

CHAPTER III

Maximilian Empire—Early days of Miramar—Napoleon's ambition—Carlota of Belgium—Acceptance of Mexican Crown—Arrival at Veracruz—Reception by people—Troubles and difficulties—Republic *v.* Monarchy—Divine right of Kings—Defeat of Maximilian—Benito Juarez and the death sentence—Treachery of Manuel Lopez—Cruelty of Escobedo—Execution of Maximilian.

ONE of the saddest incidents recorded in the pages of Mexican history is the execution of the Emperor Maximilian. Apologists have attempted to prove that the removal of this unfortunate prince by death was necessary for the welfare of the State; but it was in my opinion as unnecessary as was the act committed by our own people in executing King Charles I. in 1649 or by that of France in the assassination of King Louis Seize in 1793.

It is not necessary to believe in the Divine right of kings, the insistence upon which doctrine in actual practice mainly led to Charles' death and James II.'s abdication, to sternly disapprove of the violence offered to those who have merely blundered in their office without any criminal intent. No one who is acquainted with the true history—brief and bloody as it proved to be—of Maximilian can pretend that he committed any criminal act which could be deemed worthy of the death penalty. This is no place to argue the theories of Milton and Algernon Sydney and Rousseau any more than the philosophy of Hobbes upon the subject of Divine Right. Let those who will debate the matter; Maximilian himself certainly cherished no delusions upon the question, and he was from the first against accepting the proffered throne of Mexico at all. He, however, was a mere puppet in the hands of his proud and ambitious wife and the placid instrument in those of the intriguing Napoleon III., allowing himself to be

used for the aggrandisement of the one and the gratification of the mad political ambitions of the other. Like older and better and wiser men, the luckless Austrian prince fell to the ground, but he also brought down his unwise councillors with him.

It is a sad and sorrowful story, that of the second attempt at Empire in Mexico, the first, viz. that instituted by Yturbide, ending in that individual's death at the hands of his subjects, as did the second also.

Maximilian was born in 1832, and was the younger brother of the present Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria. He married the beautiful daughter of King Leopold I. of the Belgians, Princess Charlotte Amélie ("Carlota"), and a sister therefore of the reigning King, Leopold II., of the Belgians. He was related by birth and by marriage to half the reigning Sovereigns of Europe, viz. the Emperor of Austria (his brother), Queen Victoria of Great Britain (his cousin), the King of the Belgians (his brother-in-law), the Queen of Spain (his cousin), the King of Italy, the King of Sweden and Norway and the Emperor of Germany.

At the time that Napoleon III. offered him the crown of Mexico, the Archduke Maximilian was living peacefully and contentedly with his handsome wife at the Castle of Miramar, on the beautiful Adriatic Sea, a perfectly ideal place and one which it is easy to understand his reluctance in leaving. The royal pair had already had some little experience of a Court, since, for two years, they had been Viceroy and Vicereine of Lombardy, that troublesome province which Austria had then under her thralldom, but which, as history relates, was subsequently made part of the Kingdom of Sardinia as the result of Magenta and Solferino.

At the Court of Milan, Maximilian and Charlotte had lived so extravagantly that the Emperor of Austria found it expedient to remove them, and it was therefore all the more tempting to be offered a real crown elsewhere, although it was that of a country absolutely unknown to either of them, thousands of miles distant and inhabited by a people as different in their habits, appearance and inclinations as the opposite poles. However, all arguments against the folly of accepting the proposals of Louis Napoleon, which were

urged both by the Emperor Francis Joseph and other well-wishers, failed against the expressed desires of his ambitious and glory-loving wife. So to Mexico went Maximilian, having previously paid a series of farewell visits to the Courts of Europe, where he and his newly-made Empress were received with full royal honours and lavishly entertained. The two Sovereigns, having left Europe on April 14th, 1864, arrived at Veracruz on May 29th, and were received with extreme coolness by the people. Making their way to Mexico City, they entered their capital in state a few days later, and were solemnly crowned in the Cathedral, having previously been anointed with full pontifical ceremony at their Castle of Miramar, in the presence of the Members of the Mexican Assembly of Notables.

Troubles commenced almost immediately to accumulate thickly around the doomed royal house. Neither Maximilian nor the Empire was ever recognised by the United States of America, and fully two-thirds of his own "subjects" repudiated him and clung tenaciously to the Republic. It seemed easier for Napoleon to place an Emperor upon the throne of the country, which he fancied he had subdued, than to keep him there. Immediately the French troops were withdrawn, just as might have been expected, Maximilian found himself surrounded by enemies and almost destitute of friends. The Empress had gone to Europe to raise both money and sympathy; but she failed in both. Maximilian, after being deserted first by one General and then by another, finally found himself a prisoner shut up at Querétaro, with at least 20,000 men arrayed against him, and not five hundred heart and soul for him.

On May 15th, 1867, the end of his brief and inglorious Empire came; for on that day the successful Republican, General Escobedo, took Querétaro, assisted by the base treachery of Maximilian's own commanding officer, Colonel Miguel López. I am assured by reliable authorities that this same López was literally a second Judas, for he sold his Emperor for the sum of 20,000 silver pesos, which were actually presented to him on the day that the town of Querétaro fell to General Escobedo. Furthermore, I am assured that, in paying over the stipulated amount of blood-money to

him, the deputy to whom was assigned the uncongenial task, carefully refrained from touching the hand of Colonel López, the betrayer. One can readily understand that.

Maximilian formally surrendered himself to General Escobedo, by whom he was treated very uncivilly, and even brutally. In company with his two trusty and devoted Generals, Mejia and Miramon, he was summoned in due course to appear before the Court-Martial which had been hastily convened at the Teatro de Yturbide, at Querétaro. The ex-Emperor flatly refused, and in his absence both he and his adherents (who attended the trial) were unanimously condemned to be shot on the following morning, June 15th. The execution was, as a matter of fact, postponed for three or four days, during which time heroic efforts were made to save the life of this unhappy prince; but all unavailingly. President Benito Juárez could have saved him, but would not. Perhaps Porfirio Díaz would have saved him, but could not. It was with Juárez that the final—the only—appeal lay; but the "Indian" President was an obstinate and an unmovable man, deeply incensed against Maximilian personally, and nothing that could be said or done or suggested induced him to swerve for a single moment from his one set purpose.

And so, on the morning of June 19th, 1867, at the foot of a gentle slope of the Cerro de las Campanas, at Querétaro, Maximilian of Austria, in the 35th year of his age, was done to death.

The place where he suffered is visited during the course of the year by thousands of tourists, and seldom is any expression but one of regret at his execution heard to fall from their lips. It is a chapter in the life of the country which ought never to have been written.

CHAPTER IV

Population statistics—Foreigners in Mexico—United States conquests and annexations—Texan Republic—Relations between the sister republics—What the Mexicans owe to the Anglo-Saxon races—Value of American influence in Mexico—Appreciative Mexican comment—Foreigners and their lack of good taste—A plea for better behaviour—An American criticism—Foreigners in Mexico fifty years ago.

ACCORDING to the latest particulars available, and, at the outset, I must confess that census figures are very difficult to obtain from the authorities, and, when obtained, are sometimes unreliable, there were last year (1906) some 65,000 Foreigners in the Republic of Mexico. The nationalities most numerously represented were in the following order, and compare with the total of 57,082 in 1900, the date of the last census.

	Census of 1900.	Figures (esti- mated) 1906.
United States ...	15,265	17,080
Guatemalan ...	5,804	5,460
Other Americans ...	3,379	3,695
Spanish ...	16,258	16,770
French ...	3,976	4,010
British ...	2,845	2,900
German ...	2,565	2,850
Italian ...	2,564	2,700
Other Europeans ...	1,592	5,785
Chinese and Japanese	2,834	3,750
Totals ...	57,082	65,000

It will be observed that while the United States citizens increased to the number of some 1,700, the British hardly moved; while the French, German, and Italian nationalities fluctuated but very little. On the other hand, "Other

Europeans," which include the greatly increased number of residents from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Greece, moved considerably, and on the whole show an augmentation of close on 4,200. I have taken no note of the thousands of United States and other tourists who annually come to Mexico, and of whose movements, except in bulk, the Government officials show no recognition. No doubt the estimated figures will be found to be very "rough," when the careful and systematic Census returns are taken in 1910 and published. But for a fair and average idea, these returns will serve. The entire population of Mexico in 1810, when Baron von Humboldt visited the country, was little over 6,500,000, so that within, say, 90 years, it has practically more than doubled itself, it being in 1900 declared at 13,605,819.

There is very little immigration from Mexico, and with the exception of the Japanese and Chinese, who come over in great numbers with the idea of crossing into the United States, and which they manage to do with or without the cognisance of the American officials, the emigration into the country is inconsiderable. In all probability the Census of 1910 will show a total population of little under 16,000,000, which may not be deemed unsatisfactory.

Let us see how Mexico compares with other Spanish-American Countries in point of population, the area in square miles being considered.

Name of Country.	Population.	Area in Square Miles.
Mexico	13,605,819	767,060
Argentina	4,625,000	1,117,060
Venezuela	2,075,000	599,360
Peru	4,610,000	713,670
Chile	3,147,000	307,683
Uruguay	965,000	72,153
Bolivia	1,853,000	983,980
Columbia	3,879,000	504,770
Brazil	14,334,000	3,218,170

The nearest approach in area, it will be observed, is Peru with 713,670 square miles against Mexico's 767,060, and yet the proportion of the latter's population is 3 to 1. Gigantic

Brazil, with more than 4 times the area, has barely a million more population; while Argentina, with 350,000 more area, has 8,980,819 fewer in population. On the whole, then, while Mexico's great hope is to increase her population, and she offers every encouragement with this ulterior object in view, the Republic stands extremely well in comparison with any other located in the same part of the world.

Once upon a time Mexico was just one-half as big again as she is to-day; there are those who openly express their fear that in due course of time that remaining half will follow where the first went—namely to the United States of America—and become part and parcel of the "Stars and Stripes"; but they have little reason for their apprehensions.

The United States are credited—rightly or wrongly—with once having entertained that tender regard for Mexico which the greedy wolf professed for little Red Riding Hood and her family connections; but whatever ideas in this respect may have prevailed a decade or two ago, it is certain that none but the most friendly feelings between the two neighbouring nations exist to-day; while the community of interests is so fully recognised by both alike as to render any aggressive policy upon the part of either wholly improbable.

From first to last Mexico has ceded to America little less than one million square miles of territory, that is to say more than one-half of what she formerly possessed. Commencing with the separation of Texas, Mexico lost 362,487 square miles. This was in the year 1835, while in February 1848, by the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty, 522,568 square miles were given up, and in December 1853, by the Gadsden Treaty, Mexico abandoned a further 45,535 square miles, or, in all, some 930,590 square miles passed over to the United States, forming by no means the least valuable of her possessions.

The boundary line between the two countries is about the longest frontier in the world, and exceeds 1,833 miles. In years gone by, its delimitation occasioned much trouble, and on more than one occasion it looked as if serious contest would be the outcome. The discovery of valuable mines—or what were then considered valuable—was the main cause, and with considerable cunning the interested parties on the United States side shifted the beacon marks which, other-

wise, stood in favour of the Mexican claims to the ownership. The two Governments proceeded in the well-known diplomatic manner to "settle" the dispute by appointing Commissioners, as does our own beloved Government whenever it finds itself in an awkward predicament. First a convention was concluded at Washington, on July 29th, 1882; but it was not until the middle of 1883 that a preliminary reconnaissance was made by representatives of the two Governments, acting independently of one another. Their reports were pigeonholed, as are the reports of most Commissions all the world over, and nothing came of that convention. Six years later, namely in February 1889, another convention were summoned, but it took exactly seven long years for their Report to be presented, and in April 1896 the boundary question with the United States became *un fait arrangé*.

Since then its utility has been proved upon several occasions, the latest being in May of last year, when a filibustering pioneer and his friends nearly precipitated a row by summoning an American armed force to come across the frontier and help him suppress a riot among the workmen at the mines, which the folly and brutality of his own employees had fostered. I refer more fully to this incident under the heading of Chapter LXXI., devoted to the Mining district of Cananea (Sonora).

Recruits for revolutionary movements have oftentimes been found in America, as, for instance, when Francisco Javier Mina raised the banner of revolt against his own King (of Spain) in 1817, securing the services of 500 Americans to help him; while both Benito Juarez and Porfirio Diaz found sympathy and practical aid in that land of hospitality and refuge, at the time of their greatest need. The United States was, with England, about the first nation to recognise Mexico as an independent country, which event took place in 1825.

The long-brewing trouble between the United States and Mexico commenced by the former inciting—or at least tacitly assisting—Texas to revolt against Mexico, much about the same policy being then pursued as was later on alleged to have been followed in regard to Colombia and Panama. It is perfectly true that the Texans had, by separating from the Republic, established a separate country and a little Republic



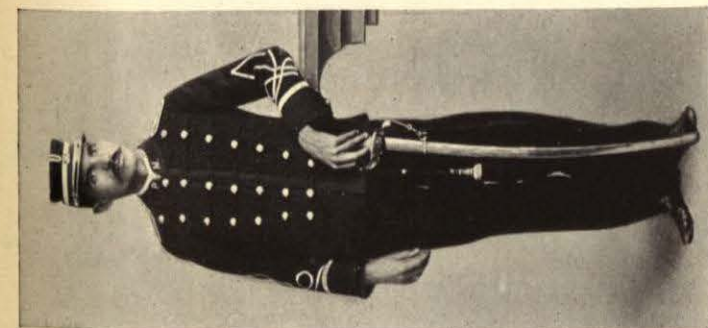
INFANTRY SOLDIER.



SERGEANT OF INFANTRY.



INFANTRY SOLDIER.



MUNICIPAL GUARD.

TYPES OF THE MEXICAN ARMY.—*see pp. 36-40.*

of their own. Perhaps, had America not interfered, the Texans' nine years' separation, brought about under the leadership of an American named Sam Houston, would have automatically terminated by the Mexicans retaking this extremely valuable part of their country. But the United States, as I have said, assisted Texas, not only to tear itself free of Mexico, but to become part of the Union States, being incorporated as one of them in 1844.

Texas alone has an area of some 265,000 square miles and a present population of over 3,000,000. Its agricultural possibilities are unbounded.

The same political move was made in regard to California, which, under express orders from Washington, was incited to revolt against Mexico in 1846, and did so with good effect, the inciter again incorporating the severed territory in the Union. Then followed a series of assaults upon Mexican towns which the Mexicans were powerless, struggle as they might, to resist. The well-trained army and navy of the United States, under the brilliant leadership of Captain (afterwards General) Fremont, Commodore Stoot, Commodore Montgomery, and General Winfield Scott, worsted the Mexicans at every turn. California was lost to them as completely as Texas, and at length a peace known as the "Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty" was compulsorily signed by the defeated Mexicans, and the United States, in "exchange" for the trumpery sum of \$15,000,000 (about £3,000,000), annexed more than one-half of the entire Mexican territory, afterwards holding its hand upon its heart and proclaiming to the rest of the world: "You see how honourable we are even at the time of victory."

The country for which the United States paid \$15,000,000 was worth then \$150,000,000, and the value is to-day almost incalculable.

Whatever other historians may think of this act of annexation, the Americans themselves long ago learned the opinion of one of their greatest sons—General Ulysses Grant—who has publicly affirmed that "this was the most unjust and most unholy war ever waged by a stronger nation against a weaker one."

All that took place in these stormy times, however, when

men could not be expected to weigh every word that fell from their lips nor submit to every political action being examined through a microscope, has given place to feelings of trust and friendship between the sister nations. The friendly feeling, deep and sincere, expressed for the United States of America by President Diaz cannot be doubted. He has himself frequently referred to his sentiments on the subject, notably as recently as March, 1907, when he publicly observed: "I am greatly encouraged to receive expressions of approval from citizens of the United States. I am always glad to see Americans, glad to give them every assistance in my power, as we feel we are indebted to the natives of that country in the past and at the present time for many things." What reason there is to suppose that the opinions of the President or the country have undergone any reaction, I cannot see.

Spanish writers have frequently admitted that, but for the Anglo-Saxon race coming into South and Central America, and bringing their great resources and intelligence to bear upon the welfare of the Spanish-Americas, their lands might still be in the depths of commercial inferiority, and their finances practically non-existent. In my volume upon South America ("Through Five Republics"),* I mention, on p. 461, the following testimony to this effect:

"Underlying the petty native jealousies and not infrequent outbursts of spiteful criticism levelled against British interests, there exists in the different States of South America the knowledge that British brains, British money, and British *esprit de corps* have loomed largely in the building-up of these countries, while, to use the expression of a sympathetic Spanish newspaper, published in Argentina, and not usually given to praise of its foreign residents, 'This great civilising power has left upon us a deep and lasting impression, clearly recognisable.'"

What the British have done, and are doing, for Argentina, the Americans have effected for Mexico. It is significant that while the Spanish influences are gradually but surely dying-out, and the French were insufficiently long in the country to have bequeathed any, American—I should perhaps say Anglo-

* "Through Five Republics of South America (1905)." (William Heinemann, 21, Bedford Street, London. 21s.)

Saxon—influence is gaining ground every day. In numerous directions can this be observed, and although it would be untrue to say that this influence is invariably for the best, on the whole there can be no doubt that Mexico would hardly have attained her present recognised supreme position among Spanish-American nations but for the advantages which her foreign element has succeeded in introducing, and that without in any way meddling with the country's internal politics.

In thought, customs and foreign relations the Republic has undergone an almost complete change; and although the transition has been tardily recognised and strenuously objected to by a certain section of the ultra-conservative element, it is too late to stem the stream of reform which must continue to flow until all old and useless forms of government, all remnants of effete and worn-out social anomalies have been completely swept away. The effect of the foreign element in Mexico has been, as all unprejudiced Mexicans readily admit, much the same as that referred to by Daniel Webster in his famous speech on Hamilton: "He smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth; he touched the dead corpse of Public Credit, and it sprang upon its feet."

A Mexican writer, Mr. Manuel M. Alegre, has borne willing witness to the benefits accruing from the country's closer connection with Anglo-Saxon methods and ideas, and states that if the Mexicans would preserve their nationality they must do as the Anglo-Saxons are doing in their countries. They have shown themselves the ruling-race of the modern world, and Mexicans must display the same vigilance as they, the same inexhaustible mental activity, the same energy for work and love of order and liberty. These are qualities possessed in a greater or less degree by all peoples, and in Mexico they but require awakening to life. Mr. Alegre advises his countrymen that their duty is to free the still partially-paralysed national mind and stimulate the active faculties of the Nation, widen its instruction and its social vision, in order that it may clearly perceive its present conditions and its possibilities in the near future. This should be the duty of the country's legislators, its teachers,

its journalists, its philosophers and its spiritual directors, as well as all leaders of public and private intellectual agencies.

Abundant evidence is forthcoming in every direction that this sound advice is being taken to heart, and that Anglo-Saxons and Mexicans are uniting in their ideas, their general tendencies and habits of daily life more and more. Several additional generations may be required, perhaps, to complete the transformation, but it is proceeding—and in the proper direction.

Any and every old-established country, I suppose, which possesses a history, traditions and hoary-headed relics—to all of which its peoples attach reverence and respect—has had to undergo the painful ordeal of the scoffs and cheap cynicisms of the prowling tourist. Many a time my anger has been aroused by overhearing the crude and senseless criticisms upon some of our greatest men buried in Westminster Abbey, that national shrine to which all Britishers pay devotion, during even divine service. The same thing has occurred at the Tower of London, at St. Paul's Cathedral and at Holyrood Palace. I have, on occasions, had to blush for shame at the same lack of respect paid to the silent denizens of the Panthéon, in Paris, by a party of English tourists; and Mexico, with its incomparable collection of hallowed spots, its unique associations and its intensely romantic surroundings, cannot hope to escape the common fate in the form of the jeers of the thoughtless and the loud-voiced criticisms of the lower-class tourists who are now swarming over her semi-sacred ground.

If there is anything more objectionable than a Cockney tripper (and I very much doubt whether you can find it!) it is the Yankee sight-seer. I really do not know which of the two is the more intolerable, but both pursue the same methods of rendering themselves offensive to the inhabitants of the countries which they periodically afflict with their presence, and both deserve to be rigorously excluded from entrance to all holy or hallowed spots unless they can learn to behave themselves with becoming reverence. Fortunately the good people of Mexico understand but very little English, and consequently a great many of the ribald remarks which fall from them in Churches, galleries or on battle-fields with almost sacred associations, fail to affect the hearers. But

the Mexicans are not fools by any means; and if they cannot understand the words uttered they can, and do, at least apprehend the broad significance, the rude gestures and the coarse laugh which accompany them, and many a time the careful observer may have seen the sensitive natives wince at the lack of sympathy and open contempt evinced by the foreign visitors to their country's most treasured shrines.

The absolute indifference thus shown by some of these tourists for the susceptibilities of the "poor Indian"—who for all his rags and tatters carries a proud and patriotic heart, and a deep reverence for his fatherland—is almost inconceivable. Is it because some care little for tradition, have no history of their own, no treasure-house of old associations and few family pedigrees that they are so prone to scoff at those who have?

That I may not be considered prejudiced or insular in my remarks, I will quote from an American traveller, Mr. John C. Van Dyke, who writes as follows upon the eccentricities of some countrymen in Mexico: "Of course, Mexico is not the United States; and that usually breaks the heart of the average travelling American. He misses his tourist hotel, his bath, his drive in the park, and his American cocktail before luncheon. Nothing compensates him for these losses. He grumbles at everything, and airs his views to clerks and porters who understand not a word of English. He does not like the hotel, though it would puzzle him to find a better one in any town of equal size in the United States. He smiles at the heavy adobe houses, not realising that they are built for protection against the heat; for comfort, not looks. He thinks every Mexican a "greaser," though he cannot match him in courtesy, kindness or generosity. And everything is so "slow," with no sense of "business," as though rapidity were a virtue instead of a nervous manifestation, and as though buying and selling were the breath of life in one's nostrils. I have heard similar fault-finding in Europe from Americans who had passed most of their lives in Kansas cyclone-cellars or Colorado dugouts. Those who have lived in Mexico for years have much to say in praise of Mexican life. There is a great deal to be learned from it, and certainly

it is not to be sneered at by the average travelling American, who is too apt to be a shallow-pate."

Mr. Van Dyke evidently feels strongly on the subject of the conduct of some of his countrymen, and does not hesitate to pronounce his opinion, an opinion which will be endorsed by all our right-thinking and reverent-minded Transatlantic cousins, of whom, I am pleased to remember, I have met many delightful and cultured specimens in my world-wide travels.

Writing on the subject of foreigners in Mexico some 40 or 50 years ago, Madame Calderon de la Barca, wife of the First Spanish Minister to Mexico, states that—"Germans of a certain class do not seem to be sufficiently numerous, and the French in Mexico, barring some distinguished exceptions, are apt to be amongst the very worst specimens of that people which 'le plaisant pays de France' can furnish forth." Of the British residents the same candid critic observes—"With very few exceptions (and these in the case of Englishwomen married to foreigners) they keep themselves entirely aloof from the Mexicans, live quietly in their own houses, into which they have transplanted as much English comfort as possible, rarely travel, and naturally find Mexico the dullest of cities." But this has all been changed since then.

Mexico has had in the past, and no doubt will again have in the future, good cause to complain of the "kindness" of its friends, who sometimes for a consideration and sometimes without, come down—principally from the United States—take a casual look around (their visits varying from twenty-four hours to a whole week), and then go back to their native country and write "a book upon Mexico."

The Mexicans themselves complain bitterly about this incurable propensity upon the part of their powerful neighbours, declaring that whether the so-called "book" be favourable or unfavourable, friendly or unfriendly, it is usually so inaccurate as to do the country more harm than good, and by creating a totally erroneous impression of the Republic and of its people makes them more enemies than friends.

While in Mexico City and other large cities of the Republic, English is fairly-well spoken among the better classes, outside of those places very little is understood of the Anglo-Saxon tongue. A few words are picked up by mercantile-clerks,

street-vendors and newsboys, while some of the commercial class in Mexico are learning English for correspondence purposes. The President understands very little of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, or if he does he steadfastly refuses to speak it. On the other hand, Madame Diaz is a fluent English speaker, and writes the language with remarkable accuracy. Of the members of the Cabinet, Señor Mariscal, Minister of Foreign Relations, is a very good speaker, while Señor J. Y. Limantour, the Finance Minister, speaks and writes English as fluently as French and Spanish. The Governor of the Federal District, Don Guillermo Landa y Escandon, who was educated at the Jesuit College of Stoneyhurst, is another fluent English speaker, while Señor Aldasoro, Sub-Secretario de Fomento, can speak English well enough, but prefers, outside Spanish, to converse in French, of which he is a thorough master.

English is taught in many of the public and a great many of the private schools, and in all families where private tutors are charged with the education of the children. On the other hand, many resident Anglo-Saxons in Mexico are proficient Spanish scholars, so far as conversation is concerned, but it is seldom that one is encountered who can write a letter in accurate Spanish. I have met foreigners who have lived 16 and 18 years in Mexico City, who have hardly been able to express themselves intelligently in Spanish, and who, in any other country whose people were less lenient and courteous than those of Mexico, would have been laughed at and ridiculed.