

who loved Sabbath-schools. While he was on a visit to some friends in the country, he saw George, and being pleased with him, offered to take him home. The mother consented and George left home with many tears for a place in the gentleman's store.

By good conduct he gained the affections of all who knew him. At the age of eighteen years, he was advanced to the station of clerk, and from a clerk to a partner with his employer. When he was twenty-one years of age, his partner died, having no children or relations, not even a wife, and he gave to poor George all the interest in the concern, at once made him the owner of some thousands of pounds. And here I found myself seated with my old scholar, in a fine house and a happy family.

He is superintendant of a large school of poor boys, picked up from the streets and lanes of the city, a member of the Church, and a man known too by the poor and afflicted. Every Sabbath morning he has a school among the poor sailors in the dock, in a room hired for the purpose. As I sat there, so happily rejoicing in the goodness of God, as manifested in this instance, I could but ask George, 'where is your mother?'

'Oh, sir, she went home to heaven from my arms in this very room a few months since; and just before she died she gave me strict charge to seek you out, and if I found you, to tell you that her dying breath went up to God for a blessing on your head.'

'Your sister, what has become of her, and baby brother?'

'Oh, sir, my brother has grown up to be a young man, and is now a clerk and first book-keeper in my store, and he too has a large class in the Sabbath-school; and my dear sister is far away, the companion of a devoted missionary in the west. She was married but a few months previous to my mother's death.'

Here I leave the history of this interesting family, and in a few words hint at the lesson it teaches.

1. See how God always confers his blessings on these little children who love their parents. Little George cared not for the shoes for his cold feet, and a warm cap for his head, until his poor mother could have food.

And through that little boy, God came in mercy to the family. George early became a Christian, and was the humble instrument of the conversion of his mother and sister. The mother is permitted the privilege of dying in the glorious prospect of heaven, and sinking down to the grave sustained by the arms of her noble boy. The sister goes out to be the companion of the missionary, to aid in spreading the news of salvation to the poor and perishing.

2. What encouragement there is in the history of facts! It teaches us to labor for the poor and destitute sons of affliction and poverty, that they may shine as stars of the first magnitude in the Saviour's crown.

Dear teachers, remember the poor. Do not pass them by; care for them and God will reward you a hundred fold.

3. The benefits of sabbath school instruction are not confined merely to the things of time; they reach into eternity, and roll a wave of glory up to the very throne of the great God.

Oh, let us faithful, industrious, prayerful, and devoted to our work a little longer—and soon we shall go home to our reward and crown.

Murray's Home and Colonial Library. Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains. By George F. Ruxton, Esq.

MEXICO AND ITS PEOPLE.

'As Durango may be called the limit of Mexico proper and its soi-disant civilisation, it may not be out of place to take a hasty glance at the general features of the country, the social and moral condition of the people, and the impressions conveyed to my mind in my journey through it.

There are many causes, physical and moral, which prevent Mexico from progressing in prosperity and civilisation. Although possessing a vast territory, which embraces all the varieties of climate of the temperate and torrid zones, with a rich and prolific soil capable of yielding every natural production of known world, yet these natural advantages are counterbalanced by obstacles, which prevent their being as profitable to the inhabitants as might naturally be expected, and in a great measure render them negative and of no avail.

A glance at the physical geography of Mexico will show that the extensive and fertile table-lands of the central region are isolated, and as it were, cut off from communication with the coast by their position on the ridge of the Cordilleras, and the insurmountable obstacles to a practicable traffic presented by the escarpments of the terraces, the steps, as it were, from the elevated table-lands to the maritime districts, and the tropical regions of the interior. The country is also destitute of navigable rivers, and possesses but two of even moderate size—the Rio Grande del Norte, which runs into the Gulf of Mexico, and the Rio Grande, or Colorado of the west, which falls into the Pacific Ocean. Its eastern coast is swept at certain seasons by fearful tempests and presents not one sheltering harbour or secure roadstead. The tropical region, subject to fatal malaria, is almost excluded to the settlement of the white population, and consequently its natural riches are almost entirely neglected and unappropriated. Moreover, when we look at the component parts of the population of this vast country, we are at no loss to account for the existing evils—the total absence of government, an universal demoralisation and want of energy,

moral and physical, which is everywhere apparent.

The entire population is about eight millions, of which three-fifths are Indians, of Indian origin, and Indios Bravos, are barbarous tribes; the remainder of Spanish descent. This population is scattered over an area of 1,312,550 square miles, in departments widely separated, and having various and distinct interests, the intercommunication insecure and a large proportion in remote regions, beyond the care or thought of an impotent government.

The vast table land which stretches along the ridges of the Cordillera of Anahuac, although possessing tracts of great fertility, is not in itself, the rich and productive region it is generally represented to be. The want of fuel and water must always prevent its being otherwise than thinly inhabited, and these great drawbacks to the population and cultivation of these districts would appear to be insurmountable. I believe the capabilities of the whole country to be much overrated, although its mineral wealth alone must always render it of great importance; but it is a question whether the possession of mineral wealth conduces to the well-being of a country. The working of mines of the precious metal in Mexico, however has certainly caused many spots to be cultivated and inhabited which would otherwise have been left sterile and unproductive, and has been the means of giving employment to the Indians, and in some degree has partially civilised them; where otherwise they would have remained in their original state of barbarism and ignorance.

The Mexicans, as a people, rank decidedly low in the scale of humanity. They are deficient in moral as well as physical organization, by the latter I do not mean to assert that they are wanting in corporeal qualities, although certainly inferior to most races in bodily strength; but there is a deficiency in that respect which is invariably found attendant upon a low state of moral or intellectual organization. They are treacherous, cunning, indolent, and without energy, and cowardly by nature. Inherent, instinctive cowardice is rarely met with any race of men, yet I affirm that in this instance it certainly exists, and is most conspicuous; they possess at the same time that amount of British indifference to death which can be turned to good account in soldiers, and I believe, if properly led, that the Mexicans would on this account behave tolerably well in the field, but no more than tolerably.

It is a matter of little astonishment to me that the country is in the state it is. It can never progress or become civilised until its present population is supplanted by a more energetic one. The present would be republican form of government is not adapted to such a population as exists in Mexico, as is plainly evident in the effects of the constantly recurring revolutions. Until a people can appreciate the great principles of civil and religious liberty, the advantages of free institutions are thrown away upon them. A long minority has to be passed through before this can be effected; and in this instance, before the requisite fitness can be attained, the country will probably have passed from the hands of its present owners to a more able and energetic race. On the subject of government I will not touch; and will I maintain that the Mexicans are incapable of self-government, and will always be so until regenerated. The separation, from Spain has been the ruin of the country, which, by the by, is quite ready to revert to its former owners; and the prevailing feeling over the whole country inclines to the re-establishment of a monarchical system. The miserable anarchy which has existed since its separation, has sufficiently and bitterly proved to the people the inadequacy of the present one, and the wonder is, that with the large aristocratic party which so greatly preponderates in Mexico (the army and the church), this much to be desired event has not been brought about.

The cause of the two hundred and thirty-seven revolutions which, since the declaration of its independence, have that number of times turned the country upside down, has been individual ambition and lust of power. The intellectual power is in the hands of a few, and by this minority all the revolutions are effected. The army once gained over which by the aid of bribes and the priesthood is an easy matter, the wished for consummation is at once brought about. It thus happens that, instead of a free republican form of government, the country is ruled by a most perfect military despotism.

The population is divided into but two classes—the high and the low; there is no intermediate rank to connect the two extremes and consequently the hiatus between them is deep and strongly marked. The relation subsisting between the peasantry and wealthy hacendados, is a species of serfdom, little better than slavery itself. Money, in advance of wages, is generally lent to the peon or labourer, who is by law bound to serve the lender, if required, until such time as the debt is repaid; and as care is taken that this shall never happen, the debtor is a bondsman to the day of his death.

Law or justice hardly exists in name even, and the ignorant peasantry, under the priestly thralldom which holds them in physical as well as moral bondage, have neither the energy nor courage to stand up for the amelioration of their condition, or the enjoyment of that liberty, which it is the theoretical boast of republican governments their system so largely deals in, but of which, in reality, is a practical falsehood and delusion.

IS THIS DEATH?

BY THE REV. OCTAVIUS WINSLOW LEAMING.

'Is this death?' said one, when dying: 'O how I have dreaded its approach, and shrunk from its conflict. But I dread, I shrink from it no longer. If this is death, pleasant and welcome art thou?' If possible, yet more remarkable and triumphant was the falling asleep in Jesus of one whom I lately knew. His spiritual life was not stamped with those strong attributes which distinguish the man of gigantic faith, full assurance, and unclouded hope. On the contrary, although occupying a prominent post in the Christian Church, usefully and honourably, yet when the subject of Christian experience was made to turn upon himself, it was evident to the writer, that his mind, sustained by a humble and fluctuating hope was not quite a stranger to those fears of death to which the holiest of men are all their 'lifetime subject.' But the time of his departure arrived. It pleased God as if to demonstrate more clearly the immortality of the soul, and the power of the atoning blood—that from the moment of the fatal attack to its close, mental unconsciousness should suspend all intercourse with the beings and objects of that external world which already had receded from his view. But with the world beyond, the invisible, the eternal world, it was evident to all around him that he was in the closest and most blessed communion. Gazing upon the slain Lamb of God, he exclaimed, with a countenance expressive of the most painful emotion, 'Thine agony! Thine agony!' Who can doubt but at that moment Jesus presented himself to his view, as having borne the curse, endured the suffering, and as having shed his blood for him. It was as a crucified, as an atoning Saviour, that he now manifested himself to his dying servant. Then as if responding to the invitations and the beckonings of the glorified spirits who thronged the opposite shore, with distress wrinking and darkening his brow, he painedly said, 'I cannot come! I cannot come!' still painfully conscious of the imprisonment of the body. Presently his countenance became radiant with heavenly joy, the cloud disappeared, and with tears gushing from his eyes, he waved his hand and exclaimed, 'I come! I come!' and in an instance the last, feebly he broke, and his spirit was free. 'So soft and noiseless was death's footstep, as not to disturb those slumbers which were soon to be succeeded by an eternal repose. And when the heaving of his heart was stilled for ever, and the happy spirit dismissed from her tabernacle of clay, it was by a touch so gentle, that the last breath was wholly unperceived; no mortal struggle, no agonizing convulsion, marked the moment of the soul's departure; and she was already towering on the wing, and far remote from all the toils and dangers of mortality, before the attendant had discovered even the preparations for her flight.' Christian reader, let our anxiety and aim, and prayer be, how we may holiest live, leaving the close of that life with Him who knows best 'by what death we shall glorify God.' O that with Paul, our motto, emblazoned on our whole conduct, may be, 'I die daily.' With him may we exclaim, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me.' And with him yet again, 'Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For, to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

YOUTH AND AGE.

I often think each tottering form That limps along in life's decline, Once bore a heart as young as warm As full of idle thoughts as mine! And each has had its dream of joy, His own unequalled pure romance Commencing when the blushing boy First thrills at lovely woman's glance.

And each could tell his tale of youth, Would think its scenes of love evince More passions more unearthly truth, Than any tale before or since Yes! they could tell of tender lays At midnight penned in classic shades, Of days more bright than modern day— And sighs more fair than modern maids.

Of whispers in a willing ear, Of kisses in a willing cheek Each kiss each whisper far to dear For modern lips to speak Of passions too untimely crossed, Of passions slighted or betrayed— Of kindred spirits early lost. And buds that blossom but to fade.

Of beaming eyes and tresses gay Elastic form and noble brow, And forms that have all passed away. And let them what we see them now; And is it thus—is human love So very light and frail a thing? And must you're brightest visions move Forever on time's restless wing.

Most all the eyes that still are bright And all the lips that talk of bliss, And all the forms so fair to sight, Hereafter only come to this? Then what are earth's best visions worth If we at length must lose them thus If all we value most on earth Ere long must fade away from us.

A WITTY LECTURE.

The following extract from the report of a

committee on hogs, read before an Agricultural society, 'down East,' contains some excellent hits.

Again: Some folks accuse pigs of being filthy in their habits, and negligent in their personal appearance. But whether food is best eaten off the ground, or from China plates, is, it seems to me merely a matter of taste and convenience, about which pigs and men may honestly differ. They ought then, to be charitably judged. At any rate are pigs filthy enough to chew tobacco, nor to poison their breath by drinking whiskey. And as to their personal appearance, you don't catch a pig playing the dandy nor the female among them picking their way up this muddy village after rain, in kid slippers.

Notwithstanding their heterodox notions, hogs have some excellent traits of character. If one chances to wallow a little deeper in some mire-hole than his fellows, and so carries off and comes in possession of more of this earth than his brethren, he never assumes an extra importance on that account; neither are his brethren stupid enough to worship him for it. Their only question seems to be, is he still a hog? If he is treat him as such.

And when a hog has no merits of his own, he never puts on aristocratic airs, nor claims any particular respect on account of his family connections, and yet some Hogs have descended from very ancient families. They understand full well the common sense maxim, every tub must stand on its own bottom.'

THE INTERESTING VARIETY OF THE BIBLE.

When the great Sam Johnston was asked why so many literary men were infidels, his reply was:—'Because they are ignorant of the Bible.' If the question be asked why the lovers of general reading so often fail to acquaint themselves with the Sacred Volume, one reason that may be assigned doubtless is, they are not aware of its interesting variety. This feature of the Bible is well illustrated by Mrs Ellis, in the following eloquent extract from her recent work entitled the 'Poetry of life.'

With our established ideas of beauty, grace, pathos and sublimity, either concentrated in the minutest point, or extended to their widest range, we can derive from the Scriptures a fund of gratification not to be found in any other memorial of the past or present time. From the worm that grovels in the dust beneath our feet, to the track of the leviathan in the foaming deep—from the moth that corrupts the secret treasure, the eagle that soars above his eyrie in the clouds—from the wild ass in the desert to the lamb within the shepherd's fold—from the consuming locust to the cattle on a thousand hills—from the rose of Sharon to the cedar of Lebanon—from the clear crystal stream gushing forth out of the flinty rock to the wide waters of the deluge—from the barren waste to the fruitful vineyard, and the land flowing with milk and honey—from the lonely path of the wanderer to the gatherer of a mighty multitude—from the tear that fall in secret to the din battle and the shout of a triumphant host—from the solitary in the wilderness to the satrap on the throne—from the mourner clad in his sackcloth, to the prince in purple robes—from the gnawing of the worm that dieth not, to the seraphic vision of the blessed—from the still small voice, the thunder of Omnipotence—from the depth of hell to the regions of eternal glory, there is no degree of beauty or deformity, no tendency to good or evil, no shade of darkness or gleam of light which doth not come within the cognizance of the Holy Scriptures; and therefore there is no expression or conception of the mind that may not find a corresponding picture, no thirst for excellence that here may not meet with its full supply, and no condition of humanity excluded from the unlimited scope of adoration and sympathy comprehended in the language and spirit of the Bible.'

AND THEN.

FILIPPO NERI was living at one of the Italian universities, when a young man, whom he had known as a boy, ran up to him with a face full of delight, and told him that what he had been long wishing above all things in the world was at length fulfilled, his parent having just given him leave to study the law; and that there upon he had come to the law school at this university, on account of its great fame, and meant to spare no pains or labour in getting through his studies as quickly and as well as possible. In this way he ran on a long time, and when at last he came to stop, the holy man, who had been listening to him with great patience and kindness, said 'Well! and when you have gone through your course of studies, what do you mean to do then?'

Then I shall take my doctor's degree,' and answered the young man.

'And then,' continued the youth, 'I shall have a number of difficult and knotty cases to manage, shall catch people's notice by my eloquence and zeal, and gain a great reputation.'

'And then?' repeated the holy man. 'And then,' replied the youth, 'why then, there can't be a question, I shall be promoted to some high office or other, besides I shall make money and grow rich.'

'And then?' repeated Filippo.

'And then,' pursued the young lawyer—'then I shall live comfortably and honourably, in wealth and dignity, and shall be able to look forward quietly to a happy old age.'