

side a present of a pair of wooden stockings, knit by my own hands and to be worn, dear one, that my friendship for you is warm as the material, active as the finger-work, and generous as the donation.

But I consider this present as peculiarly appropriate on the occasion of your marriage. You will remember, in the first place, that there are two individuals united in one pair, who are to walk side by side, guarding against coldness, and giving comfort as long as they last. The thread of their existence is mixed, and so, alas, is the thread of life. In these, however, the white is made to predominate, expressing my desire and confidence that thus it will be the color of your existence. No black is used, for I believe your lives will be wholly free from the black passions of wrath and jealousy. The darkest color is a blue, which is excellent, where we do not make it too blue.

Other appropriate thoughts rise to my mind regarding these stockings. The most indifferent subjects, when viewed by the mind, in a suitable frame, may furnish instructive lessons, as with the poet:

The iron does not rust, the silver does not lose its luster, the bellows that have breathed long, The fire-wind, when it blows, The all too righteous provoke.

But to the subject I will perceive that the tops of these stockings, which I suppose courtship to be represented, are sewed, and by means of sewing are drawn into a snarl, but afterwards come a time when the whole is made plain, and continues so to the end and final toeing off. By this, I wish to take occasion to congratulate you, and that you are now through with sewing, and have come to plain reality. Again, as the whole of those comely stockings was not made at once, but by the addition of one little stitch after another, it was put in with skill and discretion, until the whole presents the fair and equal beauty of work which you see. Life here is a series of one great action, but millions of little ones combined; and so may it be with your lives. No stitch dropped when duties are to be performed—no widening where bad principles are to be repressed, or no many it is not through sewing, nor narrowing where truth and generosity are in question. Thus, every stitch of life made right and set in the right place—none other too large or too small, too light or too loose; thus may you keep on your youth and even course, making extreme one fair and consistent.

Until, together, having passed this hind, in the final narrowing off, and dropping the coil of the emblematical pair of companions and comforting associates, nothing appears but white, the token of innocence and peace, of purity and light—may you, like these stockings, find each being dropped, and the work completed together from the place where you were formed, to a happier state of existence, a present from earth to heaven. Hoping that these stockings and admonitions may meet a cordial reception, I remain, in the true blue friendship, seemly, yet without seeming.

Yours, from top to toe,

From the Democrat.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 14, 1860.

PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER 14, 1860.

WE might have supposed that the history and the geography of Mexico, lying as that country does on our borders—would have been almost as familiar as our own; but this is so far from being true, that Santa Fe is almost as unfamiliar and as mysterious to the people of this country, as the White Nile. The recent war with Mexico and the acquisition of vast territory which once belonged to that country, are so far from having made the history of Montezuma any more familiar as that of Pownatan and Massasoit.

No country possesses greater attraction for the antiquarian and the poet. There are the ruins of mighty cities, and the traces of civilization not greater in extent, but no other record is left on the earth, which there is scenery, grand and picturesque beyond example. The history is marvellous and stirring, reminding us of the romantic legends of chivalry.

The territory occupied by the ancient Mexicans was no more than twice as large as New England, yet such is the remarkable formation of the country, that it presented every variety of climate, and was capable of yielding nearly every fruit found between the equator and the Arctic Circle. Along the gulf of Mexico, the country is bordered by a broad, fertile, and the tierra caliente or hot regions, which has the usual high temperature of tropical countries. Barren and sandy plains are intermingled with those of exuberant fertility. There are thickets of aromatic shrubs and magnificent flowers, in the midst of which tower up trees of gigantic growth. In the rank exhalations of the hot and humid soil, lurks the fatal malaria, which scourges the coast from the spring to the autumnal equinox.

After passing some fifty or sixty miles over this hazy region, the traveler finds himself rising into a pure atmosphere. He breathes more freely, for his senses are no longer oppressed by the sultry heat and intoxicating perfumes of the valley. The aspect of nature changes, and his eye no longer revels among the gay colors which painted the landscape. When he has ascended about four thousand feet, he reaches the height where clouds and mists settle, in their way from the Gulf of Mexico. This is the region of perpetual beauty, and unchanging verdure; and here he leaves behind him the hazy and hazy background and even terrible. The road now lies along the base of mighty mountains, which once gleamed with volcanic fire, and whose snow-capped summits still serve as beacon lights to sailors. Every where are traces of the ancient civilization, which have been thrown into a thousand fragments by the obstacles in their way. As the traveler tells on over the barren waste, he may sometimes cast his eye down the steep slopes, and behold the ravines far beneath him, glowing with the rich bloom of the tropics. Still rising upward, he enters another climate, and the forest of pine, oak and the dark forests of pine, conceals that he has reached tierra fria, or cold region, the last of the great natural ter-

ms into which the country is divided. The maize or Indian corn has followed him all the way up; but now he first sees fields of wheat and other European grains. When he has climbed to the height of between seven and eight thousand feet, he reaches the summit of the Cordillera of the Andes, and enters that vast sheet of table-land, which maintains an elevation of more than six thousand feet for the distance of nearly two hundred leagues, until it declines in the higher northern latitudes.

A chain of volcanic mountains of still more stupendous height, the peaks of which are covered with perpetual snow, stretches away in a westerly direction; and the cool breezes, which wander down from their icy summits, diffuse a grateful coolness over the elevated plains. This table-land, though cold in comparison with the low region on the coast, enjoys a climate as warm as the central part of Italy. The atmosphere is dry; and the soil, though naturally fertile, has a parched and barren aspect, owing partly to the rapid evaporation which takes place in those lofty regions, and partly to a want of trees to shelter the soil from the burning sun. In the days of the Aztecs, these plateaus were thickly covered with trees of extraordinary dimensions; but the Spaniards made an indiscriminate war on the forests, regarding neither beauty nor utility, and their descendants suffer the consequences of their improvidence.

Milwac across the continent somewhat nearer the Pacific than the Atlantic ocean, at an elevation of nearly seven thousand five hundred feet, is the celebrated valley of Mexico. It is of an oval form, about sixty-seven leagues in circumference, and is surrounded by a wall of steep and lofty mountains, which nature seems to have provided, though ineffectually, to protect it from invasion.

Five lakes are spread over this valley. On the opposite borders of the largest of these, stood the cities of Mexico and Texcoco, the capital of the two most powerful states of Anahuac.

The history of the races which occupied the country when the Spaniards entered it, and of those which had preceded them, is shadowy and mysterious. It is a region where imagination may revel in security, for truth itself is but now and then struggling ray through the mists, and the same may seize to illumine the pictures which she creates. Of these ancient races, the most conspicuous was the Aztec. They came, it is supposed, from the North, and entered Anahuac toward the close of the seventh century. Of course little can be known of this people, but it is generally admitted that they were well instructed in agriculture and many of the mechanic arts, and that they were the true maintainers of the civilization which existed in the country.

The wonderful ruins still to be seen in Mexico and Central America, are referred to this people, and the traveler who nurses amid the buried walls, and crumbling pillars of Mithra and Palenque inquiring in vain for the origin and end of the race, whose busy hands had raised the cities and carved those pillars. History has done little more than to preserve their name.

After having extended their sway over the remotest parts of Anahuac, which they held for four hundred years, they became gradually reduced by pestilence and famine, and by mysterious causes as they had entered it, and were succeeded by other races, the most noted of these were the Mexicans or Aztecs, and the Tezucanos. The latter settled on the eastern shore of the great lake, where they built their capital, and extended their empire over the neighboring tribes. The Aztec came to the spot, and entered Anahuac in the beginning of the thirteenth century. After many wanderings, they halted on the south-western borders of the great lake, and there they beheld the men announced by the oracle. This incident was a tale, which they regarded as a prophecy, and spreading his wings to the rising sun, an omen certainly more poetic than that which was to indicate to the wandering Trojan the spot where he should begin to trace the walls of Ilium. This legend is commemorated by the Aztecs, and the Cactus which from the arms of the modern Mexican Republic.

At first they erected light fabrics of reeds and sought a precarious subsistence by hunting and fishing. As they increased in number, they extended their policy and military discipline, and established a character for courage in war, which made them terrible to their neighbors. In the beginning of the fifteenth century, a remarkable league was formed between the Aztecs, the Tlascalcas, and Tlaxcala, and they should mutually support each other in the wars; and mutually share the spoils. This treaty was maintained for more than a century, during which time the alliance, overlapping the rocky ramparts of their valleys, carried their arms down the sides of the table-land to the borders of the Gulf of Mexico, and it extended their dominion across the continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The capitals increased in splendor and in strength, as year after year the kings returning, loaded with the spoils of conquered cities. Mexico seems to have gained a supremacy in this alliance; and when the Spaniards entered the country, the name of the great Montezuma, was the terror of the surrounding nations.

The government of Mexico was an elective monarchy. Four of the principal nobles chose by their own body in the preceding reign, the office of electors. The election was made from the nobles or nephews of the deceased prince, and military merit seems to have been chiefly regarded. The new monarch was not installed in his royal dignity, until by a victory he had obtained a number of captives, which he sent to the Aztec superintendant. And then, with great ceremony, amid the pomp of human sacrifices, he was crowned.

The Aztec princes, especially toward the close of the dynasty, lived in a comparatively luxurious and dissipated manner. They were provided with halls for the dissipation of the monarch in the transmission of business, and also with accommodations for a numerous body-guard. The monarch, made up of the chief nobles, was the head of the system outside

among them. There was a class of nobles who possessed large landed estates. The titles to these estates were derived from the crown, and they were held under the obligation of military service. It was said by some writers that there were two castles who resided a part of the year in the capital, who were called the "Two Kings." Whether this is true or not, according to the testimony of our conquerors, there was a large number of very powerful chieftains, who were bound to support the throne with their counsel and their arms.

The jurisprudence of the Mexicans, owing to a small degree of civilization, and a high sense of the rights of property and persons. In each of the principal cities with its dependent territories, a judge was appointed with final jurisdiction, in all cases which were referred to him. Beside this magistrate, a court was established in every province. An appeal could be had from this court to the supreme judge, whose decision was final.

The judicial arrangements in Texcoco were still more refined. There was a graduation of tribunals, terminating in a general court, which sat in the capital, and which held its sessions in eighty days, over which the king presided in person. This body decided all cases, which from their importance or difficulty, had been referred to them by the lower tribunals. These courts seem to have been held with a parade and pomp which might be compared with that of an eastern potentate. "In the royal palace of Texcoco," says an old chronicler, "was a court-yard, on the opposite sides of which were two halls of justice. In the principal one, called 'the tribunal of God,' sat a throne of pure gold, inlaid with turquoise and other precious stones. Above the throne was placed a human skull, crowned with an emerald of immense size, and surrounded by an acre of brilliant, precious stones. The walls were hung with tapestry, made of the hair of different animals of rich and various colors, interwoven with gold and silver. In front was placed a human skull, crowned with an emerald of immense size, and surrounded by an acre of brilliant, precious stones. The walls were hung with tapestry, made of the hair of different animals of rich and various colors, interwoven with gold and silver. In front was placed a human skull, crowned with an emerald of immense size, and surrounded by an acre of brilliant, precious stones. The walls were hung with tapestry, made of the hair of different animals of rich and various colors, interwoven with gold and silver. In front was placed a human skull, crowned with an emerald of immense size, and surrounded by an acre of brilliant, precious stones. The walls were hung with tapestry, made of the hair of different animals of rich and various colors, interwoven with gold and silver. 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