A Visit to Mexico.
BY PROFESSOR BARDWELL.

(Continued from last week.)

As our destination lay farther east and south, we entered the San Juan River. During almost the whole of the first day we were passing between low banks, and from the steamer's deck we looked across broad savannas, upon which thousands of cattle were grazing. The plains were dotted with many lagoons, from which countless waterfowl arose. Alligators basked in the sun on the muddy banks and silently slid into the water as the steamer approached them. On all sides there was abundant life, in the water, on the earth and in the air.

As we ascended the river the banks became higher and the character of the country changed from the low coastal plains to the higher and more undulating formation of the interior. Wide-branching armati-trees were frequently seen and royal palms became abundant. During the second day we passed between high, steep banks which were covered by an impenetrable jungle, consisting of forest trees bound to each other by huge vines and a dense undergrowth of shrubs.

After spending two days and two nights on the river, we arrived at the little town of San Juan Evangelista, where we boarded a train on a branch of the Tehuantepec National Railway, and on the afternoon of February 21 we arrived at our objective point, which is at the geographical center of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

As we stood on the veranda of the cottage which was to be our temporary home and looked over the surrounding country, it was hard to realize that it was February, and that in Boston the ground was covered with snow. It required but a few moments' acquaintance with the nearby forest, however, to convince us that we were in the tropics. Giant trees festooned with hanging vines, tangled growth of cannas, caladiums, palms and other rank-growing vegetation made it impossible to move a step without a machete in the hands of a native to clear the way.

The Isthmus of Tehuantepec consists of broad coastal plains which extend back from the Gulf of Mexico. As the land rises, reaching an elevation of six hundred or more feet above the sea level, the surface is broken and of a rolling contour, and the forest becomes more dense. The coastal plain is given up almost wholly to grazing, while the interior has, until recently, remained in its natural state because of the enormous amount of labor required to clear away the forest.

It was my privilege to spend ten days walking and riding over this portion of the isthmus, inspecting growing crops, following blazed trails through uncleared jungle and watching the hundreds of axemen as they felled great trees to make way for the planter.

This interior portion is being taken up for plantations. The land is exceedingly fertile and is especially adapted to raising tropical fruits. Bananas, pineapples and all citrus fruits grow luxuriantly and with little care. Coffee grows there as nowhere else in the world, and it is believed that the Castilloa Elastica, the rubber-tree of Central America, may be profitably cultivated.

Americans are buying and improving large tracts of land; with characteristic enterprise, are building up a community which will soon change the jungle into a vast garden.

The Isthmus of Tehuantepec is the narrowest part of Mexico, and is the point at which Captain Eads, the great civil engineer, proposed to construct a ship railway which should transport the largest steamships from ocean to ocean. The plan failed because the necessary capital could not be obtained, but in its place was built the single track of the Tehuantepec National Railroad, which connects Coatzacoalcos on the Gulf of Mexico with Salina Cruz on the Pacific coast. The road is now owned by the Mexican government, and it is being reconstructed. The harbors at both terminals are being improved at enormous expense, and it is expected that by means of specially designed docks, which are being built, freight may be transferred from ships at one terminal to those at another so quickly and economically that an inter-oceanic canal will not be needed.

The republic of Mexico is making rapid strides. For a quarter of a century it has had for its president a man of very great ability and of unquestioned patriotism and integrity. Under his wise leadership the