

B.Y. EXPEDITION IN THE CITY OF MEXICO

Peculiar Religious Rites of the People Are Described—An Interesting Legend—The Indians Cherish a Tradition of a Remarkable Nature—Expedition Leaves the City.

Special Correspondence.

Itzucihuatl, Mexico, Jan. 19.—So much has been written about the city of Mexico that I hesitate to tell what we saw, but I must say something to keep the narrative of our journey complete. Our first duty after obtaining comfortable quarters at Hotel Juarez, was to see the proper authorities about our bond, and to obtain permission to ship specimens out of the republic. Having letters of recommendation to our ambassador, General Clayton, we applied to him for assistance. He met us kindly, and after suggesting the best method to follow, gave us notes to the proper authorities, who in turn did all they could for us, and the results were that in a few days our bondsman in Nogales was released, re-exportation of such articles as we desired was granted, and we had letters permitting us to make shipments of specimens out of the republic.

THE CITY OF MEXICO.

In appearance the City of Mexico resembles the other Mexican cities we have visited, such as Leon, Guadalajara, Culiacan. The streets are paved mostly with cobble rock, the houses are solid, even stately, with flat roofs, and the general plan of architecture is the same. We noticed, however, a deviation from the old styles in some of the newer residences, and an inclination to imitate the more modern residences in the United States. On the whole, I hardly think the city is so clean as any of the others mentioned. Some of the streets, such as San Francisco street, are constantly swept, and are as clean as one could desire; but others, especially one of those near the market are filthy. An open sewer, or a canal which serves the same purpose flows down one street, and emits an odor sufficient to breed an epidemic.

The plazas or parks compare favorably with others, except one we saw in Tepic, where roses grew in luxuriant abundance; the churches as a rule are larger and grander. The government house, the palace of Chapultepec and the great cathedral add much to the architecture and the interest of the city.

OLD FOUNDATIONS.

The foundations of the city were built in prehistoric times. It is believed, however, that the Aztecs, the race conquered by Cortez, settled here in about 1196 A. D., and on an island built a city which they called Mexitl, after one of their gods. These people are said to have come from the north, and this agrees with the Book of Mormon account, for during the great wars that closed the Nephilish history, hundreds of thousands of the Lamanites, not alone the men, but the women and children as well, went to the north country. It would be reasonable to think that they settled in the rich and productive lands now known as the eastern and middle states, and that here they became a great people. But it is natural for the Israelites to long for the lands of their fathers, and for their reason, and perhaps because of wars and contentions, a tribe or more than one tribe returned in a few hundred years to the land southward, just as some of the

Nephites returned from Zarahemla to the land of Nephi in olden times. And these tribes, we may easily imagine settled in this beautiful and fruitful valley, building their city on an island, the better to protect themselves from their enemies. At the time of the appearance of the Spaniards, the city built principally of stone and brick, and were massive and strong, and an immense church, the temple of Huizilopochtli was erected on the square where now stands the Catholic cathedral. At the time of the conquest all of these houses were leveled to the ground and the modern city built on the ruins of the old. Recently excavations have been made for sewer pipes, and back of the cathedral many interesting relics of the Aztec temple were found. Among others several idols, a gold chain, and some copper bells, also blocks of stone from the temple. It was the custom of the conquerors, but more especially of the fanatics who followed them, to destroy everything heathen. Houses, temples, idols, books, pictures, in fact everything that now might throw light upon the history of these interesting peoples, was torn down, broken into pieces or given to the flames. But I must not say everything for I firmly believe that somewhere, according to the divine will of providence some thing or some things, still remain that will serve as a key to unlock the door to now hidden past.

We found many places of interest, and the week allotted us to visit was too short, except that all were anxious to see the road again. I have mentioned the cathedral. It stands facing the plaza Zocalo, a noted and important place in the history of Mexico. It is of mixed Doric and Corinthian architecture. The carvings are beautiful, but strike the stranger as a little extravagant. The three domes or towers are 203 feet high, and afford from the upper railing of each a beautiful view, not only of the city but of the entire valley.

A GREAT CATHEDRAL.

Inside, the cathedral measures 287 feet by 177 feet, and in height 179 feet, and has numerous chapels, all of which are richly finished. The paintings, some of which are 30 feet by 25 feet, are mostly expressive of scenes and ideas in church history and doctrines, and while valuable and interesting are not in my opinion, highly artistic. One in particular attracted our attention as combining the horrible and beautiful. It expressed better than words some of the doctrine of the church. A large car, beautifully decorated and richly covered, was being drawn rapidly. In it sat the pope surrounded by angels and saints. He had a stern look and was intent only on the future. The people of the world were walking along what appeared to be the same road, and the pope's car crushed thousands as it sped along, who were shown in all stages of agony.

As we passed through there were many worshippers kneeling before the various shrines and altars. Visitors, as did we, paired in front, or behind or among them, and no one paid attention, but the prayer and worship went on. It was apparent that many worshipped as a matter of form, and just as apparent that others were honest and sincere in their deep

devotion. Around the larger room near the wall were chairs partially enclosed, and richly decorated with wood carvings. These were the confessional chairs. In these the priests sat and outside the confessors of their sins knelt while they poured into the good father's ear all their wrongs and all their guilt. One chair was occupied when we entered, and it was the one most richly decorated, our guide desired especially to show it to us, and asked us to wait until the two women then kneeling had finished confessing. They were soon through, and each one in turn kissed the priest's hand and departed. We then took our turn at the chair, but did not confess.

The organ next attracted our attention. It is not so large as the one in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, but forms, nevertheless, a very imposing monument in the very center of the room. The wood-carvings were beautiful. There is but one criticism I can offer: they are too rich, too plentiful, but are in keeping with the stone carvings on the outside of the building. There was a time when the church by its numerous orders had full control of affairs not only in the city, but in the whole republic, but enlightenment gradually came to the people.

CHURCH LOSING POWER.

They objected to the tyranny of the orders and the church, and her power was wrested from her, the monks were expelled from the republic, and the property of the church confiscated. But still the priests have much power, especially among the lower people, but events are moving on, enlightenment is coming, and as sure as time continues Mexico will gradually break from the chains that have kept her down for centuries, and take her place among the enlightened and advanced nations of the earth.

But the most interesting, and to the lower classes the most sacred church in the whole republic, is the richly decorated shrine at Guadalupe. There is a history, too, rather a legend attached to it, which I must tell you.

CHERISHED LEGEND.

It was in 1531, when an Indian convert on his way to hear the gospel preached by the Franciscan monks, passed by a hill about three miles from the City of Mexico. The hill rises abruptly out of the valley, and in this way is similar to several other hills larger and smaller in the neighborhood. On reaching the eastern side of the hill the Indian heard strains of music, like the notes of beautiful birds. He stood and listened, not knowing exactly from whence the sounds came, but was soon astonished beyond measure to see, standing in the air before him, a beautiful lady surrounded by clouds tinged with the colors of the rainbow. The lady spoke to Juan for such was the Indian's name, and commanded him to build a temple on this spot in which he and all his race might seek her in time of trouble. She further informed him that she was the Virgin Mary, mother of the true God. "Do to me," she continued, "tell him what you have seen, and tell him further that it is my wish that a church be built here for me." Juan sought the bishop, and after considerable trouble succeeded in gaining admission, but the good man did not take much stock in the Indian's story and soon dismissed him without satisfaction. On returning home, however, Juan passed again by the hill and again saw the vision. He told of the lady to choose another messenger, but she told him not to be deceived, but return next day to the episcopal residence and again deliver his message. The Indian did so, and this time received more attention. The bishop told him that if the lady appeared again he was to ask a sign. With this Juan departed, and the bishop had two servants follow him. When he approached the hill the men lost

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At first, easy to cure.

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sight of him suddenly, and though they searched a long time were unable to find him, and so returned with word to the bishop. In the meantime Juan was again in vision. He told the lady that the bishop desired a sign, and was answered, that a sign would be given, and that he was to return next morning. Much elated at this he returned home, but found there a relative very ill, so ill that next morning Juan could not leave. The sickness still continuing Juan remained at home several days, and finally, as the sick person neared his end, with a sad heart the Indian went for a priest to hear the confession, but the road led by the hill, and fearful of again meeting the vision, Juan was going another way, when near a spring which still bubbles up, the vision again appeared. She was not vexed, neither did she upbraid his disobedience, but informed him that at that moment his relative was well. She also said that he could have the sign required, and told him to go to the top of the hill, and find there some roses which he was to take to the bishop. As the hill was very dry, and scarcely anything growing on it, the Indian disbelieved, but nevertheless climbed up as directed, when to his utter astonishment he saw a beautiful bunch of roses in full bloom. Gathering them he put them in his tilma, a coarse cloth worn over the shoulders, and hastened to the bishop. This time he was received immediately. He related his story, and to prove his words opened his tilma and the flowers fell to the floor. Now occurred what astonished not only the bishop but the Indian as well. It was seen that on this coarse cloth, there was imprinted in some way, a picture of the vision, a picture of a beautiful woman. The bishop took the cloth from the Indian's neck, and falling upon his knees spent some time in prayer. The chapel was built, and today stands the fourth one erected, the richest church in Mexico. Over twenty-five tons of silver bullion was used in its decoration and ornamentation, and every year thousands of Indians from all over the republic come there to worship and receive comfort. The original picture, on the original tilma is kept in the principal altar.

At the spring, too, which is now looked upon as containing holy water, there is a neat little chapel, and at all hours of the day worshippers are going in and out, taking a drink of the water. Another chapel much visited stands on the hill where the roses grew, and the rocks around it, in fact all the rocks on the hill, a kind of soapstone, are considered medicinal and are sold at a high price. It would be safe to say that every year tons of this soap stone are eaten by the sick, who come here to be cured.

At the time of our visit there were many worshippers, all Indians, some of whom were kneeling at the door, others on the sidewalk and others still far down the street. It is said that many will kneel as soon as they enter the street that leads to the church, and upon their knees bleeding and lacerated, will crawl to the altar. Many were drinking out of the bubbling spring, and others still worshipping at the shrine. We had as a guide the proprietor of the Juarez hotel, a German, who seemed somewhat regardless of the religious feelings of the people, so strong was his disbelief. To one a poor Indian, apparently steeped in sins, and humbled to the dust, kneeling and praying before the image of the Virgin, and who through utter exhaustion was unable to hold his arms outstretched, he bent down and whispered in a snuff and commanding voice: "Man, hold out your arms. Do you think the Virgin will forgive you if you double them up and rest them in that way?" Without looking up, the poor fellow with great effort stretched out his arms again to full length, and held them there until we passed in front of him and he saw we were visitors, and not in authority. He then doubled them back to a more easy position.

On the 15th, late in the afternoon, we saw a large crowd around us as we had in Provo the day we started on our journey, we left Mexico on the east, taking our course towards the two great volcanic peaks, Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, the smoking mountains and the white lady, both now covered half-way down their base with a coating of snow.

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CATHOLIC CHURCH GAINS

According to the Catholic directory, just issued, the Roman Catholic population of the United States is 10,742,857, a growth during the year of 645,312. The figures were furnished by the chancellors of the different dioceses.

The statistics for 1901 show there are in the Catholic church in the United States thirteen archbishops, one of whom is a cardinal, and eighty bishops. The number of priests is 11,987, of whom 3,910 are members of religious orders, and 8,377 are secular clergymen. There are 6,127 churches with resident priests, 2,518 missions with churches, and 1,774 chapels.

There are eight Catholic universities and seventy-six seminaries, in which 3,395 candidates for the priesthood are being educated. The colleges for boys number 182, and academies for girls 677. In the 3,812 parochial schools 903,980 boys and girls are pupils. The 247 orphan asylums shelter 35,084 orphans, and the charitable institutions number 385. In all the Catholic institutions in the United States there are 1,655,632 children.

The archdiocese of New York, over which Archbishop Corrigan presided, is the most populous and the richest

Catholic see in the United States. The Catholic population is given at 1,200,000. It has one archbishop, one bishop, 680 priests—487 secular and 193 members of religious orders—263 churches, 157 with 125 students for the priesthood; 11 190 parochial schools, with 49,339 scholars, 6 orphan asylums containing 2,196 orphans, 64 charitable institutions, and 71,023 children in Catholic institutions.

In the diocese of Brooklyn, which is made up of the whole of Long Island, there is a Catholic population of 800,000.—New York World.

A Good Thing.

German Syrup is the special prescription of Dr. A. Boesche, a celebrated German Physician, and is acknowledged to be one of the most fortunate discoveries in Medicine. It quickly cures Coughs, Colds and all Lung troubles of the severest nature, removing as it does, the cause of the affection and leaving the parts in a strong and healthy condition. It is not an experimental medicine, but has stood the test of years, giving satisfaction in every case, which its rapidly increasing sale every season confirms. Two million bottles sold annually. Boesche's German Syrup was introduced in the United States in 1881, and is now sold in every town and village in the civilized world. Three doses will relieve any ordinary cough. Price 75 cents. Get Green's Prize Almanac. For sale at A. C. Smith's Drug Store.

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But since 1895 they have not manufactured sufficient to supply all the demands of their justly celebrated line of Harvesting Machines. It is with pleasure we announce that the Woods Company, also the American Grass Twine Company are now manufacturing the popular

"MINNIE BINDER"

and we have contracted, and will have an ample supply for the demand in Utah and Idaho for 1901. We also refer with pride to the fact that we are equally well supplied with

Champion Six Roller Force Feed Binders.

These two machines with PLYMOUTH RED TAG TWINE will meet all the requirements of those needing Binders and Twine.

We want your orders—Please send them in or hold waiting a call from our representative.

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A beautiful line of Etoile du Nord Ginghams, in 10-yard Dress lengths, will go in this Sale, per piece, at

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Special line of French Ginghams, worth 20c, in Sale only

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At the following prices:

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