

grace with his presence any notable or worthy exhibition of a native character. General Diaz towards the end of last year, for instance, paid quite an unexpected visit to the studio of a poor artist, Señor Gedovius, who had previously seen better days, but whom poverty and misfortune had reduced to practical beggary. Entirely unsolicited, the good-hearted President visited Gedovius, bought one of his pictures, and, by the attention which he thus directed to him, succeeded in raising him again from poverty to practical prosperity.

Mexican art students have upon occasions displayed great ability at various exhibitions, and among the better-known native artists I may mention Señor Leandro Izaguirre, who has displayed marked talent in copying such masters as Velasquez and his Goya studies, which he made while in Rome; Señor Alfredo Ramos Martinez, a successful painter of pastels, his work being altogether excellent, and showing great command of colour; and Señor Alberto Fuster, who has studied in Rome, Florence and Milan, and has painted several successful pictures, such as "Sappho," "The Greek Artist," etc. Another successful painter of pastels is Señor Gonzalo Bringas; while Señores Juan Telles Toledo is a distinguished portrait painter; Francisco Goitia, who is yet quite a boy; Ignacio R. Rosas, and several others display more or less talent.

Sculpture is also well represented by such artists as Señores Fidencio Nava, Enrique Guerra, Arnulfo Dominguez and Gonzalo Bringas, already mentioned in connection with painting. At an exhibition of work by Mexican artists, held in the month of November last year, there were 219 pictures entered, all being the work of young and promising men who had been pensioned and sent abroad by the Government for the purpose of improving their studies.

CHAPTER XIII

Early printing—The first press—Rose manuscripts and books—Printing of the "Constitution of 1857"—The modern press—*Mexican Herald*—The staff and building—Native press—*El Imparcial*—Influence of Mexican newspapers—Popular readers—The old type of journal—Value of advertisement—Intelligent Peons—Self-instruction—Museums—Valuable Aztec collections—Public libraries—Learned societies.

The first press introduced into Mexico was that brought over by the Viceroy Mendoza, in January 1536, at the request of Archbishop Zumarraga, the vandal who ruthlessly destroyed all the written archives of the interesting Aztec race, and by whose act of sacrilege the present generation is deprived of any real knowledge of that marvellous people. The first book ever printed in Mexico was the *Escala Esperitual para Llegar al Cielo*, and it appeared in 1537. No one living ever seems to have actually seen a copy of this book, but it is claimed that one exists somewhere in the private collection of a Mr. C. F. Günther, of Chicago; probably if it did bibliographers would know something of it.

There are still many valuable old tomes printed from the press of Don Juan Pablos—or Pablo—who seems to have had the monopoly between the years 1546 and 1559. Some of these are to be seen in the Government Library at Zacatecas, and the courteous custodian of that well-conducted, generously-maintained institution entertained me for some hours displaying his treasures for my delectation. Antiquarians would revel in some of these priceless old books, mostly in excellent condition. There are two enormous volumes of sacred music, used by the choirs of the Mexico Cathedral in the seventeenth century, on view at the National Museum, as fresh and unsoiled as on the day they left the hands of the pious friars.

who so beautifully and devotedly emblazoned them. Every particle of the colouring, the gold-leaf and the faintest lines of shading, are in perfect condition. Scattered about the country, mainly in the hands of private collectors, are several valuable and interesting early editions, such as the *Doctrina Cristiana* (a translation) of 1548, Father Molino's *Vocabulario* (1555), Father Alonso de la Veracruz, *Recognitio Summularum* (1554), and *Dialogo Doctrina Cristiana*, in the Torascan language of Michoacán, by Father Matorino Gilberti (1559).

Another great printer of Mexico's early days was Antonio de Espinosa, a rival of Juan Pablo,—and who flourished from the year 1559 to 1575. His speciality was Latin grammars, and several well-preserved specimens of his handicraft still exist. His *magnum opus*, however, was the *Vocabulario en lengua Mexicana y Castellana*, issued from his press about 1571. The author was Father Aburo de Molino, the writer also of the *Vocabulario* issued in 1555. Juan Pablo's business eventually was purchased by Pedro Ocharto, who published a large number of volumes, mostly now unobtainable, but a fine specimen of his binding is to be seen at the Public Library at Washington, D.C. I saw it there in December of 1905, and ascertained that this volume, the *Cedulario*, was considered the greatest treasure among many hundreds of priceless books, manuscripts, and historical documents in the Library.

The Spanish fathers, who were great scholars and students whatever else they may have been, fostered learning and the publication of religious works sedulously among themselves, while keeping the people themselves in the grossest ignorance. Such learned men as Vasco de Puga, Sahagun, the historian, and Enrico Martinez, the engineer, have all added something to the great store of ancient tomes, as witness the latter's famous *Reportorio de los Tiempos y Historia Natural de Esta Nueva España*; while the Fathers Juan de la Anunciacion, Alonso de Molino and Juan Bautista seemed to have been indefatigable chroniclers of passing events; the latter's *Confessiones* and *Adventencias* being issued by Melchor Ocharte, the printer, in 1599 and 1600 respectively. Copies of these works probably exist still in some hidden cloister of Catholic Spain.

Perhaps one of the finest testimonials to the excellence of

their workmanship offered to any firm is that which exists to-day in Mexico in the form of the original printing-press, made by Richard Hoe and Co. of New York in 1856. This was the identical machine, standing in the office of *El Siglo XIX. (Nineteenth Century)*, upon which was printed the famous "Constitution of 1857." What is more, the pressman who helped to set up the type and personally printed-off the copies of this historical document, still lives and still works his machine. The press runs every day, and is yet in remarkably good order. It modestly bears the following steel-plate:—"On this press were printed the first 8,000 copies of the 'Constitution of Feb. 5, 1857,' the 'copy' being an autograph from Citizen Consti. Here, also, were printed the telegraphic news relative to the routing of the French at Puebla, May 5th, 1862." The venerable operator of this celebrated press is Carlos Ramirez, who thinks very little of modern printing machinery in spite of its rapidity, his opinion being that "the work done on the old style of press was infinitely superior." To an old man who "has rendered some service to the State," even this foolish utterance may be forgiven.

In this age of luxury and elegance, it is but right, perhaps, that the Press should have its show of display. When some of the magnificent buildings in Fleet Street were opened some years ago, it was considered that the acme of extravagance in construction and equipment had been reached. Those who so imagined had had no opportunity probably of inspecting the superb structures of *El Mercurio* in Valparaiso and Santiago (Chile), *La Prensa* in Buenos Aires (Argentina), and the colossal edifices devoted to the use of the weapon which is mightier than the sword in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Here, however, massiveness rather than magnificence and quantity rather than quality are apparent. None of the North American Press possess such beautiful homes as those I have mentioned in South America, and, indeed, many might consider the provision of elegant bedroom-suites, elaborately-equipped libraries, concert-halls and bath-rooms rather superfluous *addenda* to a newspaper office. I think so, too. But all these exist at Valparaiso, Santiago and Buenos Aires, and are at least much appreciated by the fortunate

patrons of the newspapers who are privileged to make use of them.

In Mexico City the *Mexican Herald* has also constructed for itself a lordly home, in striking contrast to the ramshackle barrack-like building in which I found it on my first arrival in the Republic. The building is admirably situated on the west side of the Alameda, the largest and most beautiful public park of the City. The building has been remodelled from an old structure, forming a portion of the ancient San Diego Church. Above the modern-equipped composing-rooms rises the venerable belfry towers of the church, and mingled with the prosaic click of the linotype-machine comes, at every quarter of the hour, the mellow chime of the ancient bells.

More than this. Immediately facing the *Herald's* handsome front entrance is the identical piece of ground whereon the hateful Inquisition held its *auto-da-fé*, and the actual scene where sixteen English sailors, who fell into the hands of the priests, were burned alive in 1780. Just round the corner is the street along which Hernando Cortés and his beaten troops ran for their lives on the "Noche Triste," and leading to the old tree—still perfectly preserved—where the valiant Spaniard sat down and wept!

All the editorial rooms are large, airy and admirably furnished, the work of one and all engaged upon the staff being carried on apparently under very cheerful surroundings. The room occupied by Mr. Frederick R. Guernsey, the Editor-in-Chief, is more suggestive of an apartment in a private palace than an editorial sanctum, the windows opening on to a beautifully-kept conservatory, and being lined from floor to ceiling with loaded-up bookshelves.

The room occupied by Mr. Paul Hudson, the Manager of the paper, is scarcely less attractive with its luxurious rugs, easy-chairs, and heavy tapestries on the walls and at the window. The *Herald's* Club Room is an elegant hall, occupying half of the 70-foot frontage of the building, overlooking the Alameda, and furnished with oak tables and all the conveniences for holding conversaciones, meetings and public or private entertainments.

So much for the *Herald's* building. As for the *Herald*



HEAD OFFICE OF THE "MEXICAN HERALD," SAN DIEGO No. 2, MEXICO CITY.



TYPICAL RESIDENCE IN THE CITY OF SALTILLO, COAHUILA.
THE HOUSE OF MR. WILLIAM C. PURCELL.

itself, it may be said that although its circulation is probably one-tenth part as large as that of the principal Mexico daily—*El Imparcial*—it has more influence than any Spanish paper, since it is the organ of the American and English population, who represent the capital and enterprise of the Republic. What the *Herald* says “goes,” and its good word is as much esteemed as its adverse criticisms are dreaded. Mr. Frederick Guernsey’s able and fluent pen has earned for the paper a high place among the literary journals of the world, while Mr. Louis C. Simonds (the Associate-editor) is well and favourably known as a financial and commercial writer of great influence. The *Daily Record* is an evening—the only evening—newspaper, and is issued in Mexico City every day of the week except Sunday. It is bright, cheerful and generally well-liked. *Modern Mexico* is a high-class and beautifully-produced monthly, printed in New York, but with head offices in Mexico City, and London offices at 150 Strand, W.C. It is edited by Mr. Paul Hudson, and often contains some valuable topical articles, especially devoted to mining and agriculture.

A great and important factor in the growing education of the lower-class people of Mexico has been and is the native press, and it is interesting for the traveller to observe how many apparently “ignorant” men and women one meets reading the daily papers. Considering that some 10 or 15 years ago it was the exception to find a Mexican of the peon-class sufficiently educated to read at all, or to sign his name, the progress made in this direction is certainly both remarkable and encouraging.

The Fourth Estate in Mexico is large and influential, perfectly free—almost too much so on occasions—to express its opinions of things and individuals, but on the whole well and fairly conducted. In the City of Mexico there are several Spanish dailies, the greatest of which is *El Imparcial*, which corresponds to the *Daily Mail* of England, *Le Journal* of France, or *Der Tageblatt* of Germany. It is the official organ of the Government, and enjoys a circulation of over 80,000 a day. The editor is Señor Rafael Reyes Spindola, an eminent lawyer by profession, and a Member of Congress. There is an afternoon paper belonging to the same proprietary and under the same editorship, *El Mundo*, having a circulation of some 35,000. The next most important daily is

El Popular, with a circulation of some 50,000, and edited by Don Francisco Montes de Oca. This publication also has an afternoon edition, *El Argos*, which is popular with the masses. The Church organs are many, and are widely read. *El Tiempo* (*The Times*) is edited by the very popular Señor Victoriano Agueros. *El Pais* (*The Country*) is edited by Don Sanchez Santos, and has a very wide popularity among Catholics. *La Patria* is an anti-foreign paper, and sometimes very bitter in its attacks, especially upon Americans. *El Diario del Hogar* (*The Fireside Daily*, which is rather a misnomer, since there is no "fireside" in Mexico), is a harmless but respectable sheet, and *Sucésos* (*Events*) is largely read for its illustrations and humour. *Corréo Español* (*Spanish Mail*) is a juvenile paper, with an extremely able editorial staff; and financial interests are represented with more or less fidelity by *Financiero Mexicana* (*Mexican Finance*). There are two bi-weekly papers named *La Tribuna* (*The Tribune*), a staunch and somewhat severe Catholic organ, and *Paladin* (the *Paladin*), a supporter of Liberal and therefore anti-clerical ideas.

Of the weeklies the most important are *Artes y Letras* (*Art and Literature*), a critical publication, very well illustrated, and edited by a keen connoisseur, Señor Ernesto Chasero. *El Mundo Ilustrado*, published from the offices of *El Imparcial* and *El Mundo*, is also very well printed and illustrated. *El Semanario Literario* (*Literary Weekly*) comes from the offices of *El Tiempo*, and is a sister publication to *El Tiempo Ilustrado*. *La Revista Literaria* (*The Literary Review*) is edited by Señor Heriberto Barron, a local poet of some eminence.

"Comic" journalism is represented by the grotesquely-named *Colmillo Publico* (*The Public Tooth*, or *Tusk*), edited by an arch-opponent of President Diaz, Señor Fernandez Perez, and *Ahuizote Jacobin* (*Liberal Old Disturber*). Neither of these prints can be termed clever, but both contrive to be extremely offensive to their opponents. Of class-organs there are several enjoying good circulations, such as *El Heraldo Agricola* (*The Agricultural Herald*); *El Tercer Imperio* (*The Third Empire*); *El Boletin Judicial* (*The Judicial Bulletin*); *El Diario Oficial de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (*Official Daily of the United Mexican States*); *El Toro* (*The Bull*); and *El Gaceta* (*The Gazette*).

There are a good many old residents of Mexico who do not consider that the tone of the native press has improved of recent years. The stately old *Monitor Republicano* formerly published editorials and special articles of great worth, and in the purest Spanish; whereas the tendency of latter-day journalism in the Republic is to flippancy, personalities, and frivolity. No wonder that the passing *régime* regret the change. The literary quality of the contemporary press, I am assured by several competent critics, has deteriorated, occasioned, no doubt, by the shallowness of the age in which we live nowadays and the bad example which is set us all by the cheap and gaudy press of the United States, which, whatever else it may be, is certainly not "literature." That it is widely read cannot be gainsaid; but has it anything like the influence upon public opinion which the *Monitor Republicano* enjoyed in its day? The better informed Mexicans will tell you "No."

Advertising in Mexico pays uncommonly well, for Mexicans are avid readers of all announcements, pictorial and otherwise. A few years ago it would have been difficult to find half-a-dozen peons who could either read or write; but to-day, so rapid and so widespread have been the results of the splendid educational *régime* instituted by the State Governments, that an illiterate Mexican would be an exception. In this connection I may mention a case which came under my own notice at Guadalajara. A tall and rather unprepossessing peon *cargador* rather astonished me by informing me in good English that my train was an hour late. It was not the latter intelligence that occasioned the surprise, however, since that is almost a daily occurrence; it was the precise method and correct English in which the man addressed me. I inquired where he had learned to speak our language, upon which he informed me that it was at school (a Government free establishment), and he proceeded to bring from concealment beneath his much-soiled blouse, carefully wrapped in a paper cover, an English and Spanish manual, which, he stated, he carefully studied every spare moment that he had. Furthermore, so I was informed, this very diligent peon received a letter in English every week from some American friends at El Paso (carriage-cleaners on the Mexican Railway), which

document he carefully copied out and answered in the same language.

I do not know whether this hardworking and humble fellow, probably still in his teens, may be accepted as a type of the rising generation of the Mexican peon-class; but this at least is certain, that a nation which can produce such intelligent and spontaneously enterprising young men has a great and brilliant future before it; and it would be as well if those who so persistently think and speak of the native peon as nothing but an "ignorant Indian savage" were to remember that education is rapidly effecting an alteration among these people which, a few years ago, would have been deemed impracticable and impossible.

Loiterers at the various railway stations—and it is astonishing to find how many derive amusement from watching the coming and going of trains—may be seen reading over and over again the coloured announcements and public advertisements adorning the walls of the station-building. Any scrap of printed paper will be picked up and read, and those who are sufficiently wealthy to buy for a centavo a copy of a local newspaper will peruse every word, from the title to the imprint. Where a number of people are congregated together, such as on the public plazas, parks and other rendezvous, it is customary to distribute handbills setting forth any theatrical entertainment or other amusement, new brands of tobacco, etc. Instead of casting away such free literature, as so many European recipients would do, the Mexicans besiege the distributor for more copies, following him about as closely and persistently as the rats followed the Piper of Hamelin. Not only are the slips carefully read and re-read, but they are afterwards carefully folded up and carried away.

Although far from large as museums go, the *Muséo Nacional* in Mexico City contains a very representative and decidedly interesting collection of things wholly Mexican. Probably no finer collection of Aztec and Toltec figures can be found anywhere, and our own American collection in the British Museum is poor in comparison. At one time this collection was housed in a side apartment of the National University, but it soon outgrew its quarters, and then found accommodation in the fine block of buildings east of the

Zocola, or large public square of the City. This year a great portion of the antiquities and objects of natural history will be again moved into the magnificent new National Museum building, approaching completion on the *Avenida Juarez*. The archaeology will be on the ground-floor, as will also some of the historical departments; while the upper floor—there are but two—will be devoted to the pictures and portraits of a long succession of viceroys. Yet another hall will contain the pictures of the Mexican Presidents from General Guadalupe Victoria to General Porfirio Diaz. To enumerate all, or even the greater part, of the treasures to be found in the National Museum would necessitate a good-sized volume. The most attractive, no doubt, is the huge sacrificial-stone which was found by accident buried in a ditch near the Cathedral, and upon which thousands of unfortunate victims must have been offered up to sacrifice by the Aztec priests, their method of execution being to throw their victims flat upon the stone, rip out their hearts with long knives made of glass, and then throw the bodies, still living and palpitating, over the side, to fall among the worshippers below. No less interesting is the large Calendar-stone, which has puzzled all the archaeologists of the world to translate; several weird-looking idols, such as *Huitzilopochtli*, a hideous god of war; two serpents' heads, of colossal proportions; a feathered serpent, very cleverly carved and most naturally coiled; *Chacmoi*, the god of fire, a gigantic head of a human being—whether of man or woman I cannot say—and hundreds of other grotesque figures, many in a perfect state of preservation, and others less so. One could readily pass days of delightful investigation into the meaning and origin of these curiously-carved effigies, but while many translations of the inscriptions accompany them, I should say that most of them, at any rate, are mere conjecture, and founded upon but little genuine authority.

To the minds of the sentimental and romantically inclined, the most touching exhibits at this Museum are undoubtedly the collection of things at one time belonging to the Emperor Maximilian and Empress Carlota. Here is their enormous and unwieldy State Coach, with its plate-glass windows, heavily-embossed panels, its gold-encrusted roof and brass-

mounted wheels. The whole conveyance is rich, but *outré* in the extreme, and nowadays looks uncommonly trashy. The whole of the Imperial harness and horse-trappings—rose-coloured silk and gold mountings with the Imperial Crown in solid gold, the identical liveries worn by the Imperial lacqueys and their arms and sticks of office, are still preserved. Pictures hang upon the walls showing the various grades of domestics who were in the Emperor's service, and numerous other evidences of the reckless extravagance to which the Imperial pair proceeded during their short but eventful occupancy of the Throne of Mexico. Some very excellent oil-paintings of both Maximilian and Carlota hang in the Art Gallery. They show their majesties in their pristine glory, he in the tight-waisted short coat and distended-hip trousers of the early 'forties, and she in the voluminous white-satin hooped skirts of the same period. The Empress must have been a very beautiful girl, and she is said to be a still very lovely old woman. But those tresses, then dark as a raven's wing, are now white as the undriven snow; the beautiful, bold brown eyes, which look out of the portrait so confidently and withal with so much happiness, now glint with madness, and are continually bedewed with tears.

Alas! poor Carlota, hapless woman and distracted wife; better for you had death claimed you years ago, for your life has been one of the saddest of known tragedies. Death hath so many doors to let out life—but none for you! There exist many excellently-produced photographs of the two famous paintings referred to, and which are considered the best likenesses of the Imperial pair ever taken.

The Technological Industrial Museum has a suitable and commodious building, but recently erected, on the Calle Betlemitas. It is a Government enterprise, as are all the Museums, Libraries and other educational establishments, all being under the control of the Department of Fomento. Here may be seen models of all the vegetables, minerals, animals and raw materials indigenous to the country, with a great deal of accompanying descriptive data.

The finest library in Mexico is that in the capital, known as the San Agustin, or Biblioteca Nacional. The building itself was formerly the church of San Agustin, and is a magnificent

specimen of architecture with its many columns and basso-relievos and other ornamental features, all executed in the most perfect taste. Beautifully modelled Ionic columns support the arches of the old church choir, the main features of the vast central hall of the building being the many slender columns, rich cornices and bold arches. The library contains nearly 500,000 volumes, and among them are many priceless works, such as cannot be found even in Europe. There are many valuable private libraries to be found in Mexico, and Mexicans are great readers, booksellers and printers thriving more than any other traders, while professors are numerous throughout the Republic.

It would be rather difficult to compute the precise money worth of the different libraries in the Republic, but some of them are of great value, and quite unique. Altogether there are about 125 libraries in the Republic, the most favoured States being the Federal District with 24, Tamaulipas with 12, Tabasco and Veracruz with 10 each, Yucatán with 9, Michoacán, Coahuila and Guanajuato with 6 each, and Morélos with 5.

Learned Societies are gradually becoming more numerous, there being, to-day, perhaps some forty-five or fifty. Among these may be found medical, engineering, agricultural, geographical, geological, natural, historical, linguistic and artistic societies, the majority of which are located in the Federal District.