

hot strong coffee, and the invigorating provisions we had brought with us, soon banished the sense of utter weariness which had come over us as we toiled down the mountain side.

"After two hours rest, we started for Amecameca, and reached the station about seven p. m. well pleased with our varied and unusual experiences.

"Mr. Perez was there to welcome us, and upon comparing notes, informed us that we had broken the amateur record for the ascent. Whether Mr. Perez knows all previous records is doubtful, but the climb was evidently a good performance.

"The wonderful and constantly changing scenes and views will live for a long time in our memories, and we shall look back at the already almost forgotten hardships as mere incidents, and the trip as one of the most interesting of our lives.

"The effects of the altitude were frequently distressing for a short time, but wore off rapidly with short rests. People in good health need have no fear in making the ascent."

Climbing Ixtaccihuatl.

There is a fascination about Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, twin white-clad sentinel mountains, overlooking Mexico's picturesque capital, which seems to exert its influence to a greater or less degree on all visitors to this Land of the Sun.

Perhaps it is the novelty of seeing a snow-capped mountain in a country commonly designated as tropical, or the fact that within such easy distance and so readily accessible are two of the highest mountains in the world, that inspires the visitor to a determination to climb their loftiest summits. After inquiry and careful consideration, however, the prospective mountain-climber, usually decides in favor of Popocatepetl, for many climb that mountain every year, while, although hundreds have made the attempt, those who have reached the summit of Ixtaccihuatl can be counted upon the fingers of one's hand.

Popocatepetl is more kindly to the climber. It affords a ranch-house part of the way up the mountain where the traveller may stay over night. Its sides are not so precipitous; women can make the ascent. Its snows are deep and soft enough to provide an easy footing, and once on the top, one can coast down again to the snow line on an improvised toboggan made of mat woven of grasses.

Ixtaccihuatl, on the other hand, offers no such advantages in favor of the traveller. Its sides are steep and covered with ice packed down through the centuries as hard as rock. Huge crevasses, partially covered with ice and snow, seam the face of the mountain—lurking death-traps to the unwary,—all combining to discourage the most hardy and fearless. Only six known parties have succeeded in scaling the perilous heights to the summit. The last of these parties was headed by Joseph Dedi, a hardy and experienced Swiss mountain-climber and an enthusiastic member of the Swiss Alpine Club, which makes the ascent the more notable, especially since this seasoned and skilful man was free to confess that the scaling of Ixtaccihuatl offered him the most difficult task in that line which he has ever undertaken. His account of his experiences and of his impressions of the "Sleeping Lady" are most interesting.

"I have lived in the Alps nearly all my life," says Mr. Dedi "therefore, beautiful scenery is no new thing to me, but never in my life have my eyes been treated to anything equal to the scene which spread out before us on that memorable Sunday morning, when with infinite toil we finally reached the summit of Ixtaccihuatl.

"In Switzerland, when you climb a lofty,

snow-clad mountain and look out across immense fields of other mountains of nearly the same altitude, the sensation of height is completely lost. On the summit of Ixtaccihuatl, however, the feeling is entirely different. There one stands on one of the high places of the world. He is in the sky—among the clouds. The earth seems to have fallen miles away from him, leaving him suspended midway between earth and sky. There is no living thing about him, not even a bird on the wing. The eternal silence closes in on him like the muffling folds of a blanket. He looks down at his feet and he seems to have come to the jumping-off place. Almost straight down, in such a sheer descent that it nearly takes away his breath, lies the world in miniature, a beautiful panorama remarkably distinct and clear-cut, almost magnified in its detail through the rarefied atmosphere.

"It was a sensation and a scene such as I shall never forget, although our stay on the summit was necessarily short, on account of the keen discomforts due to the great altitude, and the intense heat of the blinding sun radiating from the snow and ice all around us."

PART SECOND.

The story of the ascent as told by Mr. Dedi is one of graphic interest. The party which

left Mexico City one Saturday morning for Amecameca, at the foot of the twin mountains, consisted of six strong and hardy men. Five of these reached the summit, the other having succumbed to the "mountain sickness" at the very outset. With each a guide and equipped with saddle animals and pack-horses for their provisions, the party left Amecameca and by sundown had arrived at the famous old cave part of the way up the side of the mountain and about half an hour's ride below the foot of the first glacier.

There they stopped for the night, but were unable to sleep, on account of the intense cold, the thermometer during the night falling to 2 degrees below zero, Centigrade. By 5.30 o'clock in the morning they were moving again, and after half-an-hour's ride were compelled to dismount, leaving their horses behind and facing the steep half-day's climb to the summit.

"Although the guides had at the outset emphatically declared that they knew the mountain perfectly," says Mr. Dedi, "yet, when we came to the foot of the first glacier, they admitted that they had never been there before, and were as ignorant of the way as were we. Their scanty clothes and bare feet, shod only in sandals, incapacitated them for the work of chopping out steps from the solid ice with hatchets; so

putting them to the rear, we proceeded the rest of the way on our own resources.

"M. Bachasse was soon overcome with the mountain sickness and we were compelled to send him back with two of the guides, all of whom begged for the opportunity of going back. We went very slowly, cutting steps in the ice, for every foot of the way on which there was a very light layer of snow. Many times we came upon yawning crevasses, some of them so deep that blocks of ice thrown into their depths seemed to find no bottom. These we avoided by making detours, and finally at nearly noon we found ourselves approaching the summit, thoroughly exhausted and giddy.

"I have scaled many high mountains, but I have never before made a trip fraught with so much toil and discomfort. The pulsations of our hearts averaged 145 per minute. Our heads seemed bursting and our eyes falling from their sockets. We moved slowly and with the greatest care, that no accelerated motion might place a greater tax upon our already sorely tried hearts. The sun burned down upon us like flames shooting from a blast furnace. Its rays, reflected from the ice at our feet, leaped into our faces like fires from the bottomless pit. The skin peeled from our faces and hands, our lips cracked, and blood trickled from our ears and nostrils,

yet withal the view was so grand and our satisfaction so complete, that we forgot our discomforts in the triumph of the moment; and should I ever return to Mexico, I shall seize the first opportunity of making the trip again.

"We coasted down the mountain standing, each man secured to the other by a rope, and in three hours had reached the cave again, whence we returned easily to the railway station. The photographs which I took I shall send to the Swiss Alpine Club where they will be regarded as a most interesting souvenir of the ascent of a glacial mountain in the tropics."

G. E. TOWLE.
in "Modern Mexico."

The Patio

The distinctive feature of a Mexican house is the patio. This is generally a quadrangle around which the house is built. All the rooms face the patio and all enter it, unless the building is large enough to have two or more patios. But even in this case all the rooms open into one or other of the patios. There are some buildings in Mexico which contain as many as half a dozen patios, all of which are very large. The inquiring tourist or antiquarian, wandering about

through the older portions of the city, may accidentally, on entering an unpretentious gateway, suddenly find himself in one of these. If so, he will certainly be astonished at the vast extent covered by the building. If it is a real old-fashioned house, dating back two or three centuries, and originally the residence of some rich nobleman of the days of Spanish greatness in the New World, he may find himself wandering about from one patio to another and through one great archway after another. Everywhere he will find evidence of past luxury and opulence. Many of these ancient buildings were once church property. Often a church contained several chapels clustered round the main building, and, in addition to these, monasteries for the monks and the nuns. An idea of the vast extent of some of these buildings may be gained from the statement that the Franciscan Monastery covered more than a hundred buildings, half of them very large, and counting among them three of the largest hotels of the city, three churches and more than a score of the largest and most thriving business houses. The central patio of this immense building is a veritable garden and is well known as the garden of the Jardin Hotel. Around this great patio were arranged the cells of the monks. If reports are true, they were cheerless enough in the old days. But now they have been turned into very com-

fortable rooms for tourists, who often feast and make merry where the monks whipped themselves and did penance that they might get the better of the lustful desires of the flesh.

The patio is of Moorish origin and perhaps had its origin in that love of privacy which has been one of the strongest characteristics of all Eastern nations, and of none more so than of the Moors themselves. In Spain and here in Mexico, at no distant date, the patio was the only place of recreation open to the ladies of the house. Hence, it was as large as the owner could afford to make it, and as luxurious as his purse could permit. Therefore, many of the patios of Mexican houses are real works of art. The entrances are formed of great sculptured arches and rows of massive Roman or slender Grecian columns, supporting balcony-like roofs, protecting the handsome corridors which run all round the inside of the patio itself. Outside the balcony the patio forms a great quadrangle, whose floor is generally some four to six feet lower than the main floors of the house. In this patio there is generally a circular fountain of running water. Often this is made of cut stone, sometimes sculptured in a highly artistic manner. In the houses of the rich, and often of the middle class, the patios are filled with beautiful flowers and trees; and one may be surprised, on entering one of these patios for the first time, to find

himself in a grove of banana plants, whose luxuriant leaves tower a dozen feet above his head.

The patio gives a distinctive character to the Mexican house. In a well-arranged building it allows the sun and the air to enter all the rooms. The inhabitants may sit in their own corridors and enjoy all the comforts of a beautiful flower garden in the perfect seclusion which the four walls of the building give.

In Mexico City the middle class seldom live in small houses as in the little towns of the United States, or in flats, as they do there in the larger cities. "Vivienda" is a name applied to a number of rooms sufficient for one family. It may contain from three or four to twenty rooms. To get to the vivienda you generally enter the great zaguan, or coach door, pass through a corridor and find yourself in a large, square patio. Around this are arranged the viviendas. A vivienda generally occupies one side of the patio; and according to the size of the building, there may be from one to a dozen viviendas. Thus there are little colonies living side by side and shut out from the noise and bustle of the outside world. In a truly Mexican house of this kind the society is generally very congenial.

As already stated the possibilities of the patio for ornamental and decorative purposes are very

great. It is generally surrounded by a corridor between which and the patio proper there is an iron railing some four to five feet high. Above this railing are places for many flower-pots. Some seven to ten feet high and connecting the railing with the inner walls of the house are iron bars from which hanging pots for flowers are suspended. Then in the stone floor of the patio pit, if we may so call it—for it is much like the pit of a theatre—there is room for hundreds of flowers and ornamental trees. Thus the patio may be, and often is, made a veritable forest of flowers and trees.

The complexion of the patio varies very much according to locality. In the hot lands it is often filled with flowers and trees of the luxuriant tropical flora, palm and banana plants, with their broad leaves, giving it a most picturesque look.

The patio is an institution of warm countries, and it would feel as little at home in the land of snow as would the banana plant and the palm tree; yet those who have enjoyed all the pleasures it has to give would not exchange it for the most luxuriously constructed house of the North; for, like many other things in this land of sunshine, it grows upon one.

J. H. CORNYN.
in "Modern Mexico."

Mexico as Seen by Bishop Johnson

My mission to Mexico was purely in connection with the church. I visited Chihuahua, Aguascalientes, the city of Mexico and many other places.

There is a movement of purely Mexican origin to establish Episcopal churches in Mexico, and they very often need the services of a bishop. In this connection I made my way into the interior of the country. From the city of Mexico I went to Cojutta, in the sugar-cane country. Civilisation there dates back five hundred years. One rarely sees a wagon; the beast of burden is the burro. From this place we went to Iguala, in the heart of the Hot Country. We needed no covering at night; indeed, it was pleasanter to sleep in the open air.

HIS MANY JOURNEYS

At Iguala we got horses and guides and went thirty miles into the mountains to Teloloapau, in the state of Guerrero. This trip took two days. At the end of the first day we found ourselves in the Indian village of Cuatepec, an exceedingly primitive place. The people live in reed

huts and have a rather remarkable industry. They make bags out of the maguey fibre. The bags are used to hold grain or for horses' packs. The people in this country have no beds. They sleep on pallets, or straw mats. Our food was the best in the land, but of the rudest sort. We ate tortillas and highly seasoned meats. Teloloapau is an important town, and we were met outside the village by a cavalcade of young men—pure Indians. The house we stayed in over night was one of the most magnificent in that part of the country. It was adobe, and we all slept in one room—a room without windows. In this village the women carried water on their heads to and from the central well in the plaza, where everyone gathered to gossip.

The women have a deft little way of arranging their rebosos so as to form a pad on the top of their heads, on which to rest the water urn. The men wore linen suits, zarapes and leather sandals. There were absolutely no marks of present day civilization there other than a lot of trumpery cheap finery, made in the country, probably to sell to these very natives.

Last year the Sonora News Company gave an exhibition of rare articles. In this collection was a curious wash bowl and pitcher made of gourds and covered with a pigment, exactly like the Chinese and Japanese lacquer work. In talking

with the editor of The Mexican Herald I discovered that these things were made in the Hot Country of Mexico.

SIMILARITY OF LANGUAGES

Someone took some Chinese and Japanese workers into the country and found that they could communicate with the Indians who make the lacquer work. Many words were the same in both languages. The fact that both people have a similar language and similar arts shows unquestionably that they have the same origin. I read in a magazine last summer that some archives of the fourth century belonging to the Chinese government had been discovered. They contained accounts of travel by certain navigators to this continent. No doubt there is some connection in these two facts.

I was sorry that I could not go to Mitla, where the unearthing of ancient ruins has attracted widespread attention. The ruins are undoubtedly of Asiatic origin. The decorations are the same and some of the hieroglyphics are alike. They have discovered the same triangle scheme of decoration, with its top cut off, familiar to many, through pictures of Egyptian excavations and monuments.

FLOATING ISLANDS

I had a very interesting trip to the Floating Gardens outside of the city of Mexico. I went to Xochimilco, a town where there is a big lake dotted with small islands. The produce from these gardens is brought through the Viga canal to the city of Mexico.

We went on board a small steam yacht through all the channels of the lake. The islands are from thirty to fifty feet square. A few of them are as large as an acre.

The islands are curiously formed. They are begun by a wood lattice work. The rich earth is then taken up from the bed of the lake and put on the lattice work, and then Lombardy poplars are planted in the earth. These trees are very tall and do not keep the sunshine away, while their roots, strong and exceedingly long, pin down the land to the bed of the lake. Sometimes these roots are cut away and the islands are towed to a distant part of the lake.

The peons, or Indians, raise the produce—flowers or vegetables—and the islands have been in their possession many centuries, handed down from father to son. They are beautiful. To float about among these islands is like a trip into Fairyland.

In the house of one my friend's compadres,

where we took lunch, there were three figures of our Lord fastened to a post for the scourging. They are ghastly figures, carved in wood with real air and clots of blood; and the flesh is torn and covered with sores. There were several paintings of the Virgin of Guadalupe, too. At first I thought the figures were a collection—there were saints among them—but the people explained to me that they were family possessions, handed down for many generations, and the origin of them is entirely forgotten. No doubt their ancestors had kept them in their homes as a constant reminder of the sufferings of our Lord.

The people of Mexico are kindly. They are soft and easy-going; they almost make a vice of their virtues. Their pleasant address and courtesy make them delightful companions. Their aspirations are moderate. The sense of possession is strong in them—to have a fine hat, a gold-laced pair of pink trousers—these are the greatest of their ambitions.

But all this will change. They are going to school, learning to read, and some day they will realize their power to vote and make use of the ballot to institute reforms. President Díaz is a magnificent man, with a broad outlook. His method of handling people amounts to finesse, and the country has made wonderful progress under his guiding hand.

MEXICAN RAILWAYS.

From the mileage and traffic point of view, the great railway of Mexico is the Mexican Central, whose system to-day extends over 4,807 kilometers, equal to 2,985 miles, the main lines being from Mexico City to El Paso or Ciudad Juarez on the Rio Grande frontier; from Guadalajara towards the Pacific coasts at Manzanillo; from Monterrey to Tampico on the Mexican Gulf, and from Aguascalientes to San Luis Potosí and Tampico.

This great system had its origin in the concession dated September 8, 1880, authorizing the construction of a railway from Mexico City to Leon, touching at Querétaro, Celaya, Salamanca, Guanajuato, Irapuato and Silao; from Leon to Paso del Norte, now Ciudad Juarez, touching at Aguascalientes, Zacatecas and Chihuahua; and from any point on one of these lines to Guadalajara and a port on the Pacific coasts.

Mexico's first necessity was connection with the United States by rail, where there is an unlimited market for her products. Direct traffic with the north was indispensable to the expansion of the commerce and the development of the products of the country, and therefore of its elements of wealth and prosperity. To reach the commercial development was the idea which

decided the construction of the Mexican Central railway; the last rail of which was in place on the 8th of March, 1884, connecting the capital of the republic with the frontier of the United States at a point 1971 kilometers or 1225 miles distant.

Mexican Herald.