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THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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A Home in the Hot Country, the House of Adobe and the Roof of Canebrake and Sugar

PRESIDENT DIAZ' QUEER COUNTRY

by K. L. Smith



Cambija A Street Scene in Mexico



Making Tortillas

When President Taft meets the President of Mexico this month he will not only shake hands with a wonderful man but with one who has ruled almost continuously since 1876. Porfirio Diaz is a capable man, and his presidency of Mexico has been conducted in such a way that the country has steadily progressed. Few kings and no presidents have held a more consecutive record than Diaz, and though he has his enemies as well as his friends, he stands head and shoulders above other Mexican politicians. He has been in favor of educating the masses, has encouraged foreigners to make investments, had built railroads, established manufactures and brought his country to a place where it is receiving recognition from the rest of the world. Americans think that his protracted rule, while it might not have served in our country, is just the thing for this southern land where nothing is done as in the United States.

The Rio Grande is a small stream, yet once across it another world dawns on the American. One dollar of United States money is worth two dollars in Mexican money, and all railroad measurements are kilometers instead of miles. One never buys a yard of goods in a store, but a meter, which equals a yard and a tenth. This seems odd enough to the "American" but it is the street cars that interest him the most. It seems incongruous to see a tram car, antiquated though it may be, passing through narrow, precipitous streets of places that antedate Columbus' advent. The tracks are irregular, and nine times out of ten the car, which may be a second-hand one brought down from "the States," is a mule car driven by a man who is dressed in rags, with a torn sombrero on his head and a faded zarape thrown artistically over his left shoulder. On his feet he wears leather sandals, provided he is fortunate enough to have a foot covering, and in his hand he wields a long quirt with which he lashes the mules.

The Mexican mule is a remarkable animal, homely, but stout, and once started seems as loath to stop as it is unwilling to go before starting into action. Over the narrow streets goes the car, the woman peeping at it from behind the barred windows of her homes and the driver alternately blowing a tin horn, calling out "Ande, ande!" and shouting to his beast. This last peculiar sound made through the teeth, is so common in Mexico that the very air seems filled with it. It is also used to "shoo" a person out of the way and takes the place of "get up." By some secret understanding it is comprehended by the mule, who "gets up" either by going forward or backward.

There are first and second class cars on railroads, though the latter go one extreme further and furnish third-class coaches. The fare is very little—about three cents a mile in the first class—and after the conductor sells the tickets innumerable collectors appear to punch them at about every block. In this strange country where lotteries are so prevalent and gambling so common the street car tickets in many places are lottery tickets and a printed notice on the back of these slips suggests that it be kept to see if it does not draw something. Many people watch these numbers, and others make a practice of collecting the old street car tickets and noticing the numbers when the lottery takes place at the beginning of the month. In this land of contrasts a familiar sight is the funeral car with raised dais and catafalque beneath a canopy supplemented by a cross. These funeral cars are painted black or white, and differ in decorations and consequent expense. Sometimes the funeral car of a poor person has no decorations, the black casket exposed to view is without flowers and no mourners follow, but the middle class engage a better funeral car and attach it to one or more ordinary cars with closely drawn curtains and the word "Especial" on the side. So popular is this method that I have counted 11 funeral cars in one hour passing the large zocalo or public square in Mexico City.

All this strikes the newcomer as odd and he may hasten to his hotel only to find that if it possesses an elevator, which is quite improbable—it runs certain hours of the day instead of continuously and the heavy entrance doors to the court are barred after a given time of night. As the stylish resorts there are hotels and restaurants that compare favorably with those in the States. These are usually kept by some enterprising American, who leaves just enough of the Mexican atmosphere in the way of beautiful patio, filled with flowers, and splashing fountains, to keep the Mexican atmosphere, and adds to it up-to-date methods of living and a dash of American dishes interspersed with Mexican condiments. On arrival the guest is shown his room and if he agrees to stay his name, with the number of his room added, is entered on a huge blackboard which fills one side of the office wall. The proprietor then on pays little attention to his guest, who must not expect to have pen, ink and paper in his room, but who receives his key from a man who, after once seeing him, is as infallible in his recognition and in giving the correct key as the major domo of hats at the door

of a hotel dining-room in the States. Sometimes mail is left with this individual, but more often it is thrown on the desk of the proprietor for anyone to pick out at his discretion. Locks and keys are an innovation and the man chambermaid, who is also hall-boy, newsboy and boot-black, usually offers to show the newcomer how to lock the door with every appearance of imparting valuable information. "One can get a comfortable meal in the large Mexican restaurants because the head waiter usually speaks English. Whether the menu be in French or Spanish, he approaches and in an obsequious manner says in "Americano," "We have so and so." "The spaghetti is very nice today," or asks the guest to point out what he wants on the bill of fare. This he jots down in Spanish and hands to the waiter. Unlike the quiet of our well-ordered establishments, a great sputtering and talking goes on continually between the man for some and his subordinates, and when the language is not understood one leaves a sigh of relief to see them finally resolve into smiles, and the wild gestures and hissing sounds cease. In many of these places smoking is permitted, and though the Mexicans are extremely "punctilious" never draw a glass or neglect to say "Gracias" and are polite in many little ways that we neglect, well-bred men will smoke in the bath room of the street car. They are happy people, these neighbors of ours, and even the lower classes, though burdened with poverty and dressed in rags and tatters, find pleasure in life. Sometimes in the tierra caliente or hot country the children run around with no clothing. Fortunately, these people desire less than those of the same station in life in the States; they are not filled with ambition to become rich, and they accept unquestionably many conditions that we

would rebel at. Their voices are low and pleasant and the street calls, with which the air is filled, are musical and command attention. "Gorditas de horno," calls a vendor of hot cakes, and in answering notes come, "Toman queso?" or "Will you have nuts?" but no sane American wants to buy them. The street vendors are dirty and the flies congregate in millions about their wares.

On the other hand, everyone who goes to the land of white umbrellas desires to taste the national dishes, and unless he is fortunate enough to be invited to the home of a Mexican of the upper class, and they are very exclusive, he must take his chances as to where they are prepared. Tortillas are a favorite dish, as common as our bread. Women make them by the roadside, in empty cans and in their kitchen; no place seems too inconvenient and the process never varies. These small cakes resemble our pancakes. They are made of ground corn and water and baked flat on small pieces of sheet iron over a brazier. The tortilla maker usually kneels on the ground and has before her a small inclined mortar of sandstone. The part near her body is higher than that resting on the ground. It looks like a sandstone washboard, and on this she throws handfuls of corn from a basket by her side. She sprinkles this with water obtained by dipping her hand in a gourd holding this precious fluid—for water is treated like milk in our country and is never wasted. This mass the tortilla maker rolls up and down on the mortar board, crushing it as she does so with a sandstone rolling-pin. When of the consistency of meal she puts

it into small, thin cakes and if there is a child present, and there always is, she hands it to the little one, who continues to flatten it between hands that are too often dirty. It is then placed on the iron slab over two or three pieces of charcoal, which are cherished carefully. The tortillas are turned with the hands and when brown are eaten like bread or used to dip up the tripeles or beans which boil in a pot placed with its side against the fire.

These are common roadside sights. Even the better class of Mexicans, who are particular in the preparation of food, seldom cook over anything but a brazier, and only on rare occasions learn to make cake or pies. It is the life of the people that interests most in this country, with its Italian blue sky and its tropical green. It is the people who really constitute Mexican life. As a rule, they are small in stature and they do not live to be old. This is partly due to the immense burdens they carry and to unsanitary lives. In fact it is an exception to see a white-haired Mexican, and when one does he is a striking object, his dusky skin forming a marked contrast to his gray locks. As elsewhere, the soul of the artist is delighted, and there are few countries that can give more material for brush and pencil. Beside the artistic old adobe houses, with their fronts

of green, blue, red or white, it seems impossible for the average Mexican to be awkward. Unconsciously he assumes graceful attitudes, whether wetting his lips over the counter of a pulque shop or hawking his wares. He never hurries and he is pleasing in his movements, though his clothes be of the scantiest and his torn sombrero is stretched out in his hands for stray centavos.

Throughout the entire country the density of the population is a little over 25 persons to each square mile.

A \$1,000,000 Y. M. C. A.

Six thousand young men connected with the Boston Young Men's Christian Association will be called upon this week to hold their first in receiving \$1,000,000 for a new association building to be erected on land purchased in 1906 at the corner of Arlington and Newbury streets, overlooking the Boston Public Garden.

Probably not in the history of the United States has so large a task been undertaken. For three years the plans have been maturing. The financial panic of 1907 was a severe setback to the project.

Here's hoping the early frosts will not spoil the canned-fruit crop.

Ventilating Fans May Prove Dangerous

The French government assumes now-a-days a most paternal interest in the welfare and general health of its working people. So the government not long ago ordered two officials to study the actions of ventilating fans in big factories and other establishments where many workmen were crowded together and breathed air that was supplied largely by big machine fans working through giant ventilating apparatus. These gentlemen have reported back to the French cabinet that in most instances the fans used in French factories have not only no utility for the good of the workmen, but that, on the contrary, they create in the premises where they are placed a veritable whirlwind that raises constantly a cloud of almost invisible dust, which in itself is injurious to the human lungs. They also add that where one workman is suffering from tuberculosis the ventilating fans spread the contagion of these germs as perfectly as if they had been invented for no other purpose.

These officials claim in their government report that all fans should be abolished and do not draw their air supply entirely from outside the building and high above the street level. Also they recommend that the apparatus be so perfected that the workmen are protected from dust by filters that strain the air currents of all dust before it is permitted to enter the working rooms of the factory, mill or big store.

AT THE FANCY BALL.

"I am going to a fancy ball tonight and want some costume to represent my employment," said the customer.

"What business are you in?"

"I am a millman."

"Well, you'd better wear a pair of pumps."

A silver coin discovered by a German numismatologist a few years ago, is said to be the most ancient coin in the world. The coin bears a perfect Aramaean inscription of Panamu Bar Barab, King of Schamol, who reigned about 850 B. C. Up to the time this coin was found the Lydians had always been regarded as the inventors of money, but this new find shows that the Semite Aramaeans, who lived two centuries before the Lydians, are the oldest known coiners of money.

SICILIAN PRINCE ON ITS WAY TO HALIFAX

HALIFAX, Nov. 9.—The Sicilian Prince. The gross tonnage of the Prince sailed on Monday from Rotterdam for Halifax with 466 passengers for this port and New York. She is under charter to the North-West Transport Company.

The Neapolitan Prince and Sicilian Prince belong to the Prince line of steamers. Formerly they were under foreign register. Both are yacht-like steamers, built for a different trade from the one they are now running on.

The Sicilian Prince was built at Greenock in 1899. Until 1902, when she was registered on Newcastle-on-Tyne, she bore the name, Alvaro Ceiral. The Neapolitan Prince, which was built the same year, was transferred to British registry at the same time. Her former name was Rei de Neapolitan Prince is 2,784 tons, that of the Sicilian Prince is 2,900 tons. Their lengths of the same—373 feet.

The announcement made yesterday that Mackenzie and Mann had acquired ownership of the Cairo and Helopolis, which were reported to have been secured by the North-West Transport Company, goes to prove the truth of the report current for a year or more that Mackenzie and Mann controlled the North-West Transport Company. About two years ago the Canadian Northern Steamship Company was incorporated, and it is more than likely that the North-West Transport line, which commenced business as the New York and Continental line, will be the Canadian Northern Steamship Company when the spring season opens.

The line as it now exists has been run for the purpose of building up a trade and getting a foothold. It will be improved and the new line read them.

will have its winter terminus at Halifax, going to St John to discharge cargo. The summer terminus will be Montreal.

What will be done with the New York end of the business, which has attained considerable proportions, remains to be seen. Probably it will be maintained with the smaller boats now in the trade.

THE MORNING PAPER.

Some Reasons Why it Makes The Best Advertising Medium.

A woman's curiosity to know about society, marriages, births, deaths, forces her to read it.

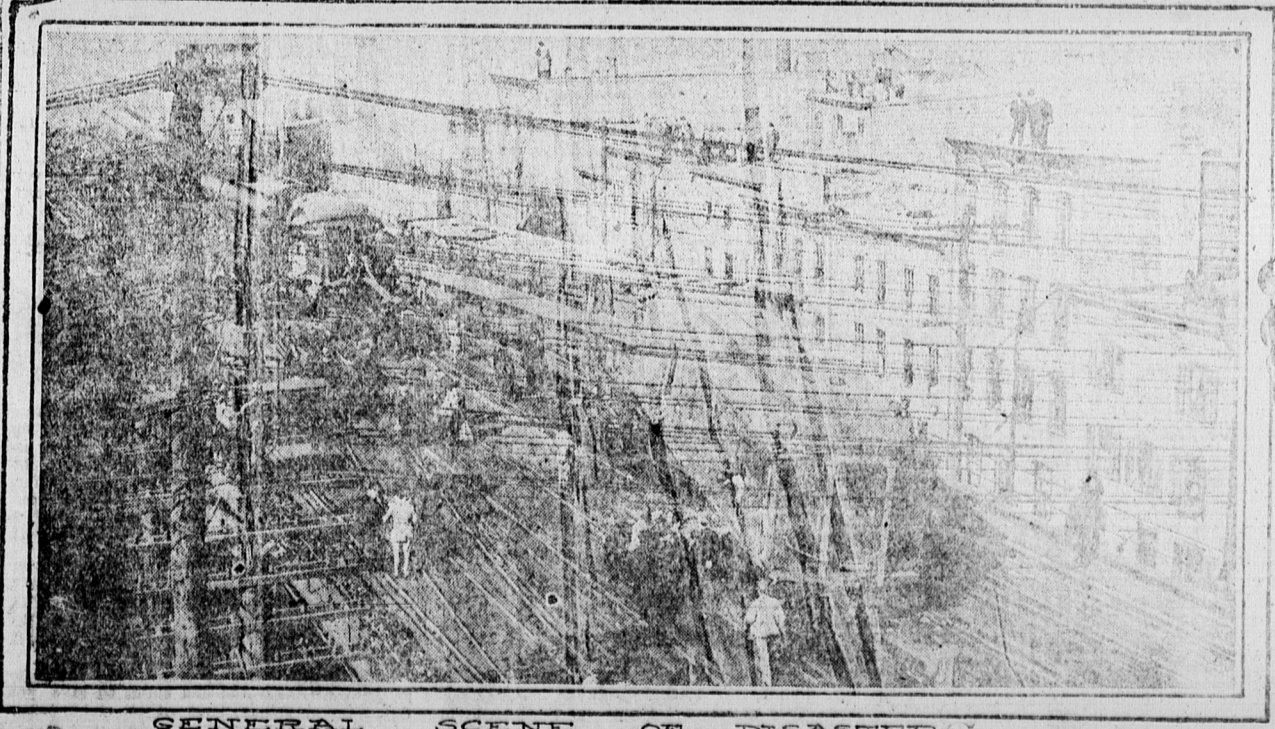
The Morning Paper is before her 11 day long, and it is she who is doing her household duties, arranging and improving the appearance of her home, that the missing and necessary articles of furniture, rugs, carpets, curtains or other necessities, show up the plainest, and there could be no more opportune time for a dealer to tell about the new goods, the new styles and the bargains offered, for the day or week.

In a majority of homes the newspaper is practically the bulk of the reading matter, and the long, all-day life from 5 a. m. to 10 p. m. of The Morning Paper gives not only the housewife but every member of the family an opportunity to read it.

The Morning paper is read at the breakfast table, again at home at noon, on the trains, in the restaurants. It is read in doctor's offices, professional offices, clubs, hotels, cafes, barber shops. It is read by daylight everywhere you go by both employer and employee.

It is a known fact that throughout the world, possibly with a half-dozen exceptions, the papers with editorial influence and national reputation are morning papers.

With these facts in mind, the business man who is looking after the money-spenders of the family to interest in his goods will consult his best interests by placing his announcements where the women will read them.



GENERAL SCENE OF DISASTER

NEW YORK, Dec. 11.—Four persons were killed, a score injured and hundreds of lives imperilled in a collision on the elevated tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Jersey City when the Philadelphia and New York express No 104 leaped from the rails and "sideswiped" an engine and tender on the next track.

The express was composed of an

engine, tender, mail car, smoker and four passenger coaches, well filled with commuters and passengers from Trenton and Philadelphia. The light engine and tender were being backed down from the Waldo avenue yards to the terminal on the river front, to be attached to a train bound for Long Branch.

The passenger engine was running at

a rate of thirty miles an hour. It smashed the front of the engine and continued east on track No 3 for a block and a half. Here the mail car, which was of wood, was crushed between the tender and the steel smoking car, which left the tracks, the light engine, which was on track No 2, and crashed into the

No 2.

As the express train approached the

upset the tender of the light engine. The tender struck the lower end of the signal, and fell onto the track, and a moment later the engine crossed from track No 2 to track No 3. Suddenly it leaped from the rails to track No 2 and crashed into the

No 2.

As the express train approached the

SCIENTIFIC XMAS GIFT SELECTION

Along with good cheer and happiness this season brings its puzzling and disappointments. When you select a gift you want it to express, to the very smallest detail, the taste of the recipient, and do credit to the sender.

Then in buying gifts for gentlemen find it so difficult, and in some cases the result is not at all what is desired.

It is this very reason prompted H. H. Brown, "the young men's man," to give the men of this province a strictly individual, characteristic of their nourished dress distinction and its this same reason why men give set this store as a standard, by which others are judged.

Mr Brown is very enthusiastic over his showing of gents' appropriate Xmas gifts—the kind a little better—little more distinctive than the common. He says his stock of lounging robes, house jackets, fancy knitted vests, coat sweaters, Xmas ties, hostery Xmas gloves, shirts, leather collar boxes, leather hat boxes, underwear, umbrellas, handkerchiefs, fur collars and caps, mufflers, caps, hats and clothing is the most complete to be seen in this city.

Articles requested will be daintily boxed with a pretty Xmas card attached, and then when purchasing after the 15th Mr Brown will have his assistants on hand to distribute to his customers while the supply lasts, one early so as to procure one. They will not surpass his calendars of previous years and that's saying a lot. The best that could be said in favor of a calendar. Mr Brown says please do not ask us to mail them—they cost us a big sum and we purchased them for judicious distribution to our customers, and you can have yours any time after the 15th when you are making your purchase." 12-134231.

WHEN WRITING TO ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE GUARDIAN