

with the cold. The Mexican children go bare-footed all the year. I suppose they would rather wear shoes, but many are too poor to buy them. They tell us that in the spring the wind blows very hard at times, and the sand comes through the pass and off the mesa, making it very unpleasant, but it does not last very long. There is scarcely any rain till July and August, when there are heavy showers, but it comes too late to start vegetation, so the valley is dependent on irrigation, which is now carried on in such a systematic manner as to make fruit and vegetable raising profitable and reliable. Alfa fa is a success here and yields three crops in a season, then makes good pasture until time to irrigate again. It takes the place of grain for feed for stock. The small grains can be raised, but corn does not do so well. There is some raised, however; the Mexicans use it to make their tortillas or corncakes. They soak it in alkali water, then mash it with smooth stones and moisten with water, pat it into cakes and bake it on hot stones at the fireplace. This is the home of the grape, and there are many nice vineyards. The Concord is not grown, only the fine foreign varieties receive attention. The Mexicans have a kind, introduced many years ago by the priests, called the Mission Grape. They are used principally for wine, which the natives drink. It does not seem to affect them as the filthy whisky used in the north. I have not seen one Mexican disorderly or rough. They are uniformly quiet and polite. They are a primitive people and, in most cases, tread the wine press as of old. Fine fruits, such as peaches, plums, pears, apricots, quinces, prunes, and even apples, do exceedingly well here, and come into bearing quite young. Vegetables do well, with the exception of Irish potatoes; they are a failure so far. We can buy very nice ones in market; they are shipped in. There is one thing the valley lacks, and that is grass. Many yards in town, and also the city park, have been sown to

Bermuda grass, and looks very pretty earlier in the season, but aside from that there is no grass. We missed it very much at first, but we have become used to it and sweep our door yard just as our neighbors do.

The American side of the valley is only from three to four miles wide here, and the river flows south-east. To the north-east of us are the sand hills, looking like bluffs, at the top of which is the Mesa, a vast plain extending for miles into New Mexico. It is entirely destitute of water. There is some vegetation, and after the summer rain gramma grass comes up and affords excellent pasture for stock. Water can be obtained from wells, but as yet there is no way to irrigate. There are many beautiful cottonwood trees here, but they are different from those in the north, having large wide spreading tops and slightly drooping branches. As the water is not far below the surface they send their roots down and have a constant supply and the foliage is very heavy. The Mistletoe makes its home on these fine old trees and gradually saps their life. I never see it there but what I want to strip it off. It is evergreen with pretty white berries, but I do not admire it, since I know it kills the tree that nourishes it. There is an evergreen weed or shrub that grows thickly on the uncultivated land; it is of a pale sickly color and is used in making the flat roofs of the adobe houses. Sunflowers grow to be small trees and make excellent kindlingwood, as they are quite resinous, and the cockle-burrs beat anything I ever saw. The natives are very poor farmers, in fact they do not work any more than necessary to get enough to eat and a little to wear. It seems to me we would starve on the diet that keeps them strong.

The Rio Grande is far from being a grand river in appearance. Last fall it was dry. Now that there have been rains in the mountains it is a rapid turbulent stream, and in the spring it may be a mile wide. It is muddy with