

consider the matter. In the meantime we were exploiting the court, and found that one señor was engaged in the congenial task of brewing *pulque*. I had been drinking this national beverage at dinner for a week, and naturally was interested in knowing how it was manufactured. We saw in one shed a cow-hide supported upon four posts, and into it was poured the milky juice from the "*maguei*" plant, or *agave*. It was undergoing the mild fermentation necessary to prepare it as a beverage. In another similar skin, covered by an upper skin and straw, to keep in the heat, was another batch. The *pulque* thus prepared, contains a little alcohol after four days' fermentation, and more the older it is. It is placed daily on the table, and one drinks it as we do milk, which it resembles in appearance, if not in taste, and with the common people it takes the place of beer, for the double purpose of quenching thirst and of stimulating their spirits, if they drink enough of it. If the fermentation is prolonged and the product distilled, a strong spirit is produced, said to produce somewhat complicated results. My experience did not go that far.

Well, our landlord of the hostelry was not that morning inclined to push business, so we departed; but we had been watched. A more progressive neighbor asserted he could supply the necessary vehicular commodity, so our cicerone arranged terms, and in half an hour, after we had some breakfast of fresh eggs, tortillas and coffee, we mounted the caravan. This was constituted of a driver and attendant, two teams of mules hitched tandem, and a vehicle of prairie schooner or band-wagon type.

Within the town we went slowly over the rough paved streets, but, once outside, our Jehu whipped up, raising clouds of dust.

Unlike most country roads, this one was well graded, leading as it did to the manor house of the Cervantes family, for two miles passing through hun-

dreds of acres set out with the maguey plant, from which is taken the pulque juice. These are simply fields of aloes, set in rows like the trees of any orchard, and growing in the arid soil to a height of eight or ten feet. The young plants springing up from the roots of the older ones, are transplanted, and in four, five, or six years are tapped, the central flower stalk being cut off when a foot thick, and thereafter hollowed out so that a basin holding a gallon or so is formed. Into this the juice flows for several months, and every day or two it is taken out in a scientific fashion. An Indian farm laborer, with a bag of pig-skin slung over his back, goes from plant to plant, and by means of a hollow gourd, holding say half a gallon, quickly transfers the juice to the bag on his shoulders. The method is by sucking the air from the gourd when the juice enters it, and by holding a finger over the top it is kept there till transferred.

Driving onward towards Tezcozincó village, at the foot of the hill, we passed over rocky ground and dry water courses, and finally stopped near the house of the village judge. Our cicerone ordered dinner, and we began the hour's ascent to the summit of the hill. This Hacienda or farm estate, on which is the famous hill of Tezcozincó, is one of the largest, oldest, and best cared-for in all Mexico. It is made so largely because of the fact that a large mountain stream flows the year round down the valley to the lake below, and in its passage is utilized at various points for irrigating the soil.

After our descent from the mountain, we had a typical Mexican dinner in the country. Tortillas, boiled chicken, side dishes highly seasoned with pepper, papos and divine pulque, in course after course, tamed our appetites, which had been freshened by the mountain climb.

Leaving our host after giving free medical advice regarding his señora, we returned a mile or so to visit the