

# Glimpsing the Charms of Mexico City



PLAZA AND NATIONAL PALACE

Founded By Aztecs About 1325, Captured By Spanish in 1521—A City of Contrasts—National Museum Holds Priceless Antiques.

By KATHERINE LOUISE SMITH

RECOGNITION of Mexico is bringing renewed interest in that delightful country as people begin to realize that the Republic has been unfortunate and that her troubles are beginning to cease. There is such charm about this country that persons who have been there are rejoiced that a neighbor with such a historic past, such inexhaustible resources, and handsome cities is now on hand-shaking terms with the United States. There are many cities in Mexico that have buildings comparable with those of our large places and the new is struggling with the old and gaining supremacy. Chief interest always centers around Mexico City, the home of President Obregon, the heart of Mexico and in ancient days the home of Aztec rulers. The capital is so delightful in climate, so cosmopolitan in social atmosphere, so individual in customs and sights, that it is one of the two most distinctive cities on the North American continent—the other being Quebec, Canada.

#### Ideal Climate

Mexico City is the focal point in the Valley of Mexico. It is nearly eight thousand feet above sea level on a plateau which ensures such a summer and winter temperature that heat and cold are never extreme. The scenery around the city is magnificent for the valley is entirely surrounded by mountains and one of the first objects to attract the eye are the two snow capped volcanoes of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl. "Popo" as it is generally called is 17,540 feet above

the sea and its companion "Ixi" or "The Woman in White," is about a thousand feet less. "Popo" is often ascended, but the highest point of "Ixi" has never been reached. It is said that Cortez made gunpowder from the sulphur in "Popo," but today nothing more harmful than ice for ice cream and domestic purposes comes from "Popo's" sloping sides. The ancient name of Mexico City was Tenochtitlan and it covered about one-fourth of the area within the present city. The traditional story of its founding helps one to understand some of the sights and symbols on its streets. About the year 825 the Aztecs and other Indian races were told they would build a city on a site that would be indicated to them by the discovery of an eagle sitting on the stem of a prickly pear, with a serpent in his talons. Halting on the shores of a lake in the Valley of Mexico they saw this sight, and every Mexican coin now bears the engraving of an eagle on a cactus. It was here Mexico City was founded and its center was the great Aztec temple—Teocalli—where sacrifices took place and where today stands the Cathedral of the City of Mexico.

#### Chapultepec Castle

One of the first places that every one desires to see is Chapultepec Castle, the home of the ruler of Mexico from Aztec times to the present. It is situated on a high hill about two miles from the center of the city and attached to it is the National Military Academy, where a system of training similar to that of West Point is carried on. No one knows exactly when this castle was built but some cypress trees around the hill are said to date to the time of Montezuma. Additions to the castle have been made from time to time, and it is now a large building with rooms, halls and galleries handsomely decorated, private rooms for the president and a series of marble terraces for an approach.

Leading to the castle is the beautiful Paseo de la Reforma, laid out by Carlotta, and considered the one of the "show drives" of the world. It is nearly a block wide, three miles long and with side paths, wide walks and artistic benches. Occasionally, this Champs Elysees of Mexico widens into glorietas in which are statues. In one is the figure of Charles IV of Spain in bronze, in another is the statue of Columbus, and most interesting of all, in a third glorietta is the statue of the Aztec emperor, Cuauhtemoc, surmounting a base which displays the scene of his tortures. On Sunday afternoons this paseo is the setting for a remarkable social pageant in which handsomely gowned women and men on horseback take part.

#### Busy Streets

The streets are cosmopolitan and autos and carriages fly back and forth. Peddlers pass with all sorts of notions, handsomely gowned women shop in stores displaying Paris garments, and attractive jewelry stores show rare stones and Mexican filigree silver work to lure the tourist. You will see all this and much more in the morning

and afternoon but from one to three beware of trying to shop for store doors are closed and bolted with big iron bolts and every one goes home for the noon meal and rest. Business begins again in the afternoon and by evening the streets are full and you jostle against Mexicans with their families, English with canes, painters and sculptors, hacienda owners from the country, fruit vendors, middle class dudes wearing felt sombreros—one above the other—like a Chinese pagoda—hundreds of unique sights. If you read the store signs you will see fantastic names—like La Pearla, La Esmeralda or "The Hole in the Wall." Perhaps you will stop at a tiny corner market and buy a dozen peanuts—all she has—from an old woman who sits with head covered with a rebozo under a white umbrella, or you may watch the peddler with live chickens in baskets on his back.

#### The Cathedral

The great Cathedral with its two prodigious towers and fine dome is well worth a visit. The building was begun about 1573 but is still unfinished. The architecture shows it was built at different periods but the effect of stone and marble is pleasing and you will find a service always going on. The choirs and altars are handsomely carved, there are paintings by noted artists and a curiosity in the shape of a railing made of tumbago—a metal alloy of gold, silver and copper, and very rare. In one chapel lie the remains of the Emperor Iturbide. "The Liberator."



A PAUPER FUNERAL



ORANGE VENDOR



CATHEDRAL OF MEXICO



PULQUE, THE NATIONAL DRINK, IS TRANSPORTED IN BAG SKINS

In the square is the Municipal Palace where President Obregon's senate labor and where hangs the famous Liberty Bell, which is rung every September 15 to commemorate Mexico's independence from Spain. Here are the business rooms of the president, the headquarters of the army and the Hall of the Ambassadors on the walls of which hang a portrait of George Washington.

Another day can be spent rambling through the National Library, where are dozeskin manuscripts that date back to the Conquest. Under Obregon much attention has been paid to education and the library has been largely increased and its activities encouraged. There are many branches, lectures and musical entertainments are given under its auspices and a bureau has been created to furnish cheap editions of standard books to the humblest classes. On Sunday official clerks read aloud.

The National Museum The Academy of Fine Arts contains

many excellent paintings by Spanish and Mexican artists, but it is eclipsed in interest by the National Museum, where the government places all antiquities found in the Republic. Here days can be spent in wandering from room to room for there are some four hundred specimens of ancient Mexican ornaments, architecture and sculpture and as excavations are now taking place in Mexico almost daily new pieces are added. Here, is the famous Sacrificial Stone on which thousands of persons were annually sacrificed. This was excavated near the Cathedral. In another corner is the Calendar Stone—the Aztecs had eighteen months. It was unearthed near the Municipal Palace. Around it stand statues representing the Sun, the Head of the Snake, the Sad Indian. Other Toltec and Aztec legacies fill the room. In another part of the Museum are such relics as the coach of Juarez, and Montezuma's shield. Just opposite the Cathedral is a strange place—the National Pawn Shop where for

one per cent, a month you can borrow money on about everything under the sun. It has warehouse after warehouse filled with furniture, silver, automobiles, musical instruments, clothing, hundreds of different articles on which money has been lent. These are kept as long as the interest is paid. Sales take place every little while and many bargains can be picked up.

It is the markets in the early morning that give the best idea of the life of the people. Besides the little corner street markets there are large markets filled with booths in which many kinds of fruits and vegetables are for sale the year round. Peaches, apples, strawberries, pineapples, bananas, mangoes, chirimoya, zapotillo, granada, alligator pears—many fruits unknown in the United States. At the restaurants are all sorts of dishes made out of fruits and vegetables, many highly spiced and with strange flavors. In the flower market women sit with huge baskets of sweet peas, lilies of the valley, roses and other flowers. They are brought in by boat from the gardens along La Viga Canal. If you desire to know Mexico City you will take a ride on this ancient canal and let the Indian boatman push your punt slowly under low bridges and by other strange craft.

Strange, fascinating Mexico City with its Chapultepec Park, which outdoes the Bois de Boulogne, its Cathedral on the site of an Aztec Temple, its Paseo de la Reforma, its fine shops, its street markets, strange street life, its very rich and its very poor. It is filled with enough sights to keep the average person entertained for months. But of course it is the unique places and people that interest the most and there are many in this "Spanish-Parisian-American-Occidental-Occidental capital."

## HORROR of the WHOOPING COUGH



EXPANDING THE THROAT OF A WHOOPING COUGH SUFFERER

An Early Winter Malady That Wipes Out More Than Ten Thousand Children's Lives Annually in This Country — What is Being Done To Cut Down Its Ravages.

By RENE BACHE

If an epidemic of bubonic plague was to kill 10,000 children in the United States in one year, the people of this country would be appalled. It would excite an alarm so widespread that the whole world would quarantine against us.

But whooping cough kills more than that number every year, and nobody thinks much about it. Last year it took the lives of 10,831 children in the United States.

This is the whooping cough season. Beginning in early October, it gains headway as autumn advances. Possibly the opening of schools, and the consequent assembling of many children together, is a cause.

It is one of the most infectious of epidemic diseases, and is much more dangerous than is generally realized. Of babies attacked by it, nearly 30 per cent die. The cough makes them vomit, and, not being able to keep any food on their little stomachs, they are liable soon to succumb.

taking alternate bites of an apple, or by "loading gum." But the agents for spreading the mischief are fingers and things touched by them. Thus it may be communicated through exchange of pencils or in playing baseball.

In earlier days it was thought that the disease was caused by a little ulcer beneath the tongue. Often, in cases of whooping cough, such an ulcer does make its appearance. But it is merely an incidental symptom, of no importance, being due to rubbing the tongue over the lower teeth while coughing.

So serious is this menace that health authorities are urging the adoption of ordinances requiring warning placards to be placed on houses in which there is whooping cough. It is deemed most important that cases of the disease shall be kept isolated. Yet parents whose children are suffering from it quite commonly allow them to play with other children, and even send them to school.

#### Important New Discoveries

The germ of whooping cough was discovered a few years ago by Professor Bordet, of Brussels. He proved it by producing the disease in monkeys and cats, by inoculation. Further experiments by him and by others have shown that secretions of the nose and mouth carry the infection. The more favorable the opportunities for the transfer of sputum from one person to another, directly or indi-



SECTION THROUGH LARYNX AND THROAT—WHOOPING COUGH IS AN INFLAMMATION OF THE LINING MEMBRANE OF THE BREATHING PASSAGES

rectly, the better the prospect for the spread of the malady.

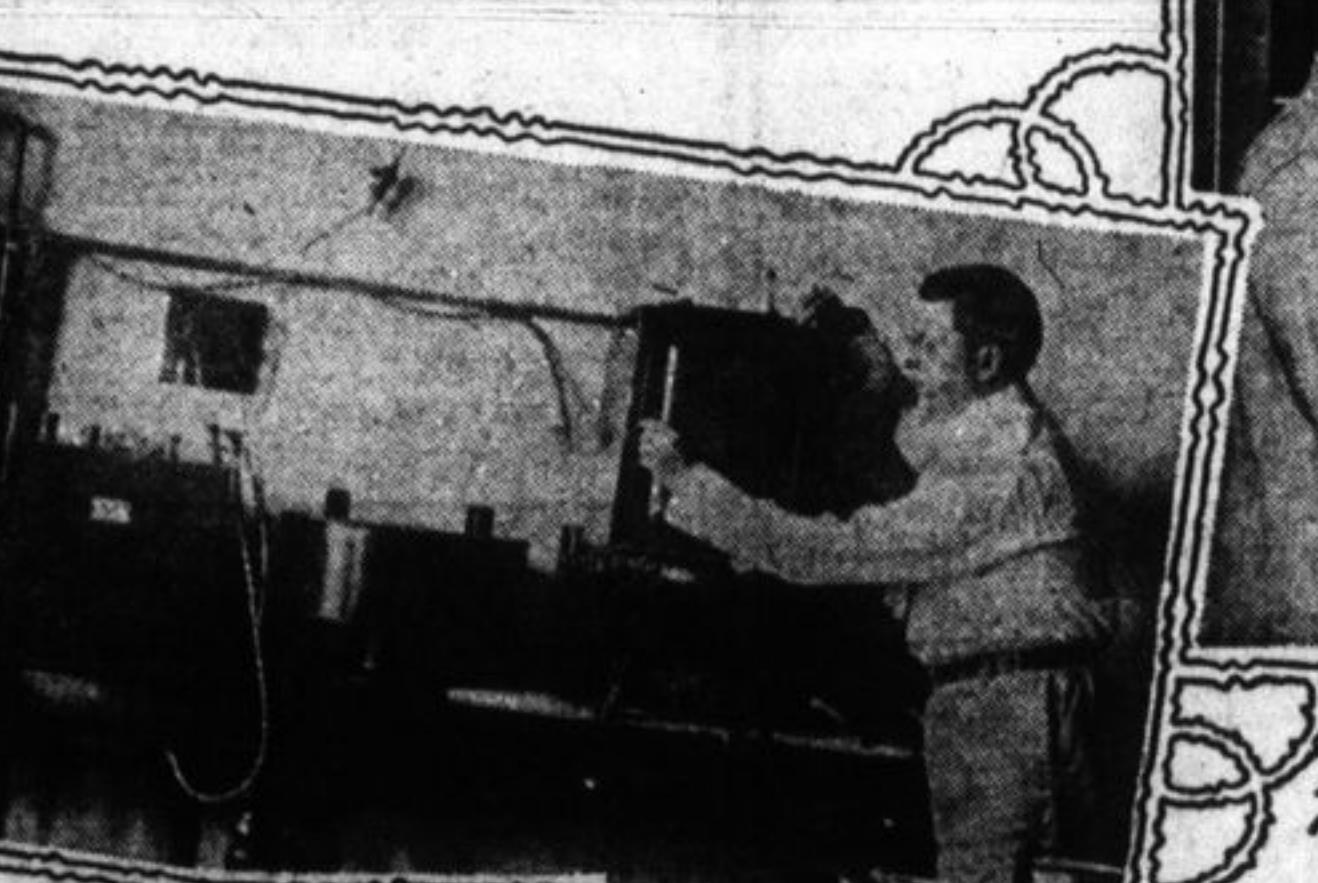
Until within very recent years whooping cough has to a great extent baffled medical treatment; but a "serum," or "antitoxin," has now been developed which renders children immune to the disease, and which is likely to prove most valuable for quelling or limiting the spread of epidemics. Only the other day announcement was made of the discovery, by two Boston physicians, that the complaint could be treated very successfully by the use of the X-ray.

The so-called "children's disease" are highly infectious complaints which, for that very reason, are not

easily escaped in the early part of life. Nearly all of us have had some or all of them in childhood, and, being thereby rendered immune, we are rarely attacked by them after reaching adult age.

Thus it comes about that many parents are careless about whooping cough, and that in some instances they deliberately expose their children to the infection, so that they "may have it and get through with it"—not realizing that the disease is very dangerous and often fatal. It kills more children every year in this country than the dreaded scarlet fever.

Fetters Of Neglect Furthermore, when a child is attacked by whooping cough, the meth-



CULTURE OF WHOOPING COUGH GERMS IN GLASS TUBE

ODORS FOR BREEDING DISEASE GERMS—MAY BE DETECTED IN SCHOOL



CULTURE OF WHOOPING COUGH GERMS IN GLASS TUBE

od, thinking little of it, commonly refrains from calling in a physician, and is content to rely upon her own nursing. This is a particularly dangerous mistake because there are liable to be complications, the most frequent and perilous of which is pneumonia. And pneumonia, weakening the lungs, may lead to tuberculosis.



FILLING AN ANTITOXIN INTO STERILIZED GLASS TUBES (COURTESY H. H. HULLFORD CO.)

stage, the cough coming in spasms and ending in a whoop. The disease may extend its course through a period of four to ten weeks, its decline being marked by fewer and fewer paroxysms and winding up with occasional coughs.

In the early stages there is fever, and the sufferer is restless, loses weight, and is weak. The eyelids may be reddened and swollen; the face may have a puffy look. In the absence of complications, the child should be kept in the open air all day, and should sleep on a sleeping-porch (in moderate weather), or in a room with the windows wide open.

Antitoxins The cells of the body, when the latter is invaded by germs of any disease, start in to manufacture a poison deadly to germs of that particular kind. We call it an "antitoxin." When recovery is accomplished, the cells go on making that antitoxin for the rest of one's life, thus producing a continued immunity to the disease. Medical science has learned how to manufacture antitoxins in the laboratory, and they are now extensively used for preventive inoculation against typhoid, tetanus, and various other maladies. One of them has greatly cut down the death rate from diphtheria. An effective antitoxin for measles has recently been developed; and it seems likely that in future generations it may be practicable by such means to render children immune to all of the infectious complaints which hitherto have been regarded as, for them, almost unescapable.