The streets of Parras were lined with men, women and children peddling every imaginable article, mostly fruit and vegetables. They refuse our five and ten cent pieces, use bits (reales), picayunes (medios) half and quarter picayunes, (quartillos) and (Clacos).

July 23rd, Sunday: There is a diversity of opinion as to the day of the week and month, I claim that it is Sunday. I regret not having noted daily all that has transpired. To make a brief story will state that most of our boys have remained in town during the week. We moved camp a few miles, where we found good water, excellent grass and quantities of mesquite beans. So our animals have rested and recuperated. On Tuesday, the French Colonel, Staff, and Escort of twenty-eight soldiers, accompanied Mr. Oury out to visit us, mounted on their splendid Arabian horses, fully armed with guns and sabres and with their flashing uniforms, they made a magnificent display.

We have reveled in fruit, vegetables, etc. I have feasted upon large, ripe tomatoes (my weakness), peach cobblers have graced our board daily and the quantities of empty bottles (each bottle costs 25c and some enterprising peddler will realize a neat little sum from our reckless extravagance) strewn around our camp attests the fact that Parras wine and brandy have not been sparingly supplied. The Terry party arrived in town Thursday evening.

Col. S. accompanied me to town in the ambulance Friday morning and I spent a very pleasant day. Capt. Dave and Mr. Wallace escorted Mrs. Terry and myself to the stores shopping, where we found poor assortments and high prices. Mrs. Terry needed shoes and couldn’t find a No. 5 in town. The Mexicans have very small feet and the merchants told us that they rarely sold a shoe for ladies as large as No. 3. I made no purchases. We rode in our ambulance to visit the Cotton Factory, a place of considerable importance and interest to me. I had become initiated into all the mysteries of cloth making by the primitive process resorted to by the poor blockaded Southerners during the war, but had never seen it manufactured by machinery.
What a contrast to the slow cards and wheels and clumsy looms of those trying times! Here, 250 looms, run by water power, turn out daily forty-five yards of cloth, unbleached muslin. Many of the operatives are women. The carding and spinning is an interesting sight. The proprietor, an American, was very courteous and obliging, conducted us through every part of the establishment and gave us excellent old wine to drink.

The factory is the property of a widow "over old to marry" and who has no daughters. Capt. Dave is inconsolable over this information. The grounds are handsomely laid out and abound with shrubbery and flowers, the oleanders as tall as trees. In many respects these people have not advanced one step since the time of Moses. They carry water on their heads, in earthen vessels of the same shape and make of those early days, and we saw them threshing wheat in the most primitive manner. The wheat is piled on a hard spot of ground in the center of the field, cleared for the purpose, collected from all parts, being cut with sickles, thrown on raw hides and dragged by ropes attached to the pommel of the saddle. There is a post in the center of the pile or stack and to this are attached two rows of horses, eight each, necked together. A man provided with a long whip drives the horses round and round, the outside ones in a gallop, the ones nearer the center having leisure to snatch sundry mouthfuls and thus the grain is tramped out; it is afterwards tossed up in the air on windy days, by basketfuls and winnowed, a slow and tedious process.

Large and small ditches course through every part of the town, and there is no lack of verdure, of trees, shrubs and flowers. I remained with Mrs. Terry (who has a room rented) 'til the afternoon, when we started again to visit a peak which commands a fine view of the surrounding country. Judge Porter, a California friend of theirs, who has overtaken them, and Mr. Wallace, who came to my sister's with Mr. Oury to assist him in carrying his baggage once, and who is intelligent, refined and agreeable, were our escorts.

Arriving at the suburbs, we alighted and wound round and round through narrow streets (impassable with a vehicle), over ditches and up hills 'til we reached the base of the peak, which we ascended rapidly, notwithstanding it is very steep and rugged. The summit is crowned with an immense rock, the top of which is reached by stone steps leading through a cavern in the rock. It is perfectly level on top and here has been erected a huge cross, visible for miles, and an altar, both said to have been constructed in a single night by a priest and two little boys. All the diseased and infirm of the adjacent country make pilgrimages to this shrine and here find a miraculous cure for all the ills and ailments to which flesh is heir. A stream of Mexican women, many with children in their arms, and all bearing long tallow candles, were struggling up the steep hill and we found several devotees already on their knees, seeking absolution from sin and
bodily pain. Poor, ignorant wretches, doubtless the exercise may benefit many, but I feel convinced that no human afflicted with any serious ailment is equal to that climb.

The view from the peak is grand and exciting, you look down upon a charming valley, extending for miles in every direction, dotted with countless fields and ranches, hemmed in by towering mountains. The city is distinctly visible. What an exquisite picture for an artist—nothing is lacking, here is grandeur, sublimity, gorgeous coloring, romance, beauty, etc.

The impending thunder shower forced us, however reluctant, to turn our backs upon this entrancing spectacle and hie us homeward with precipitate haste. At this season, they have genuine thunder storms twice in every 24 hours, leaving the atmosphere cool and delightful. All nature is full of extremes and we were brought back all too abruptly into the midst of practical, every day life.

In the city, the first sight to greet our return, was a funeral procession, as novel and strange to me, as are all the other sights, customs, etc. A brass band led, playing anything but a funeral dirge, then came men, bearing on their shoulders an open coffin, exposing the corpse of a very dark, much wrinkled old man. The lid of the coffin was carrier by a man in the rear, accompanied by mourners of each sex, bearing lighted candles. I had scarcely recovered from the effects of this repulsive sight, when another, even more revolting, succeeded it. A gang of criminals, chained together in couples and wearing heavy chains round their ankles, were coming in from the fields, where they are taken daily and forced to labor, in charge of a heartless overseer.

But the most trying of all my "experiences" was the beggars,* the countless hordes of beggars besetting you at every corner, the most abject, degraded, wretched, decrepit, infirm, miserable specimens of humanity it was ever my misfortune to look upon. I began by giving a silver dollar, but found that my means would soon become exhausted if I gave a cent, or even a half or quarter cent, as is the custom here. Remember I had never seen a beggar, during my eighteen years of life in Texas.

Several of the Terry party succeeded in disposing of extra horses and pistols to advantage, receiving $150 and $250 for some of the horses. Unfortunately, we had nothing to spare except that hand-

Note: *Even in this civilized age one sees many beggars in Latin-American countries. I recall the beggars of Bogota, Colombia, when I was there, in 1915 and 16, as military attaché at the American Legation. Many of these unfortunates were deformed and hideous to look upon—"Perdoname por Dios!"—"Pardon (or excuse) me for God's sake!" will in nearly every instance relieve one from the importunities of these mendicants, who are called "Por Dioseros" meaning, literally, "For God's" or "For God Sakers," since they always preface a request for alms by the expression, "Por Dios"—"For God's Sake!"

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Some unpublished history of the Southwest

Some pistol, presented to Mr. Oury at Matamoras, which cost $125. This he sold to one of the party for $80.

Our party is becoming much reduced. Col. Showalter and mess, and another party have taken leave of us and propose going to Durango, thence to Mazatlan, from there the Col. will join us at Guaymas. We will miss him greatly, he is very sociable, spent most of his time with us, is a constant talker and very entertaining. He still has no use of his leg, and I learn that after starting he sold his wagon to Capt. Dave and is going to undertake the trip mule back. The men of his mess are good men.

Last night the Terrys came out and were extremely anxious to continue with us, which would necessitate our remaining here (Parras) another week, while they have their wagons repaired and recuperate their broken down animals. We have come 12 miles and camped near a ranch where I learned that it was Sunday.

Our party now numbers, in our mess seven effective men; five in the Gillett mess. My better judgment rebelled at taking such a rash step. I would have preferred a week's delay and the certainty of ample and agreeable company, to risking our lives and property, as we must, as we are now approaching the dangerous part of the route, besides the Gilletts will leave us at Chihuahua, and, well, the leap is taken and I must not look at the dark side. I said good-bye to Mrs. Terry with deep regret. She is a noble woman and there are several estimable men with them from whom I have received many kindnesses.

At this ranch, there is not even a hedge and the boys have to herd the mules off the corn fields. They are now slaughtering a sheep and Addy is commencing his bread making for supper. A strong wind has blown off the mosquitos.

July 24th, Monday: Came twelve miles over a very rough road. Nooned at a ranch where there was neither wheat nor corn to be had and not a blade of grass in the vicinity. The ruins of an old Mission were there and two beautiful springs. One in the orchard or vineyard flowed into a large basin enclosed with a low stone wall, surrounded with fig trees perhaps a century old, and carved with hundreds of names.

During the few minutes I spent there, my eye fell upon two quite familiar ones, W. Oury,* and J. R. Park—1861. Possibly there were others but I did not know of this writing 'til we were starting, else, I had spent the noon hour there, instead of that dreary, sun-baked corral.

Again we have been deceived about the grass. We are now camped in the suburbs of Alamo de Parras, and our hungry mules are eat-

Note: *This was undoubtedly Wm. Sanders Oury, brother-in-law of Mrs. Oury, writer of this diary, and my grandfather—my mother's father who was in Mexico in 1861.

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ing greedily of a coarse, salt, swamp grass, while Mr. Oury has gone to buy corn for them, also water and wood. We have just laid in a supply of bread, tomatoes, eggs (very dear).

July 25th, Tuesday: Eggs for breakfast, boiled, fried and scrambled, in which a pedestrian participated, who has walked from Guaymas and is going to Matamoras, to sail from thence to New England.

This visit was soon followed by one from one of the most abject, wretched, hideous looking creatures I ever beheld,—a superannuated, wrinkled old woman in tatters, who came trudging along mumbling mechanically a studied prayer or petition in which she reiterated continually the sad fact that "she had neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, nor rich relations."

We all contributed to alleviate her wants and I gave her besides, a hearty breakfast. She then went into the road, where Addy had fed his horse and picked up the corn, grain by grain, still going over her prayer. These beggars are growing so numerous that it taxes us heavily. I never dreamed that, in the whole world, there existed as much destitution and want as I have already seen in Mexico.

We were detained some time in Alamo de Parras, having our mules shod. The blacksmith, a very genteel looking man, wore a fine linen shirt with a beautifully embroidered bosom, and to our surprise and satisfaction, he worked fast, well and cheap.

The females of the family were airily attired in chemise of finest linen, exquisitely embroi
dered all over the deep yokes and sleeves, some in bright colored silk and a shirt of bright red felt or flannel flowered elaborately with white, low cloth slippers without stockings.

As we drove through, I observed a few two-story stores, handsomely finished, the usual number of ditches and the street was bordered on each side with gardens and fields, hedged with thickly mat-
ted rose bushes. They have no system or order about planting, and their gardens are heterogeneous masses of fruit trees, flowers, grape vines, corn and vegetables crowded together in a jumble. We noticed several patches of cotton of good quality.

The abodes of the poorer classes are constructed of corn stalks, set upright and tied together with ropes or leather thongs, roof thatched with grass. All of the pens and some of the houses are made of twigs or switches tied in the same way. Their yards are usually clean.

About one o'clock we camped at the base of a mountain near the loveliest stream I ever saw except the "Comal" in Texas. It breaks out from the mountain at three points, these unite to form a small, swift stream whose waters are perfectly transparent and having a bluish tinge, cause the myriads of little fishes, the rocks and moss in the water to throw off every color in the rainbow, in the sunshine. How earnestly I wish I could transfer this charming riverlet to the arid "Post Oaks" for the convenience and pleasure of my father and
sisters and their families. In the evening, all our boys luxuriated in its limpid bosom and gave vent to noisy demonstrations of enjoyment. I afterwards, in company with Mrs. Gillock, Mrs. Gillett and nurse, indulged in a delightful bath. We jumped off a bridge, where the water was deep and very swift, and with some difficulty got out again. During the night we were a prey to millions of ravenous mosquitos.

July 26th—Wednesday: Passed a large ranch where a feast was in progress. All the day and night previous pedestrians and donkeys loaded with women, children and fruit had been passing us enroute to this celebration. Before passing the ranch, we crossed two little streams of the same clear, pretty water and beyond it another, and a large flat almost covered with water. Then we came to a dry mesquite country, with not a drop of water or a blade of grass for twenty-eight miles instead of eighteen as represented to us. A great part of the road was deep sand and tired the mules greatly. We camped at last about half a mile from the bed of a large river where we succeeded in finding a few holes of clear water and the poor boys groaned with the weight of the kegs before reaching camp. Plenty of wood and some scattering bunches of fine grass.

Our dinner at three consisted of raw onions, fried onions, pickled onions, “picadillo,” tomatoes, coffee and bread, with a liberal supply of green pepper in everything. Later Capt. Dodson and Mr. Oury went back to a ranch and succeeded in buying wheat for the mules, also some eggs.

July 27th—Thursday: Another big egg breakfast and I am the worse for it. A long drive before us and we were anxious to make an early start, when lo! two horses and a mule were missing. “Ben” has just returned with the truants, found three miles distant luxuriating in a field of green corn. Addy is still hunting them. We bought eleven watermelons of a Mexican, all different. Addy has come in and we are starting with our own mess of seven men. The Gilletts will not be able to drive their animals before evening.

During the day we passed some patches of good grass and later one “charco,” but continued in the hope of finding fine pasturage and good fishing, at the river.

On the river “Nassus” is a large “Hacienda” called the “Torion,” where we could buy nothing, as the French have preceded us and bought all they could spare. A large flourishing field of corn was not even in tassel. They cultivate extensively here, judging from the amount of water used. We crossed three or four ditches as deep and wide as ordinary creeks. Finding no grass, we pushed on to “Santa

Note: *Mrs. Oury here intends to say Nazas.*

**This hacienda is Torreon, not “Torion.” It is now a good-sized city, and a very important railroad center of Mexico. The meaning of the word Torreon is a great tower in a fortress for defense.
Rosa," another "hacienda" which I mistook for a town. The "Nassus" was high and we crossed with difficulty. Santa Rosa is the property of a wealthy Spaniard who is absent enjoying his fortune. He owns several large "haciendas." These wealthy land owners seldom live upon their plantations, but leave them in charge of reliable friends or relatives (in this case a brother-in-law), who live highly and assume all the grandeur and greatness of a born lord. We arrived at two o'clock and waited in the broiling sun, with millions of flies swarming around and on us 'til at last a young, very genteelly dressed man, much fairer than most Americans, condescended to give us a hearing. (They are much too dignified ever to exhibit the least promptness or haste about anything.) This youth, who seemed to be a head clerk or deputy, promised to sell us grass, so we drove out and camped, but our poor mules went dinnerless 'til near night because this young aristocrat was taking his "siesta" and nobody dared disturb him.

At last by repeated efforts, we obtained a cart load of "Alfalfa," a kind of clover raised all through Mexico for animals. Much esteemed and which they relish when green, but having a lot of dry on hand, they refused to cut fresh and our mules ate the dry under protest. We bought plenty of wheat and green corn for the mules, wood, and cooked supper.

July 28—Friday: Started at daylight in a cold, drizzling rain. Carried water with us and finding good grass a mile or two from Santa Rosa, stopped and cooked breakfast. Grazed two hours and started on expecting to find a "Laguna" (lake) and lay over till the Gilletts came up. Passed plenty of nice grass but found no water 'til the grass gave entirely out. Met a lot of Mexicans who told us a ranch near by had just been robbed by sixteen Mexicans, so we kept close together. Arrived at the ranch "El Renoval" about three. Could buy nothing but a kid and some water. They had a tremendous well forty feet deep in a corral, but like everything else on the premises, it was decidedly unclean. Scores of the filthiest men, women and children, perfectly unoccupied and upon what they subsist is a problem I can not solve.

Unluckily for us, the French army is just two days in advance of us, and they clean the country as they go of everything in the edible line. We watered, filled the kegs and drove three miles to fine grass.

We had three hard thunder showers after camping, but by dint of indefatigable perserverance, managed to get an excellent supper. Kid, stewed with dumplings, onions, green peppers, etc. Fear some of our cookery would shock the fastidious tastes of civilized life, but we

Note: *It would appear that alfalfa at this time (July, 1865) from the way Mrs. Oury writes above, was not known in the United States.

Notes: **Banditry is an old trade in Mexico.
are none of us Epicures and the open air, hard travel, etc., makes us both relish and digest what might prove exceedingly unpalatable and indigestible under different circumstances. Some real good musk melon sand real poor watermelons furnished our dessert. Hearing that five Indians had been seen in the neighborhood, we kept on the alert.

There were strong indications of a storm, so Capt. Dodson and "Billy" exerted themselves unusually in constructing a shelter, with blankets stretched on Dagger Stalks and this morning are lamenting audibly, their waste of labor.

July 29th—Saturday: Another kid stew for breakfast. Grazed the animals awhile and came on in search of water. Country perfectly barren. Traveled eighteen miles to a little settlement and watered at a miserable little tank. A league further brought us to "Mapimi," a mining town, where they work gold, silver and iron, though at present but two of the several reduction works are in operation. There is considerable wealth here I understand. No grass within two days travel from here, so we have camped in the suburbs of town near three beautiful springs. The boys have gone to buy wood and other necessities. We find it expensive to stay in these towns, where we are compelled to buy feed for sixteen animals, and corn is very high here.

The caterers came back with a plentiful supply of wood, wheat and wheat straw and green fodder, also green corn, for all of which they had to pay exhorbitantly. It grows quite chilly here in the evening and morning, indeed the Mexicans never fail to carry their blanket* and usually wear them around them.

A large herd of fine, fat cattle was driven in and out, mostly milch cows. I cannot imagine what benefit they derive from them, as they make no butter, use very little milk and only eat a beef when it dies or gets crippled and must be killed. Bacon is unknown to them. They raise a few hogs which they convert into lard and soap and each hog yields them nearly $100.00. They have a good many sheep and goats, but the poorer classes exist upon "tortillas" and "atole" (flour starch). If required to furnish themselves, they can live upon less than any human beings I ever saw, but, if fed by an American, can consume more than wolves. We have a daily exemplification of this fact in the person of our Mexican driver, who scrupulously cleans our board of everything left on it, often disposing of immense plates of fried bacon (they fry this in order to get the grease for cooking other things) while he is wearing the most forlorn aspect imaginable, head bandaged with a handkerchief and groaning with headache! Ugh! but I am heartily disgusted with Mexico and the Mexicans.

Note: *A peon or Mexican of lower class is poor indeed who does not own a serape or blanket—sometimes it may be a very tattered one. If he does not own this he is happy to make use of what he calls, "la capa de los pobres"—"the poor man's cloak," that is, the sun.
Could appreciate the sight of a nice, clean American village now as I never did before. I enjoy the journey, having nothing to do but eat and sleep. However, when we leave here, we enter upon a region infested with Indians and I'll be in hourly dread.

In "Mapimi" we met a Dr. Richardson of Kentuck, who was disposed to be very courteous and hospitable, invited Mr. Oury and some of the boys to dine with him, which they declined. He then insisted upon their calling in the evening, which they promised, but were prevented by the rain—said he was real "bacon hungry."

I neglected to mention the fact that when we arrived at Parras we had traveled five hundred miles and been one month on the road, with all the wear, tear and expense, and found ourselves precisely at the same distance from Guaymas as we were at San Antonio. Now we have come (from Parras) fifty-eight leagues (distance is reckoned altogether by leagues here) and still is a long, long dangerous road before us.

July 30th—Sunday: Yesterday "Silvario," our Mexican teamster, began to assume too much importance and authority, giving peremptory orders to John Peterson, a Swede, (one of the three soldiers who came to us at San Antonio bringing a note from Aunt Moore, recommending them to Mr. Oury's attention, who furnished them with provisions and arms, and occasionally with transportation. The other two Judge Terry employed as drivers, after his Negroes left—Coffman and Geary—when we left the Terrys they came and offered to continue with us, but Mr. Oury advised them to remain as they were getting wages), which roused the ire of Mr. Neville to such a degree that he administered a sound scolding, whereupon his dignified self-respect being unable to brook such a rebuke, he handed in his resignation, to the gratification of all. Another instance of Mexican ingratitude. Mr. Oury picked him up in San Antonio, penniless and destitute, paid his board bill and offered to take him with us to Chihuahua, if he would drive the wagon. His wife, whom he has not seen for four years, lives in Santa Fe. At Parras, he traded an old pistol to one of the party, for an old, broken down, crippled horse, which two of our mess have kindly driven for him and Mr. Oury bought feed and water for. This horse he sold at Santa Rosa for twenty dollars, which prosperity, added to being so well fed and kindly treated, has elevated him out of his proper sphere, and he was growing independent and insolent.

(To be continued)