

MEXICO THE LATEST COMMERCIAL ALLY

The shipping that pours in and out of the harbors at Victoria and Vancouver day by day has brought to these places a cosmopolitan temperament that can exist only where there are strong commercial bonds between cities and nations. British Columbia's two ports are tied to many strange nations over the Pacific; strange when looked at from the perspective of the casual observer, yet very real and very interesting from the view-point of an open-eyed observer. The Chinaman, whose skin runs from chrome to ochre in shade, the Japanese, whose neatness and perspicacity we know only too well, the dark-skinned, turbaned sons of grim India and the occasional arrivals from South Sea Islands, are not new to the Victorian. In these two ports they have become part of the community's daily life and part of the scene.

shake off an apathy in regard to President Diaz's country that seemed to be overcoming him, and to take his share of the Mexican trade before it was lost to him. Happily the warning and the advice did not come too late, although much trade that might have been secured years ago is still awaiting the enterprising business man. The Dominion's trade with Mexico has been almost confined to the Atlantic until recently, but there is now every prospect of this province obtaining the lion's share of it.



A MEXICAN GENTLEMAN IN HIS RICH RIDING OUTFIT.

ery that makes up a picturesque whole. The reason for this lies in the close relationship of British Columbia with the lands that lie across "the peaceful ocean," that has been brought about by the exchange of commerce between this fruitful province and those interesting countries.

Lately a new note has been struck in the chord of cosmopolitanism, a new era has opened in British Columbia trade history. Quite recently a regular line of steamers to Mexico, a project much-talked of for many years, was established, and now the two guard-ports of the Dominion are daily becoming more interested, both commercially and socially, in the southern republic, the rich country that seems destined to be one of Canada's nearest and dearest trade neighbors at no very distant time. Since the commencement of the Canadian-Mexican service, under subsidy to the Dominion government, a new line, the Pacific Coast S. S. Co., has been formed, having as one of its main objects participation in the trade which is being built up between Mexico and British Columbia. More than that, local capital has interested itself in the development of a fertile area on the Pacific coast of the republic, and there is considerable talk of further speculation on the part of British Columbians with regard to the Mexican market.

For a long time past the agents of the few Canadian business houses having interests in Mexico, in company with the Dominion's representative there, had been crying to the Canadian to

tain kind as well as manufactured goods. The Mexican market is now held jointly by Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom, and Canada should now prove a strong competitor to these countries, profiting by their experience of Mexican ways and starting a fresh book with the Mexican business men. In working up trade with the southern republic Canadians are confronted by one very real barrier to close relationship. That barrier is the Mexican way of "doing" business.

It will be necessary for British Columbia firms wishing to build up a sound exchange of trade with Mexican merchants to know more of their customers' habits and peculiarities, the latter, of course, from a Canadian point of view, before much progress can be made. From the non-success of many English, German and American firms who tried to deal with the Mexican in the brusque way of the northerner, British Columbians may learn a lesson of adaptability and patience that will assure the eventual existence of a great and valuable trade between Victoria, Vancouver and the Pacific ports of the republic.

Apropos of this it is interesting to note that the Mexican is now learning English as an indispensable part of his business education, and thus the path is being cleared for a closer understanding between the English-speaking nations and the republic. At the same time the former have many cobwebs to sweep from their minds re-

garding Mexico, its people, and their customs.

Not a few visitors to Mexico jump to the conclusion upon short acquaintance that the Mexican merchant is not as shrewd a business man as the Canadian or the Englishman. A hustling northerner, suddenly dropped down among a more slow-going Latin race, is apt to mistake deliberate methods for poor methods. He does not always stop to consider that they are the methods of the country and suited to the climate and the taste and the temperament of the great majority of the customers with whom the native merchant deals. The Latin merchant confines more time in making up his order; there may not be so much rush and bustle about it as in other places, but any experienced man who has taken orders from the Mexican or the Spanish importer will tell you that in the end he drives a hard bargain. He wants the best discounts and the longest credits. And, if he is slow in closing a purchase order, he is equally careful in negotiations for a sale. He knows the character of the people with whom he is dealing and naturally has fewer bad accounts than the inexperienced foreigner. Any foreign exporter can afford to pay liberally for honest representation in a Latin country by a house that knows thoroughly the requirements of the market and the customers with whom it must deal. The representative who works up a business and can discriminate properly in the extension of credits is worthy of his hire.

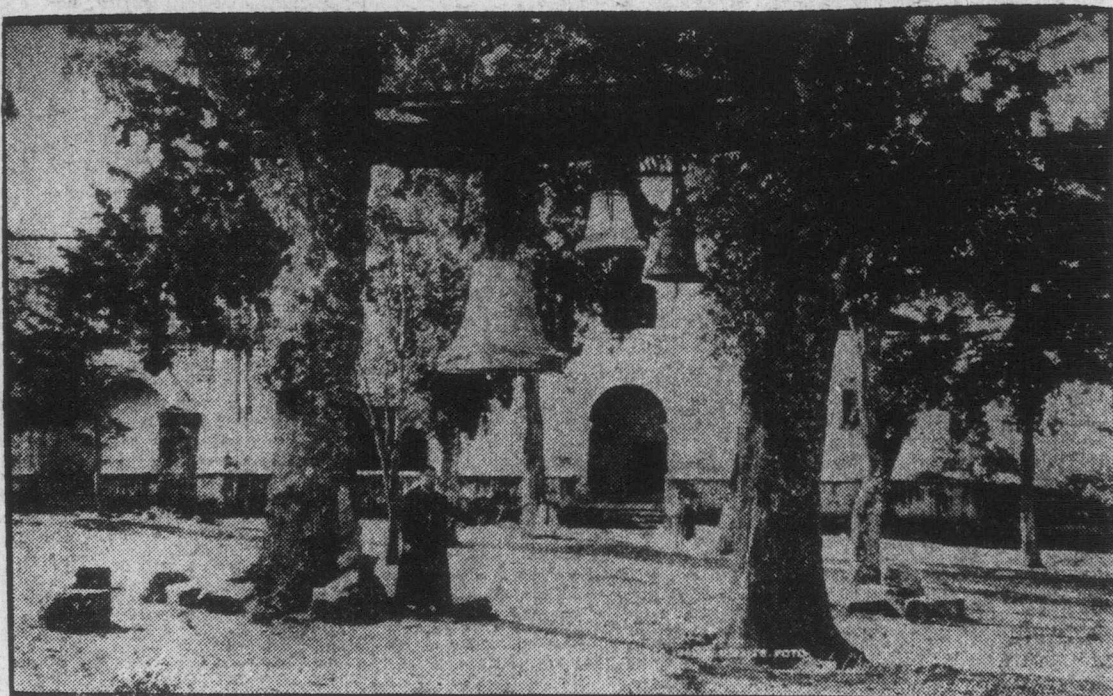
A thorough knowledge of the Spanish language is of the utmost advantage to the representative of a foreign house seeking business in Mexico, says a writer. It is not the absolute necessity to-day, however, that it was once. There are now foreign firms established throughout the republic in various lines. Many of the heads of large concerns speak English perfectly, and a competent interpreter can readily be secured in any of the larger cities. No exporting house should delay entering the Mexican field for the lack of a Spanish-speaking representative. Other things being equal, the man who can talk to a customer in his native tongue has a decided advantage; but between the man who knows Spanish and is not familiar with the business he represents, and the man who is a master of Castilian, there can be no question of choice. A lack of business ability will be detected in the Mexican market just as readily as a faulty pronunciation of Spanish. The Spanish interpreter can always be secured and employed without discredit. It is impossible for a Spanish-speaking representative to employ an assistant to tell him his business.

The progress of the English language in Mexico City is marked from year to year. Even six years ago a stranger found it difficult to do much shopping without a knowledge of Spanish. Now there is not a house of any importance in the city that does not have at least one English-speaking clerk and some of them have several, and the manager or proprietor deals with the American travelling man in the latter's own language. The prominent lawyers and doctors of Mexico are highly educated men. They speak English fluently and several other languages as well. They read the newspapers and magazines in English. The Mexicans are linguists but are very modest regarding their attainments. You will meet a Mexican gentleman in the car on his way to business, and although he may have read his morning newspaper in English thoroughly before leaving home if he has not had opportunity for conversational practice, he will be reluctant to acknowledge any acquaintance with the language whatever.

That Mexico is awakening to the great possibilities of trade on the Pacific goes without saying, and the costly improvements that are being made on some of the harbors, notably Salina Cruz and Acapulco, proves that the government of the republic is alive to the coming era of prosperity that is going to sweep along the west coast of the American continent. It is a matter for congratulation that British Columbia is also alive to the fact and ready to take their share of this prosperity, the herald of which may be found in the recent connecting of this province to the rising ports on the Mexican west coast.

Now that interest in Mexico's trade with the Dominion has been awakened and has been dealt with so frequently of late in the press, it is only natural that an interest in the habits and customs, the daily life of the Mexican people is growing locally. The fascination of Mexico for any and all visitors is too well-known to need more than a reference here. A country rich in ancient lore, rich in natural wealth, and in some places natural beauty, and unsurpassed for the architectural grandeur of its cities cannot fail to provide romance and fascination for the traveller.

The greater part of Mexico's population is made up of full-blooded Indians, and the remainder are mostly Mestizo, the descendants of half-caste In-



THE "PADRE," OR PRIEST, AND THE TZINTZUNTZAN MISSION, SHOWING THE GREAT BELLS.



A VERA CRUZ CART—ONE OF MEXICO'S ANTIQUE VEHICLES.

dians and white people. They are people whose habits resemble those of an age that has long passed, that is, if we take them collectively. In the interior of the country may be found the old agricultural and domestic implements and utensils of a hundred years ago. In the cities the most modern conveniences that the ingenuity of man has provided can be found in company with old-fashioned possessions that savor of antiquity. Throughout modern Mexico may be found the two streaks of modernity and antiquity running in harness, yet, while they never harmonize, they seldom jar. The people are indolent, if we view them in the light of workers without regard to their heredity and their climatic environment, but they are a very warm-hearted race of people who can never do too much for those whose friendship they esteem. The essence of politeness covers a multitude of small sins, not so much of social delinquency, but of business laxity.

On this page will be found some interesting reproductions of photographs showing the present day natives, their quaint dresses and one of their woe-fully out-of-date conveyances. The Mexican peasant has scarcely changed in a century, and the advent of railways and the modernizing of Mexican business is only now beginning to break through the garment of antiquity that covers agricultural Mexico. At the same time, now that digging on railways is beginning to supplant the work on the ranches, and now that capital is beginning to develop vast areas of fruitful soil with the agricultural implements of the present day, it seems that the beginning of the end so far as "modern ancient Mexico" is concerned, has already begun.

Mexico is bound to attract a great deal of tourists from the northern ports of the Pacific coast at an early date, as it is becoming so well known that interest in its charms is growing daily. While there has always been a fairly large amount of passenger travel on the steamers running to Mexican ports, and especially to the Gulf of Mexico, it follows that the development of the com-

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habitants of the country who were masters of their craft. Art seems to permeate the Mexican cities. In the City of Mexico some of the world's finest feats of architecture bear witness to the richness of Spain's one-time colony. Churches that cost millions to build and other buildings that house almost priceless gems of art, are common in that city.

The cathedral in Mexico City is the most sumptuous church in America. It faces the north side of the great Plaza, on the site of the great pyramidal "teocalli," or temple of Huitzilopochtli, titular god of the Aztecs. This edifice, which was founded in 1573 and finished in 1657, at a cost of \$2,000,000 for the walls alone, forms a Greek cross 426 feet long and 203 feet wide, with two great naves and three aisles, twenty side-chapels and a magnificent high altar supported by marble columns and surrounded by a tumbugo balustrade with sixty-two statues made of rich gold, silver and copper-alloy, serving as candelabra.

The elaborate carved choir is also enclosed by tumbugo railings made in Macao, weighing twenty-six tons, and valued at \$1,500,000. In the interior the Doric style prevails with Renaissance on the exterior. The cathedral is adorned by a fine dome and two open towers 218 feet high. At the foot of the left tower is placed the famous "calendar stone," the most interesting relic of Aztec culture.

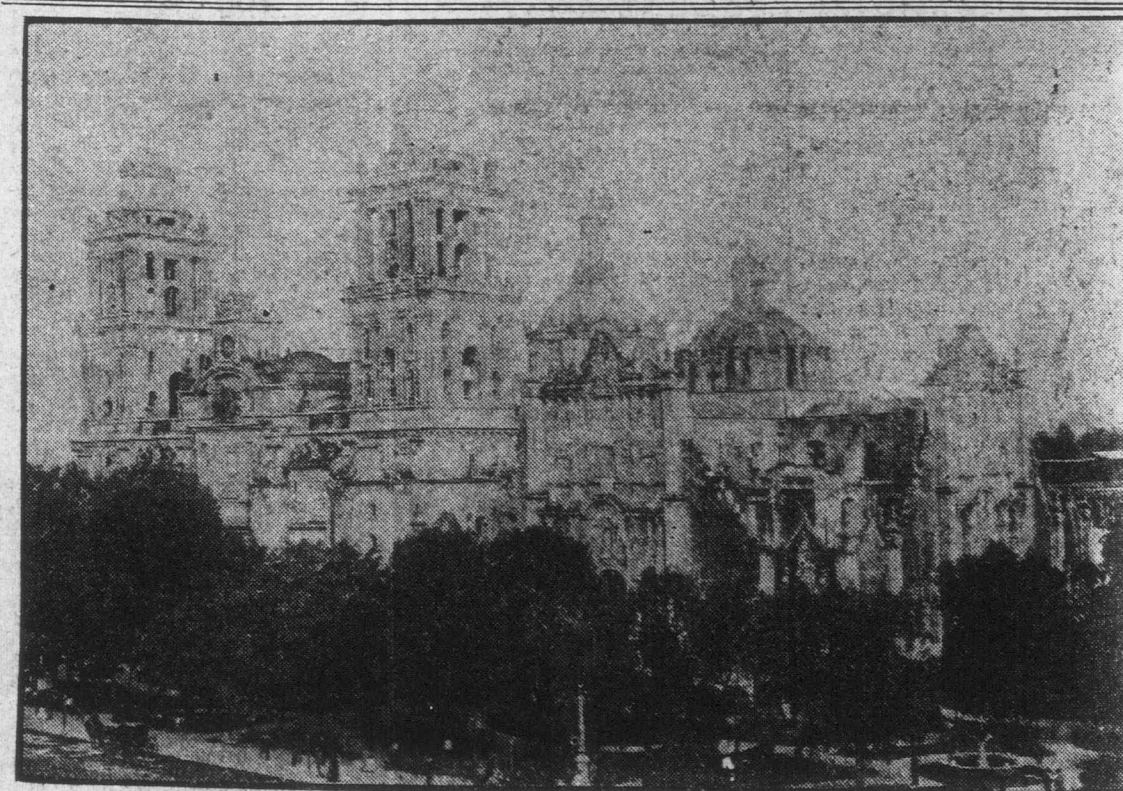
Much could be written of even the smallest phase of Mexican life, but no-

thing can adequately describe its varying features. Notes on the present state of the republic's people and the awakening of the great majority of Mexicans to the presence of the twentieth century's marvels come to us from travellers who visit this land of wonders, and from various publications that are now devoting much space to the southern country. These will no doubt be stored in the memory of those who are taking a close interest in the republic and possibly contemplating a visit to it on account of the closer trade and social relations that are now being established between this province and the republic.

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Only 34 out of every 100 Englishmen are married.



CATHEDRAL IN MEXICO CITY.

This remarkable edifice is the most sumptuous and costly church building on the American continent. It faces the great Plaza in Mexico City, and is annually visited by many thousands of tourists.



Fair Bather—I think it's
Young Man—Well, you

Sa

"Do you know that I think Providence watches over the my profession?" said the Bo as he lay back in his seat a placidly.

"Isn't it cheek instead of dence?" queried the sausage-

"Come now, but don't I caustic. Let me illustrate whi

twice Buffalo and Detroit, week I fell in with two

spirits, and one of them tried to flirt with every platform as we made the

When I gently took him to he turned on me and said

arrived at St. Thomas he off and kiss the handsome station. That was his b

I didn't know it. He had at his sister to meet him, but

that. He put up such a bluff ten dollars on the result. Th

at St. Thomas for refresh we dropped off our flir

dive for a good looking with his arms outstretched

and the name of Sadie on side-stepped him and a m

He didn't ask any questions with his left and the w

crumpled up like an old I hadn't come too w

CRAF
Cup
Dan Cupid
dark dreary
Discards his
-and
And
And

What a harassed look
But she's always all