THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PH

A MARVELLOUS PLANT.

6

The Mexican "Maguey"-How it Grows and How the Beverage "Pulque" is Manufactured.

Kane O'Donnel writes to the New York Tri-

of its common vegetable wonder, the magney. Indeed, this maguey is an estate in itself. As truly a plant as is my cabbage, it carries its blossoms to the height of twenty-five feet, leaving a vegetable mass fifteen, sixteen or seventeen feet below. There it seems to sit upon the earth, throwing out great, hard root leaves. These leaves are thick and fibrous, are indented with savage spines, and taper to a sharp point after four feet of growth. Right in their centre is an erect, bulb-shaped sheath, in their centre is an erect, but shaped sheath, growing to a point. This is the heart of the magney which, once cut out, upsprings the famous wine of agave, that for generations un-told, has been the favorite food and tipple of Indian Mexico. The bloom of the plant is a panicle with numerous flowers in tufts. Hum-boldt classes it with the pineapple tribe, which, at all events, suggests its superficial nature; but Lindley has placed it with the Agaves in the Amaryllis tribe, and there it remains. The whole appearance of the maguey is formidable. Not every one likes it, but so much the worse for their tastes, for the maguey is nature itself. Painters would find it hard to adapt it into their landscapes, yet it makes a fine field, a noble plain, and an interesting scene, nevertheless. What would Yankee growers of such overgrown grasses as wheat, rye, and corn say to this Aztec giant, one of whose children has more strength than a whole field of corn; whose life is fifteen years, and never quite dies out till it has nourished; whose stiff leaves and tough blossoms are a posy of the earthquake, or specimens of vol-

canic coquetry. Journeying in the Apam country, I have come across very large plantations of this pulque plant, or, to speak botancally, the Agave Mexicana. The habitation of the maguey is chiefly in the plateau of Anahuac, whereof the City of Mexico is capital. The best vineyards of the agave wine are in the famous plains of Apam. One of the largest haciendas of this country is at Ometusco. Hence it is that I send you my notes of this many-sided vegetable inspired, it may be, with some of its mother-milk, tresh from the tinacual. In a pulque farm the tinacual has the same place relatively as a milk-house has in a dairy. It is a long room, ranged on either side with deep and ample cow skins, set in wooden frames, into which cow skins are poured the juice of the maguey. The process of extracting and fermenting the pulque is sim-ple enough. When the maguey is of ripe age, or when its stalk is about to spring out, its central leaves, forming a sort of cabbage-heart, are cut out. Into the hollow thus made in the middle of the plant aguamiel, or honeywater, filters through as into a large round jar, which has to be emptied twice or three times a day, or the liquor will run over. The tlachiguero, or pulque gatherer, is provided with a long calabash, broad at the bottom, and narrow at the top, and perforated either way. This he broadly inserts into the plant, and applying his mouth to the top, fills his calabash by suction of air, then lets its contents out into a hog skin, after which he scrapes the hollow of the magney with a sharp iron, so that its pores may perspire freshly with honey-water. This aguamiel, which has so strong a saccharine principle that sugar is made out of it, is the infant pulque. Not, however, for some time does it change to the milky color which distinguishes the wine of Agave, and not until it is mixed with some old ferment, and allowed to rest, does it become the pulque which every morning is so much enjoyed by thirsty bibbers in the pulquerios of the capital. In the tinacual it is passed from hogskin to hogskin, until it reaches the required degree of ferment. The wooden saucer full which the haciendado gave me was somewhat sweet and thick, with an exquisite ferment, the like of which is not appreciable in the most of liquors. It was exceedingly refreshing to thirst and recreative of it. I did not distinguish that "ancient and fishy-like smell" which a delicate order of travelers describe as hardly bearable, but I suppose the old liquor of the shops contains more or less of it, without offering, however, to the curious drinker anything which a sensible taste will find it impossible to take. The best pulque, though, is not reputed sweet. The mass of it sours upon acquaintance; but this sourness is combined with an alcohol which stimulates thirst, and thus is pulque maintained in the affections of the people. Tlachique, made ont of a wild and immature plant, is esteemed the least of the pulques; pulque fino is the best. Taken in excess the liquor disorders the mind and sours the temper, and accordingly I hear it said that it causes more quarrels proportionably than brandy or beer. Yet this is told of a liquor which seems at first draught a natural milkwine, harmless as the brew of dandelion. Alcohol, mucilage, sugar, acetic acid, and traces of lime and potash are found in pulque; nothing seems to convict it of being a poison. To export it is impossible, as fermentation and breakage, or a complete spoil are the results of bottling. Some time ago it was said that 80,000 bottles were daily drank in the city, and this number quoted as proof of a general sobriety; but I fear the figures are a number of years stale. Juices of pine-apple, strawberries, oranges, and other fruits are mixed with pulque, and form what are known as compuestos or composite drinks. So much for the manner and disposition of this remarkable product. Not quite so national in its use as chocolate, it is far more popular in the district of the maguey. If the worst effects of its habitual drinking are seen in the souring of visages it is bad enough. Pulque, poverty, and indolence, are very near together, as I had occasion to see in my recent visit to one of the lowest populations of the country. Bat, though the mixing of pulque with other alco-holized drinks is maddening, the frightful forms of drunkenness are foreign to Mexico. As a fluid accompaniment of the poor Mexican's every meal, pulque is as much a home drink here as ale and beer are in Europe. About fifty million pounds' weight of pulque are introduced into Mexico annually, and about one quarter of this amount into the City of Puebla. The value of pulque estates is estimated in round numbers at fifteen millions. In the year 1858, one hundred and minety thousand animals passed the garitas of Mexico laden with pulque. Since that time war has followed war; the roads leading to the city have been blockaded; at last the city itself has been besieged, and the nectareous supplies of a pulqua-drinking population cruelly out off. It was no longer ago than during the siege endured by Marquez and enforced by Porfirio Diaz that the people of the Ciudad leal cried out as much from thirst as from hunger. Even then the humor of the people had vent in a well-remembered doggerel, which I translate for you as one of the most instructive facetize of pulque, and a choice relic of the

Tis like a graveyard now where once was pleasure bought; The people have no comfort now since pulque's failen short.

Early on every morning, King Pulque drove

With all his mule bells ringing and pleasure in

his train; The donkeys and their drivers were busy once and spry. But now they're all so down in the mouth, it

- makes a toper sigh.
- The famous good Tlamapa, Ometusco, San
- Bartole, And even Tiacolasco, are quite gone by the
- E'en cheap Jepache's very rare-and, speaking

frankly here, Pucheros are no longer made-they only offer beer.

Delicious nectar cheering, old Montezuma's

tipple, Brave beverage and merry, bring back your

showy ripple. See in what surly humor are those who loved you well:

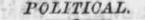
Our houses are in mourning clad, and sad are those that sell.

Some of the foregoing names will suggest themselves as hacienda titles describing the most popular sources and kinds of pulque. The style and nomenclature of the pulque shops is still more curious, exhibiting to what heights of poetry and enthusia in the ready sale of a popular beverage will carry a pros-perons dealer. If the alien comer desires to partake a pions libation, I can recommend nothing better than the Pulqueria de Kapirito-Santo: but if his tastes are wild I advise him to take a pull at the Ancient Tiger. On the road to Velasco one gets bad pulque for all that the sign over the shop invites him in so many words to come to Paradise. There was an inspired pulque vender in the City of Montezuma who called his shop the Little Wheel, and effectually christened its vats Terrible, Seven-Killer, Karly Riser, and Weeper, and though I cannot fully vonch for it, yet I ven-ture to believe that he had three or four pet

cocks crowing there every hour, as is the custom with dashing pulquereros such as I have seen hard by the Apan country. Pulque is as old as Popocatapetl. Anahuac was once inhabited by giants, and when the Toltees wanted to get rid of them they feasted them with pulque, and then fell upon them. So runs one legend. But a likelier story is that Xochitl, daughter of Papantzin, discovered the aguamiel, and presenting it to the Toltee King, won his heart, and subsequently gave him a son, who was gratefully named Meconetzin, or the son of the magney. Long before the conquest penitents used to whip themselves with the fibers of the plant, and show them bloody to their gods. More than this, the maguey was a sort of ready armory for the warlike Aztecs who rushed into battle "holding in the right hand keen daggers of the *i.tle*," as Mr. Rca Bar-cena relates in verse. With the fibers, both fine and coarse, of the magney, the Mexicans of the time of Cortes made dresses, saudals, ropes, whips, slings, shields, and much more, and used its leaves to tile their roofs. Its ashes made lye; its root soap; its leaves utensils; its skin a durable paper, used by their artists in leather and gold. Sugar, pulque, and mescal, they also made from the plant, which was also which was also good as a medicine. Indeed, no radically new use of the magney has been made by the descendants of the old Aztecs. Its fiber is made into thread, twine, rope, bags, sometimes paper, and the root and under leaves of the plant are used by simple folk for soap and medicine. The famous jenequin fiber of Yucatan comes from the maguey, and besides pulque, mescal, and aguardiente, are extracted from it. Sugar and vinegar are also among its products.

There seems to be no end to the possible uses or the patent resources of this immense plant. In the plains of Apam there are thirty varieties, only a few of which are good for pulque, and the chief of these is the maguey manso, which grows to the height of three meters and a half. The principal maguey

to yield it. The plant is to be prized for mighty sinew, and it would not be wonder if, over and above its capacity as a wine-bear the magney should yet turn out to be greatest resource of Mexico after mini Not enough experiment has been tried to termine the utmost utility of this wor plant; and along with the sinewy nopal, still invites the inventor and the man of terprise.



-Judge Carler, of Ohio, always a Democ declares for the Republican ticket. He say "I amready at all times to advocate and defe by speech and deed, the principles by which heart and mind of the nation were actuate thwarting the designs of secession and repel the invasions of treason. These are the pri ples which do now, and will ever, preserve t nation; and the election of Grant and Colfa am convinced, will sustain and maintain the -The ladies of Sturgis, Mich., threaten steal a march on the male voters of that to They have discovered that the law of the S gives the right to vote in school meeting "all isxable persons" twenty-one years of a who have resided three months in the distri-Assuming that women are persons, ninete ladies of the district have called a caucus of taxable women preparatory to the school me ing, proposing to their taxed sisters that assert their right.

-The Albany Journal, reviewing the politi situation in this State, says:-From what know, we feel justified in assuring our frien that "All is well!" If the work begun is pust to completion, and if every town, where the little has yet been done, shall do what is n ful, the Democracy will not only be over whel in the nation, as they expect to be, but whip in this state, where they have the presump to hope for success.

to hope for success. -One of the compliments bestowed by Mobile *Register* upon the Northern Democr is, that a Rebel soldier can talk with a North Democrat upon political subjects with as mu assurance of sympathy and common aim purpose, as he could teel in talking with ou his old comrades in arms.

-A prominent member of the Chicago Bo of Trade has publicly announced his desir bet any sum from \$5000 to \$25,000, that G and Colfax will be next President and V President of the United States, and has offe

to wait ten days for a taker, but has found person ready to accept his terms. -Vallandigham is not keeping his word. said, in a speech at Dayton, August 2, 1862:-it (the war) is successful in maintaining Constitution and restoring the Union,

make a full, open, explicit confession that I w wrong—utterly, totally wrong—and will ret to private life the residue of my days." —Gentlemen from North Carolina who has arrived in Washington, report the feeli throughout the State in favor of Grant and C fax as continually gaining strength, and I the example of Judge Pearson is being follow by many leading men. An immense n meeting is to be held at Raleigh on the 16t September.

-The Newark Daily Advertiser is confi the Republicans will carry New Jersey. Advertiser is politically the best posted pape

New Jersey. -The next fatal case of son-stroke will administered by the Tanners to the son of Blair. Time, 3d of November. -Brick Pomeroy says intemperance ste

away his brains. It makes a poor haul. —The key to Democratic prosperity— skeleton key.

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ER	a start of the second star	built expressly for the New York trade, are intended to sail regularly between NEW YORK and LIVER- POOL, calling at QUEENSTOWN, viz :- MANHATTAN, MINNESOTA,	DR. KINKELIN. AFTEB A RESIDENC and practice or thirty years at the Northwe corner of Third and Union Streets, has lately r moved to south KLEVENTH Street, between MAI

folks keep dry.

The vacant pulquerias are plagued with noise-

grounds are the Llanos de Apam which com-prise parts of Mexico, Puebla Tlascala; but in the dry and barren parts of Oaxaca, Queretaro, Guanajuato, Michoacan, Tehuantepec, San Luis, and Tamaulipas, it may also be found. The famous Apam region contains, according to an authentic statistician, Don Manuel Payno, no less than six hundred, square leagues of cultivated and wild magueys. The maguey de pita yields abundantly the Yu-catan jenequin for ship ropes, upon which hand and steam machines are now at work. From the maguey verdi come the mescal and tequila, one a winish alcohol, and the other a giu, made in Jalisco and Gaudala-jara. But by far the best use of the magney is to be found in its noble fiber. Don Manuel Payno long ago observed that when the railroad from Mexico to Vera Cruz is completed the Ixtle of Apam plains will bear export of greater value than the jenequin of Yucatan. Ixtle, a finer fiber, supplying threads for harness and shoes, was at last data, worth in England, $\pounds 25$ per ton, while jenequin was worth $\pounds 20$. The fact that Senor Payno was

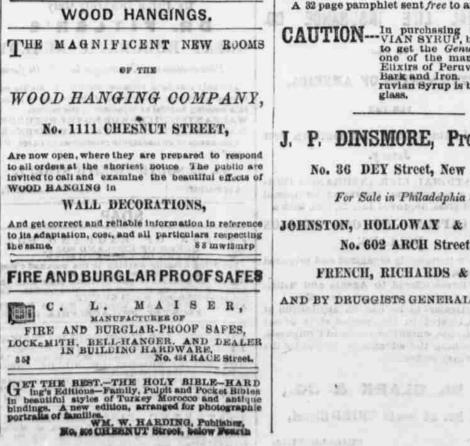
once Secretary of the Mexican Treasury lends

an interest to his views. The cultivation of the maguey is simple, and it would almost seem rude. Before the old plant dies it leaves about a family of six or eight. After growing two or three years these are taken out of the ground and stripped of leaves excepting the three centre ones. By some rancheros they are immediately transplanted in rows sixteen feet apart; by others, allowed to remain out of the ground for several months, and then transplanted, in order to prevent a certain worm entering the plant to kill it, which the worm is supposed to do upon immediate transplanting. Between magney rows various grains are sown if the land permits. No extreme of weather affects the hardihood of the maguey, except when the plant is yielding its own elixir vite. At the end of four years some few haclendadoes prune away the prickles of the plant, and tear out four or five of its leaves to improve, but four or five of its leaves to improve, but I fancy this usage, along with others connected with the plant, is al ke boorish and cruel. The maguey, however, will stand any-thing, as witness its uprooting and excision. A maguey takes from 8 to 15 years to arrive at the productive period, and yields liquor from 20 days to 6 months, and from 1500 to 4000 pounds. Over 2000 magueys can be planted in a caballeria of land, each of them yielding at least \$5 profit, so that, according to the excellent judgment of Mr. Payne, to whom I am indebted for many of the figures, a plantation of magueys gives, at a very low calculation, 80 per cent. per annum of profit. It is worth noting that on the maguey grows the large yellow worm, eaten as maguey butter by the Indians, and at one time by no less a personage than the Emperor Maxi-

milian. The magney, is, in fact, an estate in itself. It is a fruitful mother of marvels-perhaps altogether the most remarkable plant in the world. What is the value of its milk as a "nourisher in life's feast," is still among the mysteries. Coffee, mate, beer, pulque, wine, rum, aguardiente, tobacco, opium, hemp, betel, coccoa, and what not, are supposed to supply mankind with a necessary Lethe. wherein the race steeps itself only to wake up refreshed at last, according to an admirable semi-sophism of the late Hon. John A. Andrew. But those who have been graduated quite out of the circumstances of these creature comless cearts; No wonder, since that soul is gone, the milky even if a maguey's heart has to be taken out

HE

No more Hankering for Tobacco of the using Orto. Preparation, Recollect it is warranted, Beneare Counterjetts? RECOMMENDATIONS. The following are a new selected from the multi-dinous recommendations in our pussession. [From Y. P. Head, Esq. Bangor, Me.] EANGOR, Me., April 34, 1898 Thereby certify that I have used tobacco for tim-years pass, and for the last fifteen years I have use to leave off at different times. I have left off or pletely cured me of the appetite for tobacco, would recommend all who are affected with this to-ribe that it used used tobacco to such which has to critify that I rad used tobacco to such and my whole system deranged and brows. If the set off at lifteen i for tobacco, would recommend all who are affected with this to-traile cured me of the appetite for tobacco. W. P. HEALD If the directions are followed. This is to certify that I rad used tobacco to such when has my bealth had become greatly impairs and my whole system deranged and brows. (From John Morrill, Bangor, Me.] Excound for Morrill, Bangor, Me.] Excound for Morrill, Bangor, Me.] This is to certify that I have used tobacco for would recommended and I would advise who wish to quit the use of tobacco to try one box (From John Morrill, Bangor, Me.] This is to certify that I have used tobacco for much frequencies in any heatering of desire tobacco since using the Frequencies. I believe it be all that it is recommended and I would advise who wish to quit the use of tobacco to try one box (From John Morrill, Bangor, Me.] This is to certify that I have used tobacco for many frequencies in any heat. Me. How the many times to leave of four heat is state. A short time ince a firtued induced may indered so much from a dizinees in any heat. Me. the underline and the shore a creat way and the state. A short time ince a firtue difference. Me. the underline may times to leave of box of the count of an completely cure. J. full mode in the hanker after tobacco, cliner to annoke or chaw, and



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