

In Mexico City

Sights in and About the Republic's Capital

(Special Letter.)

There is much of interest to be seen by an American in the City of Mexico, and to see everything worth seeing here will take weeks. The great cathedral is an object of rare interest, and as it is open at all hours many visitors go there each day. It is a very old edifice, part of it having been built by Cortes three hundred and more years ago, and additions have been added until now it is one of the great buildings of this age. It fronts on a beautiful park which was utilized by General Scott as a camping place after he had taken the city in 1847.

I, of course, visited the cathedral and observed those at worship, each before a favorite shrine, and came away with a feeling that I had seldom or never witnessed a more impressive scene.

Methodist Hymns in Spanish.

Later I went to the Methodist church which was filled with native members and it was a great lesson to hear these people sing old familiar church hymns in the Spanish language. I had a fancy as I saw people about the city during Sunday that all classes had a great regard for the third commandment, as there was quiet everywhere, albeit there was a clanging of church bells with noticeable frequency.

It is only late in the afternoon when the people become active and then



THE PASEO DE LA REFORMA.

those who have horses and carriages take a drive along the great boulevard, the Paseo de la Reforma. It is a magnificent driveway, and on a Sunday afternoon the elite of the city are to be seen there in great splendor.

As I watched the passing equipages it seemed that nowhere could there be a finer display of turnout. There were victorias, landaus, broughams, and all the styles of fine vehicles that might be seen along the boulevards of Paris. Then the young gallant was often seen on horseback, his steed gaily caparisoned, while he was dressed generally in rich velvet with gold lace on his short coat and pantaloons legs, reaching to a spur often fashioned with a small bell that tinkled to the movement of the horse. He was all gracefulness as he rode down the boulevard, knowing that the one he most loved would see him at some point along the way. This great highway leads from the heart of the city out to Chapultepec, the summer home of the President. It is two hundred feet wide and lined with eucalyptus trees and at points there are immense flow-



THE CATHEDRAL.

er beds called glorietas. In these places are often placed monuments to the dead, the most conspicuous being one to Cuauhtemoc, the last of the Aztec Kings, and another to Christopher Columbus. Then at frequent points along both sides of the way are statues of heroes of a more modern time. There is an equestrian statue of Charles IV. of Spain, of heroic mold and probably the largest cast of its kind on this hemisphere.

WILLIAM B. ROBERTS.

Onions Purify the Blood.

Few people in the City of Mexico have any interest in anything pertaining to Spain, as there is an inborn hatred among the masses of the people here for the mother country. It is true they speak the Spanish language, but this only keeps in their remembrance the oppression of the Spanish rulers for centuries past. A role in the public schools making the teaching of the English language compulsory will be the undoing of the Spanish language here in a generation or two. This shows that there is an awakening in these quiet people, who now having tasted the sweets of liberty of conscience, will never rest until they are far removed from every vestige of the bonds that once held them. Every one takes a pride in being able to speak the English language, and in their assurance of progress often make ludicrous mistakes. I was introduced to a gentleman who fancied he could speak English fairly well, and as he shook hands with me most cordially, instead of saying "How do you do," as he intended, he

VINTAGE IN VENETIA.

GLIMPSES OF ITALIAN VINE-YARDS SEEM MEDIAEVAL.

Grape Vines Line Roads—Rich Clusters Hang Upon Every Wall and Italian Courtesy Makes Them Free—Making Wine.

(Special Letter.)

The first sign of vintage is usually at Padua. In the September sun may be seen here and there large carts with men in them, dancing vigorously. Why they danced appeared from the thin stream of pale red that ran into tubs below—wine making was going on. This simple method of wine making is only practiced, however, on a small scale. The farmer makes his own wine thus, and the small inkeeper, and perhaps the indigent landed proprietor who is far from wine presses and such-like conveniences of our later civilization. All the wine that is likely to be set before the high-stomached Signor Inglesi is made in the press. But the more ancient method is the more picturesque.

Brings Back Middle Ages.

That street scene in Padua brought back in a flash the Italy of the middle ages. It was close to the great church of St. Anthony of Padua, and a stream of pilgrims was just pouring out, solemn in their demeanor, for they were of a staider, more northerly race than the cheerful, irreverent Venetian after an exposition of relics. A little earlier in the day they had been praying earnestly to the saint and kissing, in the ecstasy of their devotion, the marble of his stately tomb. Was it the end of the nineteenth century, or was it the time when that great statue outside the church—the first equestrian statue in the world, they say—had just been set up to keep in mind the deeds of the famous condottiere, whose methods of warfare are commemorated by his nickname of "Gatto malata," the patient cat? The hard, white sunlight and the cool, gray stone of the arcade can have looked not otherwise than they do today, and no doubt the mediaeval wine-traders were just such merry rogues as these, and made equally witty remarks about the aspect of pilgrims and the oddness and curiosity of strangers.

When the Wine Season Begins.

A few days later, walking through the pleasant country that frames Verona with a smiling landscape, might be seen the operations of the grape harvest on every side. In the hillside villages, the carpenters were hammer-



GATHERING GRAPES.

ing away at huge tubs. The wine presses were being scrubbed with a will and having their joints and screws ordered. The whole available population had turned out into the vineyards to pick, and at every turn of the road one met carts piled high with grapes, and drawn by teams of patient oxen with satin hides and enormous wondering eyes and curly formidable horns that set one marveling how they should bear the yoke so tamely. Not a hillside but has its terrace of vines, not a cottage without its pergola, not a garden that lacks its burden of grape-bearing, not a foot of space that can be cultivated from which the bounty of Nature has not brought forth a gift to add to this plenteous harvest. The very railway stations are festooned with gracious trails, and amid the leafage can be spied the ripe bunches that are to furnish refresh the station master's cellar. And with all this profusion of the soil there is a pleasant carelessness on man's part that to a northern eye has a special charm. Man seems to vie with nature in open-handedness and generosity.

In the Vineyards.

The vines are trellised even along the open road, and the purple clusters with their delicate bloom, the breath of autumn upon them, hang within reach of any hand that should think it worth while to pluck them. It is their very profusion that keep them safe. After all, if a few bunches are picked, what matter? "It is but a spoonful out of the sea." This is, at any rate, the view of a peasant proprietor who is working in the midst of his grape-pickers, a laughing band of peasant girls, and who invites passers-by with a grace of manner that would do credit to an archduke, to enter and help themselves. The pickers are more interesting than the grapes, but the informal guests take a handful, and delicious they are, warm with the sun, and ripened in the soft air to an exquisite delicacy of flavor. Still, as it happens, their aim is not the satisfaction of their palates. Would it incommod the signorine if their pictures were made? So far from incommode, it would delight the signorine beyond everything. Then might one presume so far as to ask the signor to invite the signorine to stand with their baskets—so! and next, scissors in

hand, under the large vine-plant-gusto! and yet again upon the ladder set against the tree, which supports the trellis—exact! It is done, thank you. And so the guests go on their way again, more than sufficiently thanked for the buono mano they have left for host and his helpers to drink their health with, and pursued by the salutations and good wishes of them.

Italian Characteristics.

Everywhere you go in Italy you find this same gentle courtesy of manner smoothing the appetites of life. Even when he cheats you—and the town Italian, at any rate, never loses an opportunity in this direction—he does it with a smiling grace that is well worth the money. A London cabman who grumbles at your shilling, grumbles like a bear, leaves you irritated by his bearishness, makes you think ill of the whole tribe of cab-drivers. An Italian cab-driver—better still a gondolier of Venice—swindles you with an exquisite charm. He will rapidly paint a picture of the wrong you do him by not allowing yourself to be swindled. He will call to witness the bystanders and will appeal from earth to heaven. He will overwhelm you with a torrent of words, cajole you, and finally, with some pennies over and above his due, will drive off, protesting he bears you no ill-will.

From Vine to Wine.

From the picker's hand to the baskets carried yokewise across the shoulder or else on the back, from the baskets to the huge tubs on the oxcarts, from the tubs to the press or the tread cart. These are the stages in the transformation of grapes into wine, red or white. White, if you separate skins and stalks before the grapes go into the press; if everything goes in red. The Italians are careless wine-makers. They are not so particular as the French about what goes into the press. Therefore is their wine rougher, lacking the quality of silkiness which wine merchants do so extol. Finally, the press yields its oozings into the tubs, and then comes the work of casking. After this, all that remains is to dispatch the casks to purchasers; or, if the wine is to travel far, to fill one of the enormous tanks upon wheels that one sees at the railway stations. The Italians do not do much with the industry of bottling their wines. Everything goes into casks and is disposed of that way.

W. M. STANTON.

THE WRONG BOTTLE.

Why One Young Woman's Hands Are Blistered.

Grace is afflicted with a sensitive skin, and when cold weather arrives uses up more bottles of soothing lotion for her poor, chapped hands than would stock a small shop. The last thing before she goes to sleep she codiles her white digits with a liberal dose of the liquid that best suits them. She did this the other night, and as she "rubbed it in" observed that it took a long time to dry. Finally she gave it up. She had a most uncomfortable night. Whenever she moved, the sheets stuck to her hands, and she fought them off much after the fashion of a cat standing on four pieces of sticky fly paper. Once her hair got tangled around her left hand, and it nearly came out by the roots before she loosened it. This thoroughly awoke her, and she got up and lit the gas. She had the most remarkable looking pair of hands in Cook county. This was not altogether surprising, when she found she had used the bottle of furniture polish for a lotion. And, not content to let a bad state of affairs alone, she put on kerosene to take off the polish. The kerosene has blistered both hands to a lobster hue, and she has three card parties on hand, and is going to act as bridesmaid within a week.—Chicago News.

American Salesmen Best.

Consul Hossfeld of Trieste, after announcing that cheap lamps could be sold in Southern Austria to great advantage if American manufacturers would imitate the tactics of Viennese lamp makers and open stores of their own, continues his report as follows: "No native can sell American wares in a foreign country as successfully as an American who is familiar with the language and customs of the country. This has in recent years been demonstrated in every large city of Europe. The American knows what most retailers in Southern Europe, at least, still have to learn, viz.: how to advertise, how to display goods, how to meet competition, how to gratify and at the same time to educate the popular taste, and, above all, he knows how to 'hustle.' It is, moreover, difficult to induce a native retailer to buy foreign wares as long as their sale is still in the tentative stage."

Seven Days' Rest Association.

A curious society exists in the town of Bradford, England. Its name is the Seven Days' Rest Association. It is composed of men who make it a rule to do no work, and yet they are held in the greatest esteem by all. They are men who, born in humble life, have by steady labor saved a modest competence. Now they spend the evening of their days in the parks and other places of rest far from the roar of the forge and loom, with which their early life was associated. Nor are the employments of the Seven Days' Rest Association, as they are styled, entirely selfish. At their second annual dinner just held they entertained some of the comrades of their youth who had failed to attain so satisfactory a share of the world's goods, combining a quiet self-gratulation on their own secure position with a kind and cheery hospitality to these less fortunate brethren.

CYRUS "THE GREAT."

FEW CHARACTERS ACCORDED SUCH A TITLE.

They May Be Enumerated on the Fingers of the Hands—Why Were They Great?—Cyrus, the First in the List—His Characteristics.

(Special Letter.)

Everywhere you go in Italy you find this same gentle courtesy of manner smoothing the appetites of life. Even when he cheats you—and the town Italian, at any rate, never loses an opportunity in this direction—he does it with a smiling grace that is well worth the money. A London cabman who grumbles at your shilling, grumbles like a bear, leaves you irritated by his bearishness, makes you think ill of the whole tribe of cab-drivers. An Italian cab-driver—better still a gondolier of Venice—swindles you with an exquisite charm. He will rapidly paint a picture of the wrong you do him by not allowing yourself to be swindled. He will call to witness the bystanders and will appeal from earth to heaven. He will overwhelm you with a torrent of words, cajole you, and finally, with some pennies over and above his due, will drive off, protesting he bears you no ill-will.

Cyrus the Great.

Of these great characters Cyrus was the first to appear. He was born about 599 B. C., and was the son of Cambyses, King of Persia, and his mother was Mandane, daughter of Astyages, King of the Medes. This Astyages is known in the Scriptures as Asahurus. At this time the Persians were divided into twelve tribes and inhabited only one province of the vast country which has since borne the name of Persia, and they numbered less than 120,000. Through the valor and prudence of Cyrus this small province became the great Persian empire and the Persian population reached the millions. Cyrus was of fine appearance, possessed noble qualities of mind, a gentle disposition, was full of good nature and humanity and had a great desire for learning. He was never afraid of any danger, or discouraged by any hardship or difficulty. He was brought up according to the laws and customs of the Persians, which were excellent in those days in respect to education. The training of children was looked upon as the most important duty and the most essential part of government. Boys were brought up in common and everything was regulated by law for them—the place and length of their exercises, the times of eating, the quality if their meat and drink, and their different kinds of punishment.

Modest and Temperate.

All through his life he was noted for his modesty and temperate habits. Pride, luxury and magnificence reigned around him whenever he went beyond the confines of the Persian province, but never did they in any way contaminate him. He always followed the simple, frugal life of his youthful days. Wherever he went his modest and noble bearing, his affable manners and his generosity procured him general love and esteem. His desire to be just led him to be looked upon as the great arbiter of all serious disputes. During his career of conquest, although a stern disciplinarian and often appearing cruel and tyrannical, he was usually just and generous to his followers as well as the peoples he vanquished. He sought to make allies rather than enemies of those he conquered, and in this aim he was highly successful. Many provinces surrendered to him without resistance, when their



THE TOMB OF CYRUS.

rulers learned of generous treatment, and others sought alliance with so just and powerful a king. In most conquerors courage, resolution, intrepidity, a capacity for martial exploits, and such talents as make a noise in the world are usually the only ones found. Combined with these characteristics Cyrus had an inward stock of goodness, compassion and gentleness toward the unhappy; an air of moderation and reserve even in prosperity and victory; an insinuating and persuasive behavior, the art of gaining people's hearts and attaching them to him more by affection than interest; a constant and unalterable care to always have justice on his side and to imprint such a character of justice and to equity upon all his conduct as his very enemies were forced to revere. In the exercise of clemency he seemed able to distinguish those who offended through imprudence rather than malice and always left room for their repentance by giving them an opportunity to return to their duty.

The Fall of Babylon.

Before he was 30 Cyrus was at the head of the Persian troops, and from that time until he ascended the throne of Persia he was engaged in many wars of conquest, all of which proved successful and added wealth, glory, strength and territory to the empire which he was founding and over which he was to rule. His greatest military achievement was in capturing the rich, populous and strongly fortified city of Babylon. Two hundred years before Cyrus was born the prophet Isaiah foretold the fall of Babylon and even named its conqueror, Cyrus. With a great army of Medes and Persians Cyrus laid siege to the city, but its strong wall resisted the most furious and persistent assaults. For two years the contest continued. Then Cyrus resorted to one of the greatest feats of strategy recorded in the history of warfare. The Euphrates river flowed through the city. Cyrus determined to turn the course of the stream and through the bed of the channel rush his troops under the walls and into the city. When the artificial channel had been cut, he waited until a night when he knew the Babylonians would be engaged in a general feast. Then he diverted the stream, his selected soldiers rushed

into the doomed city through the drained channel, killed the unsuspecting guards and opened the massive gates to allow the entire Persian forces to enter. The Babylonians resisted desperately but were overpowered and the city became tributary to the Persian empire. Its King, Belshazzar, was slain early in the conflict. The handwriting on the wall had been portentous.

Death of Cyrus.

Cyrus reigned until 529 B. C., when he died. Historians differ as to his manner of death, but according to Xenophon, the Greek historian, he died a natural death, surrounded by his family and loved and esteemed by all his subjects. Up to the fatal sickness he enjoyed vigorous health, due to his temperate life. Another version of his death is that he was killed while engaged in a battle with the Massagetae, a nation in the north of Asia, the soldiers of whom were led by their Queen, Tomaria. She caused the head of Cyrus to be cut off and plunged into a leather bag filled with human blood, saying, "Though I am alive and have conquered you, yet you have undone me by taking my son. I will however, satiate you with blood." This speech shows the estimate of the character of the conqueror, whose work is the same in all ages—the shedding of human blood.

The Inscription on His Tomb.

The tomb of Cyrus was at Pasargadae, near Persepolis. Here, 200 years later, Alexander came, the next character in history to be immortalized with the title, "The Great." He ordered the tomb to be opened, expecting to find great treasures; but a rotten shield, two Scythian bows and a Persian cimeter were the only riches. Within the sepulchre was this inscription: "O man, whoever thou art and whencever thou comest, I am Cyrus, the founder of the Persian empire; envy me not the little earth that covers my body." Thus it will be seen that this great man, wise, moderate, courageous, magnanimous, noble and daring, feared, as men now fear, the envy of the world and begged to be left alone with the small piece of earth occupied by his remains. Surely, death has no respect for greatness.

ENGAGEMENT RINGS.

Actress Used One from Finger of an Egyptian Mummy.

In choosing engagement rings for their fiancées, lovers at times discard the conventional jeweled circlet in favor of the bizarre, fantastic and even gawky. Not long since, says Tit-Bits, out of a portion of a horseshoe that he had found, a young man had a ring made, which he gave to the lady of his choice on the day of their betrothal. The remainder of the horseshoe was utilized in the manufacture of a brooch and earrings. Another iron ring, which a short while since was accepted by a young girl as a token of her lover's constancy, was a section cut from the barrel of a pistol which many years back had played an unenviable part in a family tragedy. The scion of a wealthy family, whose fortunes owed their existence to extensive tobacco plantations, had a ring made out of the fragrant weed, hardened by some process to the consistency of metal, with which to encircle the finger of his inamorata. A single diamond gave relief to the amulet's sombre hue. Opals, formerly considered so ill-omened, are now not infrequently employed in the setting of engagement rings. One gentleman, a native of Manchester, went, indeed, to an almost extreme length in his reprobation of superstition, the ring which he gave to the lady he has now married being a hoop of thirteen opals, the former possessor of each of which had met with some serious misfortune. The engagement ring chosen by a well known actress had once decked the finger of an Egyptian mummy. Disdaining the everyday gewgaw with its vulgar glint of gems, she set her fancy upon this strangely discolored stone, which had nothing to recommend it but its unconventionality and age.

ABOUT GRAY HAIR.

No Longer Regarded with Horror by Aging Persons.

Gray hair is no longer regarded with horror, even by persons who have reached the age that entitles them to it. Such people were always more apt to be worried over the change than persons prematurely gray, who might be expected to mourn the premature loss of the characteristic of youth. Now people need give this sign of advancing years no thought, for it has been decided that gray hair is the fashion. Ada Rehan was the first woman in public life, it is said, to allow her hair to turn gray without making the slightest attempt to conceal what is commonly regarded in a stage career that the end has come, or is at all events near. Other actresses have since accustomed the public to the idea of gray-headed heroines. Miss Rehan, of course, always wore a wig on the stage, but Eleanor Duse plays Camille without the least attempt to conceal the fact that her hair has grown so gray as to give her scenes with Armand a slightly maternal