

His room over a store of the company began to be filled with floor mats, baskets, clay utensils, fiesta toys and other examples of Indian handwork. In a little while he was buying the articles not only for himself but to sell to others.

Out of the contacts with these artisans grew a missionary zeal to preserve the beauty and skills which he was afraid were disappearing. Workers on the great haciendas owned by rich families had for generations taken pride in developing identifiable local specialties. When the revolution did away with the large plantations, the workers were scattered and had to earn their living in other ways.

Fred Davis not only bought things he liked and believed salable, but encouraged the workers to produce better wares. It was partly as a result of his interest that the Mexican government in 1948 established a board for preserving native arts and that there now exists a museum of popular arts where you can not only see but buy.

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When I started to thank him for breakfast and a wonderful talk, Mr. Davis said, "Oh, but I want you to see my collection!" I said I thought I had seen it, but he said no, those were just the things he lived with, and led me to a second, twin house crammed cellar to attic—including bathrooms and kitchen—with textiles, oils, water colors, etchings, statuary, toys and other handicrafts.

Because he has known all the great painters of Mexico in their early days, he possesses some of the first as well as later works of Orozco, Tomaya, Rivera, and Siqueiros—the Big Four. He has