth; pretious stones and pearles further much this their vaine ostentation; a hat-band and rose made of diamonds, in a gentleman's hat, is common, and a hat-band of pearles is ordinary in a tradesman; nay, a blackmore or tauny young maide and slave will make hard shift but shee will bee in fashion with her neck-chaine and bracelets of pearles, and her eare-bobs of some considerable jewels. The attire of this baser sort of people, of blackmores and mulattas, (which are of a mixt nature of Spaniards and blackmores), is so light, and their carriage so enticing, that many Spaniards, even of the better sort, (who

are too prone to venery), desdaine their wives for them. Their cloathing is a petticoate, of silke or cloath, with many silver or golden laces, with a very broad double ribband of some light colour, with long silver or golden tags hanging down before, the whole length of their petticoate to the ground, and the like behind; their wascoats made like bodies, with skirts, laced likewise with gold or silver, without sleeves, and a girdle about their body of great price, stuck with pearles and knots of gold, (if they bee any waies well esteemed of), their sleeves are broad and open at the end, of Holland or fine China linnen, wrought some with coloured silkes, some with silke and gold, some with silke and silver, hanging downe almost unto the ground; the locks of their heads are covered with some wrought quoife, and over it another of networke of silke bound with a fair silke, or silver or golden ribband, which crosseth the

upper part of their forehead, and hath commonly worked out in letters some light and foolish love-posie; their bare, black and tauny breasts are covered with bobs hanging from their chaines of pearles. And when they goe abroad, they use a white mantle of lawne or cambricke, rounded with a broad lace, which some put over their heads, the bredth reaching only to their middle behind, that their girdle and ribbands may be seen, and the two ends reaching to the ground almost; others cast their mantles only upon their shoulders, and, swaggerers like, cast the one end over the left shoulder, that they may the better jog the right arme, and shew their broad sleeve as they walke along; others, instead of this mantle, use some rich silke petticoat, to hang upon their left shoulders, while, with their right arme, they support the lower part of it, more like roaring boys than honest civil maids. Their shooes are high

and of many soles, the outside whereof, of the prophaner sort, are plated with a list of silver, which is fastened with small nailes of broad silver heads. Most of them are or have been slaves, though love have set them loose at liberty, to inslave soules to sinne and Satan. And there are so many of this kinde, both men and women, growne to a height of pride and vanity, that many times the Spaniards have feared they would rise up and mutiny against them. And for the loosnesse of their lives, and publicke scandals committed by them and the better sort of the Spaniards, I have heard them say often, who have professed more religion and feare of God, they really thought God would destroy that city, and give up the countrey into the power of some other nation."

CHAPTER IX.

Churches.—Convents.—Religious Processions.—Palaces.

THE places of divine worship, and other religious establishments, in this city, yield to none in point of number, extent, or in the richness of their endowments; but as any minute account of them, after the description I have already given of the churches of Puebla de los Angeles, to which they bear a great resemblance, would be superfluous, I shall merely slightly notice a few of the most remarkable.

The cathedral of Mexico is famed for its splendour and riches, and deserves its high reputation. It is about 500 feet long, in-

cluding a building behind the altar, and stands in the great square, occupying the of the grand temple, or Teocalli, of the ancient Mexicans; most of their idols or gods, which were of stone, and of considerable size and weight, are said to be buried under its foundations, and below the pavement of the square. The exterior is far preferable to that of the cathedral of Puebla de los Angeles, but still it is rather heavy, and the architecture is of the mixed kind.

On entering I felt something like disappointment, notwithstanding the extent and magnificence of the interior. The centre is nearly filled by ponderous erections which entirely obstruct its otherwise fine appearance, and the high altar as well as that of the cathedral of Puebla, is too large for the space it occupies. Like most of the churches in this country, it is loaded with a profusion of massive carved and gilt ornaments, pictures,

and painted statues. Many of the smaller paintings appeared to be of value, and to be the works of the old Spanish and Italian masters; but they are so placed, and in such obscure lights, that it is not possible to judge decisively of their merits. There are in the apartments adjoining the cathedral, allegorical and sacred subjects, pictures of a prodigious size, and of considerable skill in their composition and design, though few of them are executed by masters held in estimation in Europe.

The high altar and its appendages are enclosed by a massive railing, of great extent, of cast metal, said to have been founded in China, from models sent from Mexico. The figures which ornament it are very numerous, but of mean execution and design. The metal, resembling brass, is considered to be of such value, on account of the gold it contains, that a silversmith of Mexico is said

to have made an offer to the bishop to construct a new rail of solid silver, of the same weight, in exchange for it.

Divine service is celebrated here with great magnificence. Mass is regularly said every half hour from daylight till one o'clock, exclusive of the high mass, and other occasional masses. In no place are religious ceremonies observed with greater pomp or splendour. The procession which I saw from this cathedral far exceeded, in order and regularity, in the grandeur of the vestments, in the costliness and value of the sacred ornaments, and in the profusion of gold and silver, any thing I ever witnessed. Even the processions of Rome, and other celebrated catholic cities of Europe, suffer much in comparison with those of Mexico.

In Mexican churches we do not meet with that distinction of pews and seats so universal with us. Here on the same floor the poorest Indians, and the highest personages in the land,

mix indiscriminately in their prayers to that Being to whom all earthly distinctions are unknown. In South America, persons of property are (or were till lately) always preceded to church by slaves, carrying handsome cushions for their masters, but this is a luxury and pompous display of vanity unknown in Mexico. The newly-arrived European is shocked at the idea of kneeling on the boards which form the floors of the churches, and which are left loose in order to receive the bodies of the dead, for this is the place of burial: it is not customary to erect monuments to the deceased, nor is even the name inscribed to point out to surviving relatives or friends the spot of interment. In no part of New Spain did I observe any memorial of the dead, except in the chapel which contains the bones of the conqueror Cortez; there, a fine bronze bust, cast by Tolso, is placed near to them. Funerals are performed here

in a very unostentatious manner; the same coffin being used for ages to remove indiscriminately the bodies of the deceased. How different in this respect are the more pleasing customs of the Swedes, and other northern nations of Europe, where the graves of the departed are kept in the greatest order by surviving relatives, who weekly visit them and plant them with flowers. I have often witnessed with satisfaction in Sweden, and indeed even in some parts of North Wales, on a Saturday evening, whole families employed in this affectionate office.

The Franciscan convent of Mexico is an immense establishment, with an annual income of nearly £21,000, arising principally from alms. Its church is fine, and, with its numerous apartments, courts, and cloisters, it is covered with large paintings, descriptive of the miracles and life of the founder:—to those who, like myself, are fond of church-seeing,

it will supply an ample subject for a long morning's occupation. On my first visit I was absolutely lost amidst its multiplicity of passages and labyrinths, nor could I find my way to return until conducted by one of the courteous Padres who had observed my dilemma.

The Dominican convent and church is another place of great extent and wealth, and, like the rest, contains a numerous collection of large pictures, statues, and other splendid decorations. It has been used occasionally by the Government, since the independence of the country, as a temporary place of confinement; and a few months before my arrival it contained some of the principal members of the Congress, who had here comfortable apartments, and were well entertained. Escape from it was impossible, though it embraced sufficient space to lodge several thousand persons, allowing ample

room for exercise; whilst the various subjects delineated on its walls would furnish to them varied topics for contemplation and study.

In the paved yard or court in front of the church we were shown a large flat stone, with a square hole in its centre, where, my informant told me, was fixed the stake to which the victims of the inquisition were formerly fastened, previously to their being burnt. This tribunal was, till its abolition by the Ex-Emperor in 1820, under the jurisdiction of the Dominicans.

The Palace of the Inquisition is on the opposite side of the street, and near the place of execution. In this house persons accused of ecclesiastical crimes were confined. I had been told, previously to my arrival in Mexico, of its horrible subterraneous cells, in which the wretched captives were imprisoned; but this must evidently have been an exaggeration, as

no subterraneous places ever existed in the city of Mexico, nor ever can exist, for wherever the ground is opened, even but for the depth of a few feet, water instantly springs up. In the great square, whilst I was digging for the purpose of taking a cast of the sacrificial stone, we were obliged, at only three feet in depth, to employ persons constantly to lade out the water. This palace is very elegant, and exhibits little or no appearance of the purposes for which it was intended. It was occupied as a polytechnical school at the time I was in the city, but was then on sale.

The monastery of the Professa is also well worthy the attention of strangers:—the fitting up of its elegant church is in a more modern style than the others, and its appearance is as fresh and brilliant as at the hour it was first finished. When lighted up on particular or grand occasions, the profusion of its superb silver and gilt chandeliers, and massive can-

delabras, filled with wax-lights, produce a magnificent effect.

St. Augustine's should not be missed, and many others are well deserving of a visit ; but the bare enumeration of their treasures would exceed the limits of this work.

The religious processions which I saw here were conducted with greater order and effect than those at Puebla, and appeared to be equally attractive to the people. The preparation of the streets leading from the cathedral commenced a week before the festival, and the whole line of passing was covered with an awning, to defend the procession from sun or rain. It was the grandest and best-arranged thing of the kind I had ever seen ; commencing and finishing with discharges of artillery. The number of religious dignitaries, in all their splendid vestments, with the quantity of silver and gold ornaments of the church, made an appearance quite new to an Englishman ;

and the effect was much heightened by the appearance of the magistrates and gentlemen of the city in full dress, and officers of the army, cavalry and infantry, with their military bands, and some of their finest troops, in handsome uniforms. On these occasions the city pours forth its whole population, and then only has the stranger an opportunity (in the crowded balconies and windows) of seeing the ladies to advantage. A fête in the neighbourhood of the capital constitutes one of the principal sources of amusement to the populace, where dancing, gambling, and cock-fighting seem to be the leading pastimes.

The Palace of the Viceroy is a noble building, and of greater extent than any thing of a similar class in England. It stands on the south side of the great square, and contains many of the public offices, the Prison, the Mint, the Botanic Garden, the

Library, Government Printing Office, &c., &c. The Library contains many valuable manuscript works, among which the History of Mexico, made by order of Government, occupies more than forty large quarto volumes, with numerous maps and drawings.

The Palace of Chapultepec, built by the Viceroy Galvez, is delightfully situated on a small hill about a league from the city ; it is a large handsome edifice, and cost an immense sum of money. The best-informed persons believe it was rather intended as a fortress than a palace. It is now unoccupied, and is, in some parts, in rather a dilapidated state ; but being at the distance of only a short and pleasant ride from Mexico, it is well worth visiting, especially as the road passes the whole way close to one of the fine aqueducts. In the garden belonging to the palace are some immense trees, which the natives call cypresses : I paced some of their

trunks, and should think they were sixty feet in circumference;—they are of great height, and from their thick foliage descend great quantities of that remarkable lichen, several yards long, called Barba d’España, or Spanish beard.

About two miles farther, near Tacubaya, is the house and garden of the Archbishop of Mexico; the latter well deserving the attention of the botanist, exhibits at the same time a fine specimen of a Spanish garden, decorated with its profusion of flagged walks, fountains, canals, close-shaded ways, and innumerable large and elegant flower-pots, placed on steps in every direction.

CHAPTER X.

Hospital of Jesus de los Naturales, erected by Cortez.—
Public establishment for pledging Goods.

WE visited the Hospital of Jesus in company with the Count Luchese, uncle to the Duke de Montleone, the descendant and heir of the great Ferdinand Cortez, who founded and endowed this institution; and in the chapel of which, by his own express desire, are deposited his bones. The house is large, forming a square, and enclosing a court; the apartments for the patients are clean and airy, the offices for the attendants comfortable and well laid out. In one of the rooms were several portraits of the family, and one like-

ness of the great captain himself; with the identical embroidered standard under which he wrested this immense empire from the hands of the unfortunate Montezuma. We were shown a massive table of mahogany, which was extraordinary from its size, the top being formed of only one plank, and still more remarkable from having been the property of the conqueror. There is a neat church belonging to this establishment, containing a monument to the founder, with a pompous inscription, recording his actions, and surmounted, as I have before mentioned, by a well executed bust in bronze.

A strong iron-bound chest was produced, and when unlocked we were allowed to touch the bones of him who conquered and added New Spain to the territories of Charles V. I attentively examined the cranium of this extraordinary person, but saw nothing to distinguish it—I should judge from it that his

person was small. Some of the teeth had been lost before death.

A National establishment for affording temporary relief to persons in pecuniary distress has long been founded in Mexico, under the protection of the government.* It occupies an extensive building opposite the Franciscan monastery. I procured an introduction to the director, a highly esteemed ecclesiastic, who politely attended me, and explained the regulations. I was shown property of all kinds, deposited, as pledges, for money advanced. A room of great extent and strength was thus filled with various articles of value. Whole services of plate were piled up upon each other.—Massive silver vessels, dishes, crucifixes, statues of saints, pictures with silver frames, articles of female decoration, dia-

* Might not the regulations of this establishment furnish some useful hints to the society about to be formed in London, under the title of the Equitable Loan Company?

monds, pearls, and some very fine rubies and emeralds, impress upon the beholder, at once, the past opulence and present reduced condition of the country. Property sent here remains for a certain time on the payment of a small interest, when, if not redeemed, it is offered for sale by private contract, with the lowest price affixed to each article ; if, in a given period, it remains unsold, it is then put up in a monthly sale by auction, sold to the best bidder, and the overplus of what has been advanced, after deducting interest and expenses, paid over to the original proprietor.

The establishment is open every afternoon. The crowd that filled the court attested the humble fortunes of the bulk of the people. We remarked that the jewellery deposits were less in proportion than any other species of property ; and the conductor accounted for it by observing, that those Spaniards who had, or were about to return to the mother-

country, converted their dollars into more portable articles, that they might convey them about their persons with greater security. This, too, accounts for my having sold the old doubloons which I had brought with me to the capital for twenty-two dollars, though intrinsically worth only sixteen—they afterwards however fell to eighteen. The reader will at once perceive the difference between this establishment and the pawnbrokers' shops of England: with us the distressed individual is but too often at the mercy of an interested and mercenary trader; but the public functionary of the Mexican Institution has no interest whatever of his own to serve,—and perhaps a still greater public advantage accrues from the American plan, by preventing the facility with which, with us, stolen property is disposed of through the medium of the pawnbroker.

CHAPTER XI.

The Minería.—Academy of Fine Arts.

THE Minería, or School of Mines, has been erected but a few years. It is, perhaps, not equalled in point of extent, or beauty of architecture, by any thing of the kind in Europe: it has been constructed at an immense expense and liberally furnished by the mineholders, and other wealthy inhabitants. But alas! this noble structure is doomed never to be finished: its foundation, placed on the swampy bottom of the lake, has already given way: its elegant columns are inclining from the perpendicular, and its architraves separating and cracking in every direction. Part

has already been taken down, and I fear the remainder must shortly follow. The situation on which Mexico stood, till lately the centre of a lake, must originally have been chosen as a place of security by a few Indians, incapable of defending themselves against their more numerous and powerful neighbours; what a pity it is that it should ever have been fixed upon for the site of such a noble city as the present capital!

The Academy of Fine Arts had been extinguished by the revolution: it has, at present, neither student nor director. The building and plaster casts remain, but its revenues are lost; may we not hope for its restoration?

Baron Humboldt has given us rather a flattering picture of this subject, at the time he visited the country: if his account was correct, as indeed I have every reason to believe it to have been, twenty years of internal

war and insurrection have produced a deplorable change in the state of the Arts. There is not now a single pupil in the Academy; and though the venerable President still lives, he is in a state of absolute indigence, and nearly blind. Not one landscape nor architectural painter remains in this great city; their only artists being either those who copy religious subjects for the churches, or such as attempt portraits; but both are deplorably bad. The principal employment for the pencil seems to be in the decorations of coach-bodies and the heads of the wooden bedsteads. In the metropolis, a few pictures of the Infant Saviour, the Virgin, Magdalen, St. Joseph, St. Anthony, or St. Cuthbert, are the only productions of modern painters which are to be met with. Of the myriads of pictures with which the churches, convents, cloisters, &c. are crowded, I saw few worth the expense of

removing. The churches and cathedrals may, amongst the great numbers with which they are encumbered, have some good, and I am inclined to think they have ; but the quantity of light admitted into these superb temples is too limited, even in the brightest day, to render it practicable to discover their merits : they are lost to the world in the sacred gloom that pervades the place. The public are likewise prevented from a near approach by clumsy railings ; but, from what little insight I was enabled to obtain by peeping through these barriers, it appeared to me that some of the finest productions of the Italian and Spanish schools might possibly be here buried in oblivion.

I visited the houses of many of the nobility, but found little worthy of notice. The Count of Valenciana's drawing-room has a set of prints from Claude, which, with the exception of a few fine things in the palace of

the Bishop of Puebla, are the only works worth mentioning connected with the old masters, that came under my inspection.

In the many rambles I made through the city, I often examined the brokers' and furniture shops ; as, amongst the countless number of statues and pictures of saints and martyrs, I expected to have found something worth bringing home : but all my researches in this way only produced me two small pictures ; one on copper, (the Adoration of the Shepherds), an early picture, or a copy of Correggio ; the other a Holy Family, somewhat in the style of Carlo Maratti.

I had imagined that the amazing and rapid accumulation of wealth which had accrued to several individuals from the working of the silver mines would have caused some of the productions of European art, either through devotion or taste, to have made a voyage across the Atlantic ; but this does not

appear to have been the case, or, if it were, they have accompanied the Spaniards in their retreat to their mother-country.

I saw no traces of the occupation of the sculptor in marble: this may be accounted for by the customs of the country forbidding the use of monuments—nor are there any fire-places which could admit of chimney ornaments. Of carvers in wood there are many, as every house has a statue of a saint or madonna painted and generally superbly dressed. The art of engraving on stone is unknown in Mexico; but the Indians greatly excel in the modelling and working of wax. The specimens of different tribes with their costumes, and the habiliments of the gentry of the country, which I have brought over, will amply testify their merits in this department of the Arts: they also model fruit and vegetables in a beautiful manner. A lady at Puebla de los Angeles executes, in a singular

style, with pieces of old linen cloth, groups of comic figures, some of which I have also brought to England. Such was her skill, that, from having only seen me for a short time, on my first passing through the city, I was surprised to find, on my return, that she had executed a portrait of me in this style, which was immediately recognised by my friends as a strong resemblance.

CHAPTER XII.

Theatre.—Alameda.—Passea.—Chinampas, &c.

MEXICO has but one place of dramatic exhibition; which is a respectable building, and of considerable size. Its internal form is that of a lengthened horse-shoe, narrowing considerably towards the stage, the proscenium of which is too much contracted to admit of showy exhibitions, or many actors at the same time. The amphitheatre, or audience part, consists of a pit and four tiers of boxes, which are let off by the month or season:—the front of these is scarcely raised a foot from the floor. They are furnished with chairs, &c. according to the taste or opulence of the

owners; and, if occupied by a full-dressed audience, the effect would be very imposing, as the whole-length figures of the ladies are seen to much more advantage here than in our theatres, pressing over the high parapet of what we very correctly call *boxes*. The pit has three divisions, to each of which the prices vary, and each seat is separated by arms, and numbered; a practice which, however convenient, could hardly be established in our crowded houses.

The orchestra is indifferent; the scenery, dresses, and machinery, inferior to the theatrical exhibitions seen at our Bartholomew fair, and the performers in general that I saw are below mediocrity.

The house is lighted from above by sconces, each holding a number of glass lamps; and the light is more pleasing and better than might be expected. It is open every night, and twice on Sunday, on which day, and on

holydays, the price is double; but this establishment paid so ill, at the time of our visit, that its final close was announced from the stage while we were present—so that the capital of New Spain is now without any dramatic entertainment.

Of the audience I can say but little, in consequence of the woful change that has taken place among the inhabitants of this once gay city. Not a tenth part of the house was occupied; and of those present but very few were females, and they not dressed for the occasion as in Europe,—wearing no ornaments, with the exception of one young lady of distinction, who had a plume of black feathers in her head. Two or three Canton crape shawls were the only coloured articles of dress to be seen. With very few exceptions, all present, of either sex, pursued their favourite habit of smoking; the ladies, even in the boxes, with a fan in one hand and a

cigar in the other, were enveloped in a smoke that rendered it difficult to see from one side of the house to the other.

The "Spectator" thinks that women may so manage the graceful use of the fan as to make it an engine capable of ensnaring the hearts of man. If this be possible, how are we to withstand a Mexican beauty thus doubly armed? how many a hero who has fearlessly stood fire at Trafalgar or Waterloo, how many men who have dared all the artillery of the quadrille at Almack's, would fly from the fair one with smoke issuing from her lips and nostrils, and enveloped in all the fragrant incense of the "real Havannah."

The last time I visited the theatre was in company of M. Lewis Sultzer, agent of the Rhenish Company of Merchants. He had been in Mexico 40 years before, during the viceroyalty of the celebrated Galvez; and was strongly impressed with the miserably

altered appearance of this once splendid place of amusement, which he had before seen crowded to excess by brilliant audiences. In the presence of the Viceroy smoking was prohibited, but between the acts a curtain was let down before his box, that the people might not be altogether debarred this luxury.

The alameda, or public promenade, situated on the north side of the city, is not worthy, in my opinion, of the other establishments. It is laid out in paved walks, with fountains and statues in very bad taste and worse execution. Neither are the company, who frequent it for the purpose of walking, of the best description, and those who use the drive in their close coaches are scarcely to be seen. In these kinds of enjoyments the Mexicans certainly do not excel.

The following is the account given of the alameda by Friar Gage. It is a description of the place two hundred years ago, and,

that it may lose none of its interest, I insert it exactly in his own words.

“The gallants of this city shew themselves daily, some on horseback, and most in coaches, about four of the clock in the afternoon, in a pleasant shady field, called the Alamaida, full of trees and walkes, somewhat like unto our Moor-fields, where doe meet, as constantly as the merchants upon our Exchange, about two thousand coaches full of gallants, ladies, and citizens, to see and to be seen, to court and to be courted,—the gentlemen having their train of blackmoor slaves, some a dozen, some half a dozen, waiting on them in brave and gallant liveries heavy with gold and silver lace, with silk stockings on their black legs, and roses on their feet, and swords by their sides; the ladies also carry their train of slaves by their coaches’ side, of such jet-like damesells, as have before been mentioned for their light apparell, who, with their bravery and white mantell over

them, seem to be, as the Spaniard saith, ‘mosca in leche,’ a flie in milk.”

Another drive and ride, called the Paseo, is about two miles long, planted with double rows of trees, and mostly frequented on Sundays and holydays. Many handsome well-mounted and well-dressed young men, ambling on their pretty little horses, here display their persons and equestrian skill to advantage. A number of elegant carriages and equipages are sported on these occasions; but I observed only one chariot and two single-horse chaises in the whole city. The road terminates suddenly near a bridge and gate, through which the canal of Chalco passes. Here most of the carriages draw up close on the side of each other, in such a way as to prevent the company from seeing farther than the window of the carriage next them. These coaches generally contain ladies, who, by this ridiculous custom, have no oppor-

tunity of displaying their fine figures and beauties for admiration.

From the account I had received of the Paseo, I was a little disappointed; but the sight of the Indians returning home from their little Sunday excursions in their canoes, on the canal of Chalco, which is close to the ride, made ample amends. In the fine evenings, during the dry season, the environs of the city present a scene of bustle, gaiety, and pleasure, scarcely to be paralleled; hundreds of canoes, of various sizes, mostly with awnings, crowded with native Indians, neatly dressed, their heads crowned with the most gaudy flowers, are seen passing in every direction: each boat, with its musician seated at the stern, playing on the guitar, and some of the party singing or dancing, and often both united, presents such a picture of harmless mirth as I fear is rarely to be met with on similar occasions in our own country.

I accompanied Colonel Campbell, an English gentleman who had been in Mexico several months, in a canoe on the canal, on a little shooting excursion. Our intention was to visit the lake of Chalco, but we soon discovered, from the small progress we made, being only pushed forward by two boys with poles, that one day would be much too short for our purpose. After accomplishing a few miles, we were therefore obliged to give up our intention. The canal lies through swampy savannahs, something like those in the West Indies, in which vegetation is very luxuriant; several pretty villages are on its banks, and we saw Indians catching tortoises, from whom we procured specimens. We landed about a quarter of a mile from a church, to which was a raised path, and entered the Indian village by a bridge of unhewn timber, and were in the midst of the houses before we were seen. We were

first observed by a group of nearly naked children, who instantly set up a cry of terror, and disappeared; a general alarm was now spread; all the women were at the doors in an instant, and appeared terrified at the sight of strangers. A few inquiries, and a few medias given to the inquisitive young ones, however, soon dispelled their terrors, and a fine healthy looking young woman, to whose child we had given a little present, asked us into her house, and seeing me notice her furniture and domestic utensils, explained the use of every thing, and then brought forward her three children, who had concealed themselves in a corner, to shake hands with us. The place was surrounded with chinampas, or what have improperly been called floating gardens; her husband was at work on one of these, and she called him to show it to us. They are artificial islands, about fifty or sixty yards long, and not more than four or five

wide, separated by ditches of three or four yards in width, and are made by taking the soil from the intervening ditch, and throwing it on the chinampa, by which means the ground is raised generally about a yard, and thus forms a small fertile garden, covered with the finest culinary vegetables, fruits, and flowers,—Mexico receives an ample supply from these sources. We shot here several pretty birds, some of which we killed on the wing, to the great surprise of the natives, who had now gathered round us in considerable numbers. We returned to the village, looked at the church, and examined a curious circular ancient warm bath, in form of an oven, with a very low entrance; it was of unburnt brick, and the flue and fire-place still remained.

The village had one house of comfortable appearance; it was a shop, and, on passing it, the owner, the only white man in the

place, invited us in to take refreshment. He brought us some excellent pulque, which, being quite fresh, was devoid of the smell so disagreeable to strangers. Being pressed to dine, we accepted the invitation, and sent a man to bring our canoe, from which we made some addition to the repast. Our host liked our Madeira, and begged a small cup for his wife, who had been just confined: we sent her the remainder of the bottle; and this little act of civility soon brought us acquainted with the whole family, who treated us in the kindest manner;—we dined, and spent two hours with them, and parted, I believe, mutually pleased with each other. Our canoe had been steered through the chinampas to the door of our new friend, and most of the villagers came to see us off. On our way home we landed several times at the villages on the banks, and made some additions to our ornithological collection;—many of the birds were new, but

not of very splendid plumage. The sides of the canal were covered with feathers of the ducks from the lake of Chalco, which had been plucked and thrown away by the market-people, to whom they are of no value. We admired the dexterity with which the numbers of canoes we met were navigated. Some were so small as scarcely to support the weight of the person they contained—these were impelled forwards by a small paddle. I fear the reader may think these accounts tedious, but on me the recollection of a day spent in such a manner leaves a stronger and more pleasurable impression than those passed in more polished society, where it but too often happens that all around is hollow and artificial.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Botanic Garden.

THIS beautiful little establishment occupies one of the courts of the viceregal palace; and, though situated in the centre of a large and populous city, every vegetable production seems in perfect health and vigour. It affords to the stranger a most delightful retreat from the mid-day sun, and to the botanist, or admirer of the works of nature, a treat not to be met with elsewhere in New Spain, or perhaps in the world. It is handsomely laid out in the Spanish fashion, with flagged walks, bordered with elegant large pots of flowers. The walks are rendered cool by the creeping

plants that are trained over them. They diverge from a large stone basin in the centre, constantly supplied by a fountain with water, which, in small rivulets, spreads itself over every part of this little paradise—imparting freshness and life to thousands of elegant plants and flowers, unknown to the eye of the European, but which here, in a climate of eternal spring, in the open air, bloom and send forth their fragrance without the assistance of man, and produce a very different appearance to the dwarfish sickly exotics of our hot-house, which, with every possible care and attention, with difficulty linger a few years without re-producing their species.

Apples, pears, peaches, quinces, and other European fruits, flourish here, in company with bananas, avocatas, and the most delicious sapotas I ever tasted.

The celebrated hand-tree, which has excited so much attention among botanists, is in

great perfection here. I have brought models of its highly curious fruit, made from the living plants, as well as several species of the extraordinary cacti, mostly natives of Mexico, with which the gardens abound.

Numbers of birds frequent this delightful spot, and from being perfectly undisturbed are very tame. On the 3rd of April, I saw the first humming bird since I had left Jamaica; in a month afterwards they were in great plenty, and the examination of them, in all their evolutions, added much to the pleasures of this establishment, which, I regret to say, was about to be discontinued, the pension of the professor being stopped: such were the exigencies of the state, that even the trifling salary of the venerable little Italian curator was then unpaid. I procured from the garden the seeds of such plants, fruits, &c. as were ripe at the time I left the city, as well as of what appeared to me the most beautiful or curious

in the different places through which I passed: they are now in British earth;—many of them springing up, and appearing to be in a healthy and vigorous state, under the care of Mr. Tate, at the Botanic Garden, in Sloane Street; and as most of them are natives of the higher and temperate regions, I hope in a short time to see them naturalized, and flowering in our gardens and plantations.

The following is a list of plants which I procured from the Botanic Garden, but the advanced season prevented my bringing them over. All those printed in Italics are new.

- 1 *Lobelia Surinamensis.*
- 2 *Turrea tinctoria.*
- 3 *Hedysarum virgatum.*
- 4 *Bignonia stans.*
- 5 *Bignonia linearis.* Cavanill.
- 6 *Dahlia gigantea.*
- 7 *Malva arborea.*
- 8 *Ipomœa involucriflora.* An genus novum?
- 9 *Salvia involucrata* Cavanill.
- 10 *Fuchsia arborea.*
- 11 *Datura scandens.*

- 12 *Nocca latifolia*.
- 13 *Psoralea glandulosa*.
- 14 *Datura arborea*.
- 15 *Hedyotis fruticosa*.
- 16 *Cactus Phyllanthus*.
- 17 *Cactus coccineus*.
- 18 *Solanum scandens*.
- 19 *Euphorbia pulcherrima*.
- 20 Varietas ejusdem flore lutea.
- 21 *Brassica crispa*.
- 22 *Ipomæa violacea*.
- 23 *Lexarcea*. Genus Novum.
- 24 *Hoitzia coccinea*. Cavanill.
- 25 *Crinum uniflorum*.
- 26 *Pancratium pulcherrimum*.
- 27 Variæ species Novæ Cactorum, inter quas valde' singularis *Cactus senescens*.
- 28 *Crinum Zeylanicum*.
- 29 *Ferraria Pavonia*, *Tigridia quorundam*.
- 30 *Sicyos angulata*.
- 31 *Dahlia coccinea*, variat floribus purpureis, coccineisque.

Professor Cervantes was kind enough to furnish me with this list.

CHAPTER XIV.

Markets.

ONE of the most interesting sights to an inquisitive stranger in Mexico is a ramble early in the morning to the canal which leads to the lake of Chalco. There, hundreds of Indian canoes, of different forms and sizes, freighted with the greatest variety of the animal and vegetable productions of the neighbourhood, are constantly arriving; they are frequently navigated by native women, accompanied by their families. The finest cultivated vegetables which are produced in European gardens, with the numberless fruits of the torrid zone, of many of which even the names

MEXICAN INDIANS going to MARKET.

are unknown to us, are piled up in pyramids and decorated with the most gaudy flowers. In the front of the canoes, the Indian women, very slightly clothed, with their long glossy tresses of jet black hair flowing luxuriously to the waist, and often with an infant fastened to their backs, push the canoes forward with long slender poles. In the centre, under cover, the remainder of the family are seated, mostly employed in spinning cotton, or weaving it, in their simple portable looms, into narrow webs of blue and white cloth, which forms their principal clothing. Other boats are loaded with meat, fowls, turkeys, and a profusion of wild ducks, which they pluck and prepare on their way to the market; generally throwing the feathers, which they consider of no value, into the water. Others again are freighted with Indian corn, the general food for horses, in bulk or straw, reared like floating pyramids. Milk, butter,

fruit, and young kids, are all in the greatest plenty, and what adds to the picturesque appearance of the whole is, that nearly every canoe has a quantity of red and white poppies spread on the top of the other commodities; and if there be a man on board, he is usually employed in strumming on a simple guitar for the amusement of the rest. The whole of this busy scene is conducted with the greatest harmony and cordiality. These simple people seldom pass each other without saluting; “Buenos Dias Señor, or Señora,” is in every mouth, and they embrace each other with all the appearance of sincerity.

They land their cargoes a little to the south of the palace, near the great market; and remove their various commodities on their backs to the place where they deposit them for sale. This market is well worth visiting at an early hour;—when thousands of Indians assembled with their various commodities for

sale, many of them from a considerable distance, form one of the most animated sights that can be imagined. It was my constant morning's excursion: and by purchasing their curious birds, or other natural productions, at rather a higher price than usual, I became known to them, and had several of them in my pay, who brought to my house whatever they could find that would please the *Britannico*, a name by which I was known in the market. One old woman was very successful in taking the humming birds, and brought me alive many of the most beautiful species in my present collection. But I had much difficulty in procuring specimens of ornithology in the market fit for my purpose; for, though hundreds of fine birds were almost daily brought, yet most of them were partially plucked, and many were without feet.

Among the great variety of aquatic birds

thus imported from the borders of the lake are numbers of our waders, sandpipers, phalaropes, &c. all brought alive; and the quantity of ducks of various kinds is surprising;—25,000 have been sold in a year, and at a very low price. The most plentiful were the shoveller (*anas clypeata*), and the teal, (*anas crecca*), which are both sold at the same price, and are principally eaten by the poor, though the latter is equally good as in England, where it is so much esteemed for the delicacy of its flesh.

Domestic water-fowl are almost unknown in this part of New Spain. I never saw a tame duck, and geese, not more than twice during the whole time I was in the country. Turkeys, fowls, pigeons, hares, and rabbits, are in great plenty, and venison is occasionally met with at table. Fish is scarce and dear, the lakes producing but few species: the *pesca blanca*, or white fish, resembling in

appearance and taste our smelts, is the best. Tortoises, frogs, and the axolote, a species of salamander, (an aquatic animal much resembling a water-newt or lizard), are abundant in the market, and are all good eating; the latter have been the subject of dispute among naturalists since the discovery of America, and we are still in obscurity with respect to their doubtful history. They were so plentiful in the time of Cortez that his army principally subsisted on them, and I have seen them by thousands in the markets of Toluca; yet they have never been discovered in a young state, nor has any sexual difference yet been noticed. I brought several home in spirits, which are now under the inspection of Sir Everard Home, from whom the public may shortly expect much information respecting this obscure species.

The Indians also bring to market a considerable quantity of a small delicate fish, not

more than two or three inches long, which they take in nets in the canals and ditches near the lakes. They are enclosed in the leaves or capsules which surround the head of the Indian corn, and then roasted. In this state they are exposed for sale, at a very reasonable rate : we thought them excellent, but they are seldom seen at the repasts of the rich. They have also a small crustaceous animal resembling our shrimp, but not so well tasted. The meat market is well supplied with beef, mutton, and pork, and in the spring kid is plentiful and cheap ; veal is prohibited by law. The beef and mutton are by no means equal to what we have in the markets of Europe ; but, though these meats are not of the best quality, they are very far from bad. Perhaps the fault is in a great measure owing to the butcher, and we are always partial to our own method of preparing animal food. Of vegetables and fruits there are few places

that can boast such variety as Mexico, and none where the consumption is greater in proportion to the inhabitants. The great market is larger than Covent Garden, but yet unequal to contain the quantity daily exposed for sale: the ground is entirely covered with every European kind, and, as I have already stated, with many, the very names of which are unknown to us. I was never tired of examining these fruits and vegetables, and took casts and drawings of all I could procure of the former during my residence: they are very numerous and extraordinary, and these copies are executed in a manner which will convey a better idea of a Mexican market, and the productions of a tropical region, than a volume of description. They must be seen to be understood: how few persons in Europe have any idea of the form or appearance, when in a state of life and vegetation, of the various kinds of bananas, plaintains, pawpaws, cus-

tard-apples, sour sop, citrons, shaddock, ackee, sopotas, avocata, tunnals, pitalli, ciayotte, chennini, genianil, granadilla, pomegranates, dates, annonas, mangoes, star-apples, melons, gourds, tomatas, &c. with which, and many others, this market abounds in succession at various seasons of the year ; but by the casts I have taken of them they will be familiarised to the eye in a moment. In such a country and climate the finest productions of every part of the globe might be produced, but the whole is left to the care of untutored Indians, whose horticultural knowledge is indeed very limited.

A few intelligent gardeners from the north of our island would soon acquire fortunes in the neighbourhood of Mexico, and be the means of increasing the blessings already enjoyed by the people in those delightful regions.

Besides the articles furnished for the table,

MEXICAN INDIANS returning from MARKET.

the Indians dispose of wool, cotton, coarse cotton cloth, manufactured skins, earthenware, baskets, &c. in the market, and it is an amusing scene to witness them collected in large parties with their children seated on the ground, enjoying their frugal meals of tortillos and chile. But, unfortunately, in the lanes near the market are found numbers of pulque shops, where the men are seen enjoying their favourite beverage, and indulging in their propensity to gaming; and I am sorry to say that, in more than one instance, I have noticed these generally good-natured creatures, when heated by pulque or aqua ardente, and soured by the ill fortune of the day, venting their disappointment, *like mere Christians*, on the persons of their innocent and unoffending wives!

CHAPTER XV.

The Mint.

THIS establishment occupies one part of the palace of the Viceroy, and is of considerable extent; we visited it in company with several German and American gentlemen, and obtained admission, without difficulty: a person was sent to attend us, who explained every part of the process of preparing the silver, coining, &c. and on our leaving the place, refused any remuneration whatever for his trouble,—a thing very unusual in any part of the world. In no institution of the kind, that I am acquainted with, does a stranger receive so much attention, politeness, and information, *gratis*, as in this.

The silver is sent from the mines in bars, about two feet in length, and weighing about 1000 ounces each. They are first refined and made to the standard quality, and then melted into narrow pieces, from which they are drawn by a succession of wooden machinery into long thin stripes of the thickness and breadth of a dollar. This machinery is worked in apartments underneath the building, from which the light is excluded; the first process is executed by mules, the next by men, who, for this purpose, are nearly in a naked state. They are then taken by another set of men, who, by means of a screw-press, cut them into round pieces, of the size of the coin: these are taken to the opposite side of the room, to persons who weigh and regulate them, by filing off the overplus weight: they are then milled at the edges, and sent below to be whitened by boiling in alum-water, and thence carried to

the stamping room, where they are coined by fly presses, worked by eight men each : these machines, twenty in number, are said to be capable of coining upwards of 100,000 dollars in ten hours.

The operations seemed to me to be in general performed in an awkward manner ; the machinery occupies a great space, and occasions much noise. At present about two hundred workmen are employed, but when the mines were in full operation four hundred were engaged, and eighty thousand dollars *per diem* were coined here, independently of what was done in the other mints.

They were still striking bad impressions of the expelled Emperor, and I was sorry to observe such ill executed work on a coin which was to serve as the medium of exchange throughout the greater part of the civilized world. They are now sinking new dyes for the Republican Government, but

their artists are totally incompetent to the task of executing them in a style worthy of the country. I had consulted with Pistrucci of our mint, and obtained his terms for executing the dyes for Mexico, but the haste in which the new Government wanted them finished, prevented the possibility of a communication with Europe. The reverse of this coin is the Mexican eagle, seated on the Nopal; it is copied from a fine specimen of the *Falco Chrysaetos*, which I killed in Scotland, and is well etched by Howett, in my catalogue of the late London Museum. I hope, therefore, that the new Mexican copy will be an improvement on the figure which has already appeared.

About 2250 millions of dollars have been issued from this place and universally circulated over every part of the globe; had proper artists been employed in sinking the dye, this vast circulation would have contributed to improve

the taste of mankind, by diffusing a knowledge of the arts. But Mexico, owing to Spanish policy, is three hundred years behind Europe in every species of refinement; yet, in spite of her disadvantages, she must infallibly shortly break her chains, and assume her proper station among the nations of Europe and America. As soon as it is known that the traveller may feel himself in security in New Spain, many intelligent and respectable men will be induced to visit it for scientific purposes, and will diffuse that spirit of knowledge and inquiry which is hitherto unknown, but which will convince the Mexicans of their inferiority to us, as well in intellectual acquirements as in a knowledge of the arts.

CHAPTER XVI.

Inns.—Shops.—Trades.—Dresses, &c.

A STRANGER, on his arrival in Mexico without an introduction, and with little knowledge of the language, will be unpleasantly situated, as the inns do not supply his table, and it is very difficult to procure private furnished lodgings. Apartments are to be hired unfurnished, but till they can be made ready, he must repair to the Gran Sociedad, or some such place, where an ordinary is kept; though even here they supply neither beds nor furniture, and the guest must make a positive bargain for his room, and pay every day for whatever he has, or he will be

grossly imposed upon. The influx of foreigners who are likely now, however, to visit Mexico, will naturally produce an improvement in this respect. In the Sociedad are several billiard tables, dining and coffee rooms, ice- and confectionary rooms, shops, &c.; which, in the evening, are crowded with company of every description, and greatly infested by importunate beggars, blind and crippled, of the most disgusting description, crawling and rolling on the floors of the apartments, or carried on each other's backs. I have never seen so many miserable objects in any other city, not even excepting Milan; and yet there are persons who say it is a rare thing to see a lame Indian !

The appearance of the shops in Mexico affords no indication of the wealth of the city. Nothing is exposed in the windows; all are open, in the same manner as they were in London till the sixteenth century; few have

signs or even names in front ; and most of the articles are manufactured in the shops in which they are exposed for sale.

Silversmiths' work is done here in the same tedious manner it used to be in England. All the ornaments are finished by hand ; there are some good chasers, but in general the production is clumsy and very heavy.

I inquired about precious stones and pearls, but there were few good, and those much dearer than in Europe. Rubies appeared to me the only jewels worth importing from Mexico.

The manufactory of gold and silver lace, trimmings, epaulets, &c. is carried on in the greatest perfection, and these articles are sold at a much lower rate than with us. It is usual with our naval officers, on their arrival at Vera Cruz, to lay in a stock of such requisites.

The tailors here make great profit, as

clothes are 300 per cent. dearer than in England, and are seldom well made. Cloth coats are only beginning to be generally used, but will very soon supersede the printed calico jacket, till lately universally worn. The workmen follow their employment seated on stools, and not with their legs crossed under them as in Europe.

The first sight of a milliner's shop here must always raise a smile on the face of a newly arrived foreigner. Twenty or thirty brawny fellows, of all complexions, with mustachios, are exposed to the street, employed in decorating the dresses, and sewing muslin gowns, in making flowers, and trimming caps and other articles of female attire; whilst perhaps at the next door, a number of poor girls are on their knees on the floor, engaged in the laborious occupation of grinding chocolate, which is here always performed by hand.

Confectionary, which is in much demand in Mexico, is made in great variety, and at very reasonable prices. The number of different kinds of dulces, or sweetmeats, exceeds five hundred, and yet they have few like ours. A good artist from this country would soon make a fortune; but it would never repay the speculation to send the manufactured article where the price of sugar is so low.

The profession of druggist and apothecary must also be excellent ones; their prices are exorbitant.—I paid in Mexico a dollar per lb. for the article used in making the composition for preparing my birds, which in Europe is sold for four-pence, and yet the ingredients are the produce of the country. Hops sell here for two shillings and sixpence per ounce, and all drugs in the same proportion.

An apothecary's store generally occupies six times the space which a similar establishment does in England. I was shown one at

Puebla, belonging to an intelligent gentleman of the name of Call, which engrossed the whole apartments of a very large house. Thousands of boxes, drawers, cases, bottles, and jars, were arranged in the greatest order, together with an extensive chemical apparatus. Among the drugs we observed many that have been long exploded in Europe; such as parts of serpents, living tortoises, &c., &c.

Barbers here seem to retain the importance which their calling formerly held in England;—their shops are numerous, and generally make a handsome show with the display of the utensils of their trade, mixed with pictures and prints, grinding stones, and burnished brass basins, resplendent as the helmet of Mambrino on the head of the knight of La Mancha. The price of shaving is a hundred times dearer here than in England, and equals half the physician's fee.

Cabinet work is very inferior and very

expensive in Mexico: they have few of the tools employed in Europe, and mahogany, or any good substitute for it, is scarcely known. Most of the chairs in the best houses are made in the United States. It will be learnt with surprise, that in this country the saw (except in a small hand-frame) is still unknown: every plank, and the timber used in the erection of all the Spanish American cities, is hewn by Indians with light axes from out of the solid tree, each tree producing but one board. We were at a loss to conceive whence, considering this sad waste, the immense supply for Mexico could be derived. The construction of sawing-mills in the woods near Toluca would be productive of very great profit.

In turning wood, the mechanic sits on the ground, and uses his feet as well as his hands in the operation of the lathe, which is here of very simple construction.

Coachmakers excel all the other mechanical arts practised in Mexico; their vehicles are firmly put together, of handsome forms, and well finished: the best painters of the country are employed in their decoration, and the gilding and varnish equal what is done in Europe, from whence the handles and ornamental parts in metal are procured.

Of coopers I saw none. The skins of hogs, blown up like bladders, being substituted for barrels, and sold through the streets by itinerant venders, whose light load, suspended on each end of a long pole, occupies as much space as a loaded cart.

Bakers' shops are large establishments, and no where can better bread be had than here; but I am informed the people who make it are absolutely slaves, and are never permitted to leave the place in which they work, being, to all intents and purposes, prisoners.

During the late revolution the people in-

sisted that this degrading system should be abolished; it was so, and the city remained several days without the means of procuring wheaten bread, when the old arbitrary mode of preparing it was again resorted to.

Tortilios are soft cakes made of maize, or Indian corn; they constitute the principal food of the poor, and resemble our pikelets: they are wholesome, nutritious, and good, and, when eaten warm, I considered them a delicacy.

Shops for the sale of native and Spanish brandy, (aguardiente), and other spirituous liquors, wines, &c. are too common; and by the gay display of their various-coloured poisons, in handsome decanters, present such a temptation to the poor Indian, that few who possess a media can carry it home.

The water-carriers of Mexico are a numerous body, who bring this necessary article from the deposits of the aqueducts to private houses in large globular jars, poised on their

backs, and supported by a strap from their heads, from which is suspended another smaller one, to serve as a counterpoise to the larger.

These men seem to have a great aversion to the article in which they deal, for at an early hour they may be seen in a pulquefied state, stretched on the bare ground in the fullness of enjoyment; few of them have any settled place of residence, but, like the Lazzaroni of Naples, sleep under the first place of shelter that presents itself.

The costumes of the various classes of inhabitants of the city of Mexico vary considerably. The dresses of the Spaniard, and higher class of white natives, differ but little from those worn in Europe. The men and boys often appear in the streets in the long cloak; and in the house light jackets, of printed calico, are generally worn. They shave less often than we do, and when on a

journey, or as long as they are indisposed, that operation is not performed.

The dresses of the ladies, and even of children, in the streets, are universally black ; the head of the former is generally uncovered, or with only a slight veil thrown over it. They take great pains with their fine hair, and are particularly neat about the feet, the stocking being usually of fine silk. This is their morning appearance, in which they are seen going to or returning from church, to the duties of which they are very attentive. No well regulated family omits hearing mass every morning, mostly before breakfast.

On holydays, processions, and other public occasions, the dresses of the ladies are very gay, but not of such expensive materials as those worn by our fashionables ; artificial flowers are used in abundance, but ostrich feathers sparingly. It is generally in their

carriages that the ladies appear in public, and very seldom on horseback.

The dress of the country gentlemen, or paysanas, is showy and expensive; and, when mounted on their handsome and spirited little horses, they make an elegant appearance. The lower dress consists of embroidered breeches, chiefly of coloured leather, open at the knees, and ornamented with numbers of round silver buttons, and broad silver lace; a worked shirt, with high collar; and a short jacket, of printed calico, over which is generally thrown an elegant manga or cloak, of velvet, fine cloth, or fine figured cotton, the manufacture of the country:—these are often embroidered, or covered with a profusion of gold lace. On the feet are soft leather shoes or boots, over which is tied a kind of gaiter, peculiar to the country; they are commonly of cinnamon-coloured leather, wrapped round the leg, and

tied with an ornamental garter: these are a very expensive article, the leather being cut in relieve in a variety of elegant patterns by the Indians, in the interior provinces, in a manner that it would be difficult to copy in Europe. They are sold from eight to forty or fifty dollars the pair, and even at that price yield a poor remuneration to the makers. Yet they are an article of great consequence in the fitting-out of the Mexican beau, who often appears in this kind of boot, richly embroidered in gold and silver, which costs upwards of one hundred dollars. The stirrups and spurs correspond, in magnificence and workmanship, with the boots. The hat is of various colours, large, and the crown very flat and low, bound with broad gold or silver lace, and with a large round band, and fringe of the same. They are elegant, and well calculated to guard the sun from the head and shoulders. The decorations of the horse are

also expensive; the great Spanish saddle, with its broad flaps, is richly embroidered with silk, gold and silver, and the high-raised front covered with the same metals. The stirrups are often of silver, but those of the lower classes are of wood. The bridle is small, with a very large and powerful bit, by means of which the riders suddenly stop their fine little horses when at full speed.

The dresses of the country ladies are showy, but not elegant:—worked shifts, with a light open jacket, and a richly embroidered or spangled petticoat, of bright coloured soft cloth (often scarlet or pink), seem to be the unvarying costume.

The dresses of the poorer classes and Indians vary in the different provinces. The mixed descendants of the Spaniards, in the capital, and in Toluca, and other cities, have little more than a blanket, worn much in the fashion of the Roman toga; whilst the garb

of the Indiamen consists of a straw hat, close jacket with short sleeves, of different dark-coloured coarse woollen or leather, and a short pair of breeches, open at the knees, also of leather, sometimes of the skin of goats, or of the peccary, with the hair side outwards. Under this are worn full calico trowsers, reaching to the middle of the leg, with sandals of leather on the feet, much in the form of the ancient Romans. The women appear in little more than a petticoat and short jacket, with their long raven-like tresses plaited on each side of the head with red tape. When seated on the ground for hours in the market-place, exposed to the sun, I have often seen them place a cabbage, or other large leaf, on their heads, to defend them from its influence. They are generally clean in their appearance, and orderly and modest in their behaviour. Indians are seldom seen on horseback, or walking, on the roads; their ordinary pace being

a kind of trot, or short run, in which manner they proceed to the town, carrying heavy loads. In returning from the market they are not so expeditious, being sometimes a little pulquefied, and in high spirits: they are, however, always respectful and polite to strangers. While these are passing they stop, take off their hats, and salute them; and they are always much pleased to be spoken to or noticed.

The Indian huts vary much, according to the situation in which they are placed. Those in the warmer parts are a mere bird-cage, made of canes or sticks, and roofed with leaves. In the mountains, near the snow, as at Las Vegas, they resemble the houses of Norway, and Alpine Switzerland, being composed, like them, of solid logs of wood. Some are of split boards; many of unburnt brick, with flat roofs; and near Mexico and Toluca, of stone. They have always a neat

little garden attached to them. The villages, in favourable situations, are so enclosed and screened by the luxuriant foliage in which they are enveloped, that a stranger may pass without observing them. Their neat simple residences have often afforded me much pleasure:—their bed, a mat spread on the floor, or a net suspended from the ceiling—a few earthen vessels and calabashes—with the stone for preparing their tortilios, or bread of Indian corn—form the bulk of their earthly goods. The rude figure or print of a Saint, and generally a few toys of earthenware, serve as ornaments, and constitute their finery;—yet I have never seen a people more truly happy and contented.

CHAPTER XVII.

Manufactories.—Customs.—Manners, &c., &c.

THE account of the manufactories of New Spain will occupy but a small space. The policy always pursued by the mother-country in keeping the colonies as much as possible dependent on her, induced her to frame strong prohibitory laws for the purpose. Silk-worms were not allowed to be reared, nor flax to be cultivated; and the vine and olive were prohibited under severe penalties. A few coarse woollens and cottons, amounting in value in the whole country to scarcely a million and a half sterling, were, it appears, formerly made, but during the revolution even these have diminished.

The wretched system in which public manufactories are conducted is of itself sufficient to disgust even the lowest and most degraded of the human species. Instead of encouraging the love of labour and industry, as the means of obtaining comfort, wealth, and enjoyment, it is here accompanied only by slavery, poverty, and misery.

Every manufactory that requires many hands is strictly a prison, from which the wretched inmates cannot remove, but are treated with the utmost rigour. Many of them are really confined for a number of years for crimes against the laws ; and others, by borrowing a sum of money from the owners, pledge their persons and their labours till they redeem it, which it often happens is never done. The proprietor, instead of paying in money, supplies them with spirits, tobacco, &c., and by these means they increase, rather than liquidate, the original debt.

My friend, Mr. Lewis Sultzer, a very intelligent German, with whom I went from England, and resided in Mexico, is at the head of the extensive mercantile establishment of the Rhenish Company, and has been acquainted with the country for forty years. He dined and spent a Sunday at one of these places, near the city, where woollens are made, and on his return in the evening, his description corroborated the account I had previously heard. They have mass said for the wretched inmates on the premises; but high walls, double doors, barred windows, and severe corporeal punishments inflicted in these places of forced industry, make them as bad as the worst-conducted gaol in Europe. As the people receive their ideas of manufactories from such places, can we wonder at the detestation in which they are held? What must their opinion of Europe be, which they are taught to consider as the place from whence

all the manufactured articles imported are produced, and where, as they suppose, the fabrication is conducted on their own system? But this state of things cannot long remain: a liberal Government like the present will assuredly devise a remedy for so great an evil, while the introduction of artizans from Europe, and steam engines, which are now erecting at two of the mines, will give the natives an idea of our mechanical knowledge, and tend greatly to prepare them for many other important improvements.

They make excellent beaver hats in the capital, as well as in some of the provinces; and those of wool, used by the paysanas, are well adapted to the country.

The mangas, or cloaks, of thick cotton, made here, and worn by the country gentlemen, do credit to the taste of the natives, the patterns of them are elegant, and the fabric is both strong and good.

Their tanned leather is very indifferent, though the country produces abundance of fine bark, and skins are cheap. Before I left Mexico two tan yards were preparing by young men, tanners from Europe, with every prospect of success.

Paper has never yet been made in New Spain, but is always imported from Europe: it is of bad quality, and exorbitantly dear. Perhaps, from linen not being in use among the lower classes, it may be difficult to procure the material for the best paper, otherwise the manufacture of it here would be very advantageous.

The making of cutlery and hardware, of any kind, is scarcely attempted; and what is done is wretchedly executed. They must long continue to receive it from Europe; but our manufacturers should be cautioned as to what they should send, for few table knives, and no steel forks, are used at the houses

even of the wealthy. I have seen a good dinner for a large party, with only one knife at the table.

Watches have never been made in the country, nor will they perhaps for many years to come. The number of persons who wear them is inconsiderable; and those hitherto used, are mostly of French or Swiss manufacture, at low prices.

Messrs. Roskells, of Liverpool, are the first Englishmen who have ventured to establish here a house in this line of business; and their watches are deservedly held in high estimation; but the people must recover from the effects of their recent struggles for independence ere they can afford to purchase expensive luxuries.

I have already mentioned the works of glass and earthenware of Puebla, the latter of which is also made generally over the country; but our blue and white earthen-

ware is in great request. Many hundred crates were sold in a few weeks at great prices.

Our manufactories of soft goods, of almost every description except fine woollen cloths, will find a considerable market in New Spain. The production of the looms of Great Britain,—our muslins and calicoes, printed and plain, are greatly used and preferred; but the platillos, or German linens, sell better than the Irish. They are made up in a different form, and present a more pleasing exterior, which probably is the principal cause of the preference. Our shawls of every description, but principally those that are showy and cheap, are beginning to be generally worn.

The low-priced French woollen cloths seem to be preferred to our fine ones. It is but lately that coats of this material have come into general use. The glory of a Mexican

dandy at present is to appear in a new coat of cloth as glossy as possible; the fineness of the fabric seems to be of inferior consideration to its shining surface.

Cotton stockings are now in demand; till lately, those of the finest French silk, with ornamented clocks, were principally worn by ladies; but, in a short time, I have no doubt that little else will be seen in Mexico but English manufactured goods and English fashions. It would be a good speculation for our merchants to forward a few handsome and well-dressed specimens of our countrywomen as *pattern cards*: our muslins and printed goods would, by these means, be in greater request, and Manchester and Glasgow might double their exportations in a few months. The circulation of Ackermann's periodical magazines of Fashions would probably assist in producing the same effect.

Carpets are very little used, I saw but two

or three in the country. The floors of the fine apartments in which the Congress hold their meetings were covered with several of different patterns; and a few private houses of the nobility display small ones, or pieces of them. But hearth-rugs (though fire-places are unknown) are in more general request, being used as saddle-cloths; whilst the huge lackered curtain-pins manufactured in Birmingham are seen decorating the high fronts of the saddles.

There are no optical instruments made in Mexico, nor is there an artist who can repair even a common barometer; upon the slightest accident it must, therefore, be sent all the way to Europe to be mended!

Cast iron, so generally useful and necessary to us, is almost unknown in New Spain; its use for culinary purposes being supplied by the excellence of their common earthenware. Of the powers of iron, when connected with

steam, they have received such exaggerated accounts, that they in general disbelieve the whole statement. One person asked if it was true that, by means of a boiling teakettle, a thousand persons could be moved in safety one hundred miles a day. And the French story, of the inhabitants of Birmingham making their clergy of cast iron, and causing them to preach by steam, had been recently imported in an American bottom. But the Conde de Regla having lately discovered both coal and iron on his estates, we may hope in a short time to convince the Mexicans of the truth of the new advantages to be derived from these materials.

The manufactory of shot is wretchedly bad, being of all shapes, and selling at no less a price than one shilling and sixpence per lb. Gunpowder is cheap but coarse.

English beer and porter are in great request, and often sold at enormous rates,

sometimes four or five dollars the bottle. The bottle itself is sold in Mexico at half a dollar, and in the provinces at a whole one.

Breweries were about to be established :—barley, as fine as any in Europe, is produced in most parts of the country ; and hops, till they can be cultivated, may be imported from England or the United States ; but I scarcely think that, for a general beverage, beer will ever supplant their favourite pulque.

Spanish wine, not of the best quality, though high in price, is sparingly used ; brandies of the mother-country, and that made here from the sugar-cane, are in too much request ; the latter strongly resembles Irish whiskey, and is considered a wholesome spirit.

The literary establishments at present in Mexico are very few, and no libraries of any extent are open to the public. The productions of the press are not numerous, nor

is there any thing that supplies the place of our magazines, or other periodical publications. There are now, however, three or four daily newspapers, but they contain very little information; they are only just beginning to insert advertisements, which are received gratis, in the same manner as they were in England at the commencement of our newspapers.

Lancasterian schools were established in the capital by the late Emperor Augustine I., who, when in London, informed me it was his intention to have extended them throughout all the provinces. Something of the same nature is in contemplation by the present Government.

The children of the nobility and wealthy inhabitants are principally taught at home; but the places of public instruction in greatest repute are the Seminario and San Idelfonza.

In the great square, near the market, are

the public letter-writers, who, in the open air, like those of Naples, follow their daily labours; their occupation seems to be chiefly the production of ornamental love-letters, like our valentines; but, judging from their appearance, it does not seem a profitable calling. They are also dealers in ink, which by the way is of a very bad quality.

Medical and surgical knowledge is less cultivated here than in Europe. Dissections are not allowed by law. Several young physicians, from the United States, had arrived, and were getting practice, although labouring under the great disadvantage of not knowing the Spanish language.

An able oculist would be a valuable acquisition and blessing to Mexico, where diseases of the eye are so prevalent, and in which there are more blind persons than in any country I have ever travelled; there is not a native who can perform an operation. The Count

of Valenciana is at present in a state of total darkness, from cataract; it appeared to me that in England or in France the cause of his malady would be removed in a very few days.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Public Execution.

THE very unusual circumstance of a public execution took place a few days before I left the city ; the crime was robbery and sacrilege : two persons had been convicted of it about a year since, but their punishment had been delayed till this particular time.

About eleven o'clock they left the prison of the palace, (together with an accomplice, who was sentenced to imprisonment and to witness the execution of his companions), preceded and accompanied by a strong military guard of horse and foot, the officers of justice, and many hundred persons, bearing ornamental

lanterns, with lighted candles, used in processions. The criminals were each mounted on an ass, and dressed in white woollen gowns and caps, with red crosses on them. They were tied down to the pack-saddle, from which an iron bar passed to the neck, and was united to a strong iron collar; they had also a very heavy chain on one leg. They were attended by a number of priests and religious of different orders, who continued to recite short sentences and prayers to the wretched malefactors, who repeated them in as audible a voice as their situation would admit, but it was with difficulty they could be supported on their animals.

The procession moved slowly through the crowded streets—the windows, balconies, and parapets of the flat-roofed houses were thronged to excess; and on no occasion had I seen so many ladies, nor, in my opinion, to so much advantage. The behaviour of the whole as-

sembled city was strictly decorous, and the awful spectacle seemed to make a proper impression, and elicited more feeling than I expected to have witnessed. The ladies in general knelt as the prisoners passed : an awful silence prevailed, interrupted only by the muffled drums, and the exhortations of the priests ; but thousands of fine black eyes were suffused in tears, whilst their mute trembling lips were engaged in prayer for the wretched victims of vice, now about to make a public atonement for their crimes.

On arriving at the open space near the Vera Cruz gate, the fatal apparatus appeared in view. It consisted of a high gallows, with a scaffold under it ; on this were two upright pieces of wood, with a seat attached to each, on which the culprits, more dead than alive, were, after some preparatory prayers, successively placed, with their hands tied before them. The executioner then put an iron cir-

cular bolt round their necks, which passed through the stake behind them, when the attendant priest requested the multitude to join in supplication to the throne of mercy for the unfortunate beings. The bolts were drawn tight by screws from behind, which in a few seconds terminated their sufferings, without the public witnessing the horrible contortions so often seen in our executions. They were removed, and a rope being put round their necks, they were drawn up on the gibbet, and their bodies exposed for a short time, during which one of the officiating clergymen delivered an impressive sermon suitable to the occasion ; he was listened to with great attention, and at his conclusion the multitude quietly dispersed in the greatest order possible. The bodies were then put into coffins and delivered to their friends.

I must observe, to the credit of the populace, that the whole was conducted in the most

solemn and decent manner, which I attribute to the effect of the religious feelings of all who were present. It formed a strong contrast to an execution which I once witnessed in France, soon after the revolution, when the rabble of Rouen behaved with the most disgusting ribaldry and obscenity.

CHAPTER XIX.

Domestic Animals.—Horses, Mules, &c.

MEXICO possesses a fine breed of light, active, spirited small horses, which are used for the saddle only; some are of great beauty and well broken in, being extremely elegant in their paces, and very sure-footed. The men excel those of most countries in the art of riding and managing these noble animals; but the usage they receive is very different from that in Europe—for they are scantily fed, poorly lodged, and hardly treated. Their principal food is chopped straw; the leaves and stalks of the maize, or Indian corn; and, whilst working, the grain of the maize, and

sometimes barley. I have seen good green oats in the neighbourhood of Xalapa, but never witnessed their being given to horses in their ripe or dried state. Whilst on a journey they are not suffered to drink: very few are shod, and those that are, seldom have more than two shoes. Their saddles and accoutrements are very large and heavy: they are easy and safe for the rider, but it is a rare thing to see a horse return from a journey without a sore back. I have always preferred my English saddle to that of the Spanish, and in several journies performed in company, my little nag was the only one that came back uninjured.

Nothing on entering the kingdom of Mexico strikes the newly arrived European as more ridiculous than the huge, heavy, unwieldy trappings with which the paysanas encumber these useful animals. An immense saddle, with large *armas de aguas* of skin

dressed with the hair on, hangs down to the horses knees in front, whilst a heavy petticoat-like covering of stiff jacked leather, called a Cortez shield, encloses the whole hinder parts in a most uncomfortable manner, as far as the haunches, where it terminates in a heavy deep fringe of iron resembling a bundle of jack-chains, whose jingling noise, and the uneasy capers it causes the tormented animal to make, seem to constitute the principal felicity of Mexican dandies in their perambulations through the city, or on the Pasea, which is the Hyde Park of Mexico. Here they display their persons and equestrian skill, decorated in showy paysana dresses, and armed with enormous spurs similar to those used in Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries, the rowels of which are some of them above twelve inches in circumference, and have a small bell attached to the side of each, the music of which, joined to

that of the rattling iron fringe, denotes the consequence and approach of the ambling cavaliero.

The ladies of the city of Mexico seldom appear on horseback; when they do they are seated in a clumsy box-like side-saddle, placed on the right side, which prevents them from sitting in a graceful manner. Lately, however, some young ladies of distinction have ventured to appear like European female equestrians; and I hope we shall soon see the women of New Spain enjoy their rational liberty, and take air and exercise like those of other parts of the civilized world. I have seen ladies here riding astride the horse, but this is by no means usual. The paysana or country lady is often seen mounted before her cavaliero, who, seated behind his fair one, supports her with his arm thrown round her waist; and, as females here wear neither hat nor bonnet, he, as a mark of politeness and

attention, generally places his hat on her head, and supplies its place on his own by a handkerchief.

Horses enjoy the full privilege of wearing their ears and tails unmutilated, and it is considered a beauty and perfection to carry the latter between their legs—to which the frequent use of the Cortez shield greatly contributes. It seems to an English eye at first a defect, but how infinitely preferable is it to our ridiculous, brutal, and unnatural custom of cutting off the ears and part of the tail of this generous and useful dependent on man, and nicking the remainder to the bone, roasting and torturing it to make it turn in a contrary way to what nature intended. Surely the humane laws lately enacted to prevent barbarity to animals ought to extend their influence to prevent so frightful and absurd a practice as this.

The horses in Mexico are never littered ;

they sleep on the bare stones, and I never saw a curry-comb nor any substitute for one. Tied up the whole day in the yards of the city, they remain patiently waiting their evening meal; they are often turned loose together, and it then requires the use of the lasso to catch them again. The lasso is thrown with great dexterity by every ostler or servant, and the moment the horses or mules feel the rope on their necks they stand perfectly still, but without it will not suffer themselves to be saddled or bridled. The horsemen are, as I have before mentioned, extremely expert. I have often observed with pleasure a number of young men, in sport, amusing themselves by riding after and endeavouring to unhorse each other: they whirl round suddenly, and, seizing their adversary's horse by the tail, bring the rider to the ground by destroying his equilibrium.

With the greatest dexterity and agility

they single out a bull in the open plains, and in the same manner bring the furious animal to the ground with little risk to themselves, their horses being so sure-footed as seldom to make a false step, even on roads and on rocks where the best English hunter would fail.

Horses are bred in great numbers at the different haciendas in the provinces, where they are sold very cheap. They run in a state of nature till wanted, when they are caught with a lasso, hoodwinked, and immediately mounted. For the first fifteen or twenty minutes, they exert their whole strength to throw the rider; but finding their exertions ineffectual, they patiently submit, and generally give but little trouble afterwards. The bit used in this process is a terrible instrument, something like that of the Mamelukes.

The Ex-Emperor Iturbide, who was remarkable for his personal strength and prowess, was said to be very much attached

to the taking of bulls and horses in the above manner.

The superb stable and stud of the Conde de Regla, in the city, contain the finest specimens of horses and mules in the country: the building, formerly a convent, though unfinished, might almost vie with the famous stables at Chantilly: the horses are many of them of exquisite beauty, and some of great speed and fine action. Of this the public may judge from the models executed in wax by an Indian, and from that of *El Volante* (a horse of singular form and great velocity), presented to me by the Conde. The mules used for his carriages are, for size, strength, and form, much the finest I have ever seen; many are near eighteen hands high, and of proportionate strength. In his stables they enjoy the luxury of sleeping on boards, but even there they are not littered.

Mules are universally preferred in this country for drawing carriages of every description, as well as for transporting goods and for travelling long journies, being stronger, and capable of enduring more fatigue and privations than the horse. To the carriages used by the nobility and gentry in Mexico and the other principal cities, two handsome mules only are used, yoked with singularly elegant harness; but the heavy clumsy travelling carriages on the public roads are usually drawn by eight or nine mules, and driven by two postillions. These vehicles, when laden for a journey with the household furniture, beds, provisions, &c., which custom renders it necessary to carry with you, make such an appearance or set-out as an Englishman can have no conception of. Each article has to be unladen every night, and carried into a place (I will not call it a room), there to remain till morning,

when all must be again repacked and reloaded, an operation which often requires two hours. From the time of being yoked to the carriage to their finishing a journey sometimes of from forty to fifty miles, do these patient animals continue their unceasing exertions over wretched roads, in the hottest sun, without tasting food or even a drop of water. Neither horses nor mules (except those belonging to the great), are ever dressed, but they have a custom of washing them, on their day's labour being finished, by sprinkling them copiously with cold water, an operation which they consider to be very refreshing and beneficial to their health.*

The full harness and equipment of a Mexican cavaliero is very elegant, and often very expensive ; the saddle, bridle, and accoutre-

* I have sometimes observed the driver during a hard day's labour wash their ears with pulque.

ments being richly embroidered in gold, silver, and coloured silk. The boots (or rather wrappers for the legs), the spur leathers, and coverings of the wooden stirrups, are embroidered, and some of the leggings only are so elegantly ornamented as to cost 150 dollars the pair: the whole dress, if it have any pretence to fashion, cannot be purchased for less than 6 or 700 dollars. The saddle-room of the Conde de Regla contains many coverings for the horse, of great value, some being composed of valuable fur and lion skins, superbly mounted in gold and silver.

The price of horses varies here as much as in England; a good and handsome animal may be purchased for twelve or fifteen pounds. Trotting being considered as a great defect, I bought one of the finest trotting horses in the city, and a good figure, for only twelve pounds, on account of its having this great fault; but those that are very showy and

graceful in their paces will often sell for 200 pounds, or even more. Mules bring high prices, if handsome and well broken in for the saddle; the clergy generally use them, and they will sell for two or three hundred dollars. The ordinary kinds are used for the conveyance of goods from Acapulco and Vera Cruz to the capital, and it is not uncommon to meet a drove of nearly one thousand of them in company, laden with bales of merchandise of two or three hundred weight. Some of these muleteers are rich, and it is remarkable that a robbery of them is scarcely ever heard of. I have seen the great square of Mexico nearly filled with mules, laden with silver for Vera Cruz, each mule carrying two thousand dollars; and I was told that there was no instance known of these rich convoys having ever been pillaged.

Asses are common here, but they are not so fine and large as in the south of Europe :

they are employed in large droves for conveying burthens, but are not so usually met on the great roads as mules.

Prodigious herds of horned cattle are seen grazing in all the great plains and near the haciendas :—they are so like our black cattle in the southern part of Scotland that I almost hailed them as my country acquaintance ; but the resemblance is chiefly in the exterior. The beef is in general hard and dry, but this may probably arise from the slovenly and injudicious manner in which the butchers perform their office, as well as from the mode of cooking. I have only once or twice met with good roast or boiled beef, and that was at the tables of English or American residents. Veal is not allowed, by law, to be killed.

Early every morning great numbers of cows with their calves are seen in the streets, when the warm milk is sold as wanted ; and the city is also supplied from the haciendas in the

neighbourhood. Butter is dear, and not of the finest quality ; it is principally brought by the Indians, rolled up very neatly in the leaves which cover the heads of the Indian corn or maize. I have tasted good cheese of the country, but it is rare and dear. Small Dutch cheeses are common here, and I once, as a stranger, by chance, saw a specimen of our renowned countrymen from Cheshire, in company with a real Yorkshire ham.

The sheep here are rather handsome in appearance, but they are not of a valuable kind. They have long slender limbs and large horns ; their wool, perhaps for want of attention, is not fine, and the mutton lean and tasteless to those accustomed to the flavour of our fine English breeds.

Flocks of goats are common in the mountains ; and in the months of April and May the markets are consequently well supplied with kid, which is little inferior to lamb.

PIGS.—Fine breeds of these useful animals are kept by many persons of wealth, as an article of trade, in the city of Mexico; and the care and attention paid to their cleanliness and comfort so far exceed any thing I have seen elsewhere, that a short account may be useful, by furnishing hints to our farmers, brewers, distillers, &c. by whom large numbers of these valuable animals could be conveniently kept. The premises where the business is carried on are extensive; consisting in general of a good dwelling-house, with a shop, slaughter-house, and places for singeing the pigs; large bowls for rendering the lard; salting and drying rooms: and lard rooms, with wooden binns for containing the rendered fat, which is an article of great consumption in Spanish cookery, being used as a substitute for butter. There is also a soap manufactory, in which the offal fat is manufactured, and

apartments where the blood is made into a kind of black-pudding and sold to the poor.

Behind all these are the sties for the hogs, generally from 800 to 1000 in number, which occupy a considerable range of well-built sheds, about thirty feet deep, with the roofs descending very low, and having the entrance through low arches, before which is an open space, the whole length of the yard, and about twenty-four feet wide, in the centre of which is a kind of aqueduct, built of stone and filled with clean water, supplied from a well at the end of the premises.—The hogs can only put their noses into this water through holes in the wall, which prevents their dirtying it, as it passes through the whole division of the yard. This is the only liquid given them, and their food is maize or Indian corn, slightly moistened and scattered at stated hours on the ground, which, in the yard as well as the

place where they sleep, is kept perfectly dry and clean. They are attended by Indians with every possible care,—there is a cold bath on the premises, which they are obliged frequently to use, as cleanliness is considered essential to their acquiring that enormous load of fat from which the principal profit is derived. Their ease and comfort seem also in every respect to be studiously attended to; and the occupation of two Indian lads will cause a smile on the countenances of my musical readers, when they are informed that they are employed, from morning till night, in settling any disputes or little bickerings that may arise among the happy inhabitants of this community either in respect to rank or condition, and in singing them to sleep. The boys are chosen for the strength of their lungs, and their taste and judgment in delighting the ears and lulling the senses of this amiable harmonic society; they succeed each other

in chanting during the whole day, to the great delight and gratification of their bristly audience, who seem fully to appreciate the merits of the performers.

The proprietor of one of these establishments himself attended us, and explained with much complaisance the use of the various apartments; he assured me that the premises cost him 60,000 dollars, and that his sales before the revolution amounted to about 2000 dollars per week: indeed, his display of diamonds, and his three splendid carriages with fine horses, standing in the yard, bespoke him to be a man of some opulence and importance. His stock are bred at a hacienda or farm belonging to him, near Otumba, and driven to Mexico, to be fattened, when about eight months old. The breed is said to have been brought originally from the Philippine Islands.

Dogs.—The breed of this useful domestic

animal seems to be entirely left to chance: a few Spanish pointers are to be seen, but the rest are a mixed mongrel race of every description, of which some are large and kept as house-dogs. Every village swarms with them; they are a perfect nuisance from their numbers and being always prowling about loose. Travellers can scarcely pass a village or house in the night but they rush out, and by their noise alarm and sometimes even seize the horses; a tax on them, well enforced, would either remedy this evil or produce a good revenue.

A very curious and diminutive species of wild dog is found in the mountains to the north east of Durrango. They are only eight or nine inches long, in form something like a greyhound, with a large high projecting forehead, long ears, and a long tail. They burrow in the ground, and are said (which, if true, is very extraordinary) to feed on grass

and other vegetable substances. They are sometimes brought to Mexico, and when domesticated, and improved in their food, they increase in size. Those I have seen were about ten or eleven inches long, and appeared to be a timid weakly race, though not very good-natured. I procured one at Mexico, which had just arrived from the north, but it died in a few days.

Mexico produces an animal which seems to connect the wolf, fox, and dog: it is called the Cocytie, and is about two-thirds of the size of the wolf, which it greatly resembles in shape and colour. While travelling, I have frequently heard their clamorous cries in the night, when hunting in concert in large packs. They are destructive to lambs, poultry, &c. but never attack man. I have seen them near the road side when travelling in the day;—they suffer you to approach almost within gun-shot, and then move off very deliberately.

A young one which I endeavoured to rear made its escape, and could not be retaken. The smell of them is stronger and even more disagreeable than that of the fox.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY JAMES BULLOCK, WHITEFRIARS.

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