

nobility, which are even more splendid and costly than those of the court of Madrid or all other European kingdoms; for they spare neither gold, nor silver, nor precious stones, nor gold bracelets, nor the finest silks of China, to enrich them.

To enhance the natural beauty of the horses there are the harnesses studded with precious stones, the silver horse-shoes, and whatever can make their appearance more magnificent and sumptuous.

There is not a single street in any city of the world that can be compared to those of the city of Mexico in cleanliness, and much less in the magnificence of the stores which line them on both sides. The silverware stores, above all, are worth admiring for the exquisite and valuable works of art which one finds there.

The viceroy sent to New Spain in 1625, wishing to make the king of Spain an appropriate present, ordered a parrot to be made of pure gold, silver, and precious stones studded so perfectly to represent the feathers, that the workmanship alone was estimated at about 15,000 ducats.

At the Dominican convent there is a silver chandelier with three hundred arms for one taper each, and one hundred small oil lamps placed at the end of some of these arms; a work so rare

and perfect that it has been valued at 40,000 ducats.

To what has already been said regarding the prettiness of the women, I may add that they enjoy so much freedom and are so fond of gambling that there are among them some who find one day with its night short when they are playing a "manecilla de primera." And they are such ardent lovers of gambling that some of them publicly invite men to come into their homes to take a hand at cards.

Men and women spend considerable sums of money in their wearing apparel, which generally is made of the finest silk.

Precious stones and pearls are so extensively worn that even the female slaves have their jewels, and none of them would go into the street without their pearl necklace or bracelets and their diamond earrings.

The creoles dress so lavishly and their carriage and gestures are so charming, that there are numbers of Spaniards, even among the most prominent, who desert their wives to follow these mulattos. Ordinarily they carry a skirt made of the finest silk embroidered with gold and silver. Their gowns are like jackets, they have tails, but no sleeves, and are tied with gold and silver ribbons. The richest women wear belts embroidered with gold and studded with diamonds and

emeralds. Their shoes are very high, with several soles adorned with silver nails with big heads, and their hair is charmingly combed, and they wear round their forehead a gold ribbon with love-phrases engraved on it.

The residents of this city are extremely fond of the pleasures of life, but also there is no one city in the world whose inhabitants are more devout and kind towards the ministers of the church. They all do their utmost to please the nuns and friars and to enrich the convents. Some build rich altars and chapels for the saints of their devotion; others bring gold crowns for the Virgin; some build convents or repair them; others give to this or that monastery a monthly rent of several thousand ducats.

I cannot pass without mentioning a very devout and liberal gentleman who lived at the time of my residence in this country, and who distinguished himself by his prodigality. He was Alonso Cuellar, and it was said of him that his house was paved with gold bricks, to give an idea of his enormous wealth.

This man Cuellar built a nunnery for the nuns of San Francisco, in which he spent more than 30,000 ducats, and then assigned to it a rent of 2,000 ducats for its maintenance.

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There are only fifty churches and convents for friars and nuns, but they are the best I have ever seen. Roofs and ceilings are gilded, the altars are made of marble, the steps of the finest Brazil wood, and, in a word, they are so rich that the cheapest of the altars costs more than 20,000 ducats. Besides the ornaments, the jewels of the images, and the chandeliers, are so valuable that they would enrich the nation that could possess them.

About the friars and nuns I will only say that they enjoy much more liberty than in Europe.

It happened during my residence here that the friars of La Merced had a meeting to elect a superior. Opinions were expressed, arguments followed, insults ensued, and finally their reverences, after a tremendous quarrel in which cuffs and kicks were exchanged right and left, produced their knives and the end of all that was that a number of friars were fatally stabbed. The viceroy was informed, and he personally, accompanied by a number of guards, intervened and called the friars to order. until the superior was elected.

It is customary for the friars to visit the nuns and pass the day in their company, hearing their

music and songs and eating their delicacies, not less than drinking their choicest wines.

The most prominent men send their daughters to the convent that they may be trained in needlework and music. These daughters are also taught to recite monologues, act dramas, and to dance religious dances. In the fiestas of San Juan and Navidad especially, dances and dramas are given in the churches, so that people are often at odds and ends as to where is the best music and the prettiest dancing girls.

In a word, all that may delight the senses is found in the city of Mexico; even at the churches, which should be destined to adore the Supreme Being, something is found to please the men.

The biggest plaza is that of El Mercado, which is very beautiful. On one of its sides there are a number of arches or porches under which one can go without receiving the rain or the rays of the sun. Opposite these arches is the viceroy's palace, and in the neighborhood is the beautiful street which they call "Las Platerias," where, in less than one hour one can see jewels to the amount of several millions of dollars. San Agustín street is also rich and beautiful. There the merchants in silks have established their stores. Tacuba and El Aguila streets are equally two of the most interesting. The latter bears that name on account of a stone idol placed at the corner of

said street, which represents an eagle and has been there since long before the Conquest. The richest men of the city live in Tacuba street, including the Marquis del Valle, a scion of Hernan Cortes.

The young men of the city go every day, after 4 o'clock, some of them on horses, some others in carriages, to a delightful place which they call Alameda, where there are places planted with enormous trees that the rays of the sun never pass their branches. There are seen every day more than two thousand private carriages occupied by noblemen and ladies and by rich people. The noblemen go to see their "damas," followed by a dozen or so of black slaves all of them wearing very costly liveries, in which silk, silver, gold, and precious stones are most in evidence. The young ladies and matrons are followed by their beautiful female slaves who walk by the side of their carriages. The viceroy's suite, which now and then goes to the Alameda, is perhaps even more numerous and magnificent than that of the Spanish king, his lord and master.

In the Paseo they sell ice waters and dulces, the former served in the finest crystal glasses.

But it often happens that these paseos have a tragic end, for the beaux, jealous of their sweet-hearts will not allow anybody to talk to them, nor even look at them, whence they draw their

swords or daggers, and attack their supposed rivals. In one moment thousands of swords and poniards are in evidence. Some want to avenge the dead or wounded, while others fight on the side of the murderer, who is finally taken to the nearest church, where he feels secure, in that the viceroy himself could not take him out to punish him.

I will not end without stating that water passes under all the streets of the city, so much so that one cannot dig a hole without finding the liquid. The buildings suffer much from this condition of things. During my visit to this country I observed that they were rebuilding the San Agustin convent, for the entire building was sinking. The columns were already so low that new foundations were placed under them, and I was informed that this was the third time they had built new columns upon the old ones, which had already sunk.

Mexican Herald.

The American Boy in Mexico

It is safe to say that very few people realize what a great future the American boy has before him in Mexico. He is really beginning where his father leaves off, with the advantage that he

has been born to many things that his father has learned only by bitter experience and many hard knocks. The American boy born and educated here is both Mexican and American. He has all the hardiness and venturesome spirit of his American ancestors, all the tendency to initiate, experiment, to make himself master. These qualities are what have made his fathers influential in the developing of modern Mexico. But the boy has what his father has not, or has only in part, and that in an artificial manner. He has a sympathy with the life, manners, customs and ways of thought of the Mexicans. He is prepared to enter fully into their lives and to become part of the Mexican nation. He speaks the language like a native. He can thus meet the American and the Mexican on equal terms and is the link between them. He has in his hands the means to become a power in the land. The history of Mexico city is intimately associated with the names of children of the few foreigners who lived here in the first half of the last century. The Joneses, Mackintoshes, Crows (Creels,) Morans, etc. need only be cited to call forth a flood of memories. If these few foreigners, through their descendants, have had such an influence upon the history of the country, what may be expected of the many foreign children now being educated here!