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THE PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE.

"EVERY DIFFERENCE OF OPINION IS NOT A DIFFERENCE OF PRINCIPLE."—JEFFERSON.

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NO. 1.

Advertisements... Terms of Advertising... Advertisements... Terms of Advertising... Advertisements...

Poetry.

From the Golden Rule.

VOICES OF NATURE.

There is pleasure in the pathless woods, There is pleasure in the lonely shore; There is pleasure where man's foot has not tread, By the deep sea, and music in its roar.

Miscellany.

From the Anglo-American.

MEXICO AND THE MEXICANS.

BY GEORGE THOMAS JR. Esq. (Late Minister of the United States to Mexico.)

A work like this, coming from hands that may be well supposed capable of the task, is not to be considered as one of authority, would at any time be received with welcome in the Republic of Letters; but at this peculiar juncture when the amicable relations between the United States and Mexico are unhappily suspended and the two countries are placed in hostile array against each other, there is probably a more than usual curiosity to know anything new to get any additional glimpse into the characters, manners, and social as well as political affairs of the Mexicans.

At this juncture, however, the most interesting topic concerning them is, in all probability, their military character, their resources, their discipline, and their notions on the pending disturbances; and the author having touched these points rather as abstract questions than as probable for immediate use in action, is less likely to be tinged with any prejudices than if he wrote with an eye to certain and speedy contention.

That which is in all respects the greatest nuisance, and the most insuperable barrier to the prosperity and progress of Mexico, is the army. They will tell you there that it amounts to forty thousand men; but they have never had half that number. I have no doubt that the accounts at the Department of War exhibit nearly the number stated, but a large proportion of them are men of straw—legions names fraudulently inserted for the benefit of the officers who pay them. They are paid every day, or rather, that is the law; but the pay is just as fictitious as the muster rolls.

They have more than two hundred generals, most of them without commands. Every officer who commands a regiment has the title of general, and is distinguished from generals who have no commands by the addition of "General effective." The rate of pay is not very different from that of our own army. Each officer and soldier, however, is his own commissary, no rations being issued, and they are well satisfied if they receive enough of their pay to procure their scanty rations, which was very rarely the case, except with Santa Anna's favorite troops, whom he always kept about his person, and thus made it their interest to sustain him. In none of the last conversations which I had with him, I told him that the army would remain faithful to him just so long as he could pay them, and no longer, and that I did not see how it was possible for him to pay them much longer.

The result proved the truth of both predictions, and that, I have no doubt, was the cause of the revolution which overthrew him. It was not alone with the French scoundrels that "la liberte et la peine" is a cry of fearful potency. Shortly before I left Mexico, an officer in the army, came to the city and settled his accounts with the War Department, and received a certificate that twenty-five hundred dollars were due him; after hawking about amongst the brokers, he sold the claim for a hundred and twenty-five dollars, which was five cents on the dollar.

They say they are obliged to have a standing army, and that they can only enforce their laws "by the grace of God and gunpowder." This may be true, but I doubt it. But if this be, is there any military man that will deny that five thousand soldiers well paid, fed and disciplined, would be more efficient than fifty thousand such troops as they have? It has been the policy of all great commanders not to take doubtful and undisciplined troops into a great battle. I do not hesitate to say that if I was in command of an army of ten thousand disciplined troops, and was going into battle, and was offered ten thousand more Mexican troops, that I would not take them. Napier, in his history of the peninsular War, describing some battle, uses this expression: "The British army was strengthened or rather weakened by twenty thousand undisciplined Spanish troops." The inequality between disciplined and undisciplined troops is estimated by military men as one to five. This inequality is much greater with large masses, and I do not think that any commander could perform a tactical evolution with five thousand Mexican troops. I do not believe that such an one—a manoeuvre in the face of an enemy—ever was attempted in any Mexican battle; they have all been mere useless skirmishes, and generally terminated by a charge of cavalry, which is, therefore, the favorite corps with all Mexican officers.

Should regard it, from the diminutive size of their horses and equally diminutive stature and feebleness of their riders, as utterly inefficient against any common infantry. I said so in conversation with Colonel B—n, an officer who had seen some service, and had some reputation. I was not a little amused at his reply. He admitted that squares of infantry were generally impregnable to cavalry, but said it was not so with the Mexican cavalry, that they had one resource by which they never had any difficulty in breaking the square. I was curious to know what this new and important discovery in the art of war was, and waited impatiently, the "push of his one thing," when to my infinite amusement he replied—the Lasso; that the cavalry armed with lassos rode up and threw them over the men forming the square, and pulled them out, and thus made the breach. I remembered that my old nurse had often got me to sleep when a child, by promising to catch me some birds the next day, by putting salt on their tails, which I thought was about as easy an operation as this new discovery of the Mexican cavalry. I had read of "knocking ranks and charging squadrons," but this idea of lassoing squadrons was altogether new to me. Buonaparte fought and gained the battle of the Pyramids against the best cavalry in the world, Mamelukes, in squares. He lost the battle of Waterloo because the British squares were impregnable to the next best—the French cavalry—during all of that long and awful conflict. The idea, however, of the lasso did not occur to the Mamelukes in Egypt, nor to Buonaparte at Waterloo. I was reminded of the equally novel attack of the Chinese upon the English, when they were all formed in battle array and the Chinese threw muskets at them instead of cannon balls and shells.

The Mexican army, and more particularly their cavalry, may do very well to fight each other, but in any conflict with our own or European troops, it would not be a battle but a massacre. Frederick the Great, who was the author, in a great degree, of the modern system of tactics, had three maxims as to cavalry. First, that a cavalry corps should always make the charge. Second, that in a charge of cavalry, they were not going fast enough unless when halted the rider from the mouth of the horse struck the froth in the face; and third, which was rather the summing up of the first two, that the spur was more important than the sword. In other words, that the impulse and momentum of the horse was of more consequence than the arms and blows of the rider. What then must be the murderous inequality between a corps of American cavalry and an equal number of Mexicans? The American corps, from the superior size of their horses, would cover twice as much ground, and the obstruction offered by the Mexicans on their small and scrawny ponies, would scarcely cause their horses to stumble in riding over them; to say nothing of the greater inequality of the men themselves, five to one at least in individual combats, and more than twice that in a battle. The infantry would be found even more important.

I do not think that the Mexican men have much more physical strength than our women. They are generally of diminutive stature, wholly unaccustomed to labour or exercise of any sort, and as a conclusive proof of their inferiority to our Indians, I will mention the fact that frequent incursions are made far into the interior of Mexico by marauding bands of Comanches, who levy black mail to an enormous extent upon the northern provinces of Mexico. It is not unusual for bands of a hundred Comanches to penetrate several hundred miles into Mexico and carry off as many horses, cattle and captives as they choose; there are not less than five thousand Mexicans at this moment slaves of the Comanches—and of all our western tribes the Comanches are the most cowardly—the Delawares frequently whip them five to one.

The soldiers of the Mexican army are generally collected by sending out recruiting detachments into the mountains, where they hunt the Indians in their dens and caverns, and bring them in chains to Mexico; there is scarcely a day that droves of these miserable and more than half naked wretches are not seen thus chained together and marching through the street to the barracks, where they are scourged and then dressed in a uniform made of linen cloth or of serge, and are occasionally drilled—which drilling consists mainly in teaching them to march in column through the streets. Their military bands are good, and the new learn to march indifferently well—but only indifferently well—they put their feet down as if they were feeling for the place, and do not step with that jaunty, erect and graceful air which is so beautiful in well drilled troops. As to the wheelings of well-trained troops, like the opening and shutting of a grate, or the prompt and exact execution of other evolutions, they know nothing about them. There is not one in ten of these soldiers who have ever seen a gun, nor one in a hundred who has ever fired one before he was brought into the barracks. It is in this way that the ranks of the army are generally filled up—in particular emergencies the prisons are thrown open, which always contain more prisoners than the army numbers, and these become soldiers and some of them officers. Their arms, too, are generally worthless English muskets which have been condemned and thrown aside, and are purchased for almost nothing and sold to the Mexican government. Their powder, too, is equally bad; in the last battle between Santa Anna and Bustamante, which lasted the whole day, not one cannon ball in a thousand reached the enemy—they generally fall about half way between the opposite armies.

Touching the political liberty in Mexico, and the national industry there, Mr. Thompson did not find anything flattering, for although there is not any legalized slavery in the country, there are matters which are more than tantamount to that wretched condition, and the little industry that is to be found among them is exercised under compulsion by the wretched beings who have become amenable to such coercion. There are a good many negroes in Vera Cruz; more, probably, than in any other portion of Mexico. I did not see half a dozen negroes in the city of Mexico in a residence there of two years, and very few elsewhere. It is a very great mistake to suppose that they enjoy anything like a social equality, even with the Indian population; and although there are no political distinctions, the aristocracy of color is quite as great in Mexico as it is in this country; and the pure Castilian is quite as proud that he is a man without a cross, as was old Leatherstocking, even if that cross should have been with the Indian race however remote. The negro in Mexico, as everywhere else, is looked upon as belonging to a class a little lower than the lowest—the same lazy, filthy, and vicious creatures that they inevitably become where they are not held in bondage. Bondage or barbarism seems to be their destiny—a destiny from which the Ethiopian race has furnished no exception in any country for a period of time long enough to constitute an opinion. The idea of the free negro of liberty in Mexico, or elsewhere, is exemption from labor, and the privilege to be idle, vicious, and dishonest; as to the mere sentiments of liberty, and the elevating consciousness of equality, they are incapable of the former; and, for the latter, no such equality ever did, or ever will exist. There is a line which cannot be passed by any degree of talent, virtue, or accomplishment. The greater the degree of these, which, in rare individual instances, may exist, and the nearer their possessors may approach this impassable barrier, they are only the more miserable. This may be called prejudice, but it is a prejudice which exists wherever the Caucasian race is found; and nowhere is it stronger than in Mexico. The negro is regarded and treated there as belonging to a degraded caste equally as in the United States; much more so than in South Carolina; in quite as great a degree as in Boston or Philadelphia.

Whilst upon this subject, it may not be inappropriate to allude to the system of servitude which prevails in Mexico—a system immeasurably worse for the slave, in every respect, than the institution of slavery in the United States. The owners of the estate (haciendas) receive laborers into their service. These laborers are ignorant, destitute, half naked Indians; certain wages are agreed upon, and such articles as are absolutely necessary; an account is kept of all these things, and neither the laborer nor his family can ever leave the estate until all arrears are paid. These of course he has no means of paying but by the proceeds of his labor, which, being barely sufficient for his subsistence, he never can get free; and he is not only a slave for life, and his children after him, unless the employer chooses to release him from his service, which he often finds it convenient to do when the laborer becomes old or diseased. Whatever may be the theoretical protection from corporal punishment which the law affords him, the Mexican slave is practically no better off in this respect than is the African slave in this country. All the laborers in Mexico are Indians; all the large proprietors Spaniards, or mixed blood. I say all; there may be a few exceptions, but they are very few of either. So of the army; the higher officers are all white men, or of mixed blood, the soldiers all Indians.

The plough in universal use that used two thousand years ago—neither more nor less than a wooden wedge, without a particle of iron attached to it. The hoe is a wooden staff, with an iron spike in the end. What is still more remarkable, the only animal used in ploughing is the ox; a planter, with twenty thousand horses and mules (by no means an unusual number), will only use his oxen in the plough. If you ask why this is, the only answer I can give is, that the Spaniard never changes his habits, nor anything else but his government. All the passion for change which exists in other men, with him is concentrated in political changes.

It is this peculiar characteristic which has tended more than any and every other cause to produce the present degraded state of Spain. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Spain might justly be regarded as the most powerful of the nations of the earth; she had not only expelled the Moors, but had conquered a large portion of Africa;

discovered America, and was in possession of its untold and seemingly exhaustless treasures, with a galaxy of great men, which all the rest of the world could scarcely equal. What is she now? A bye-word amongst the nations; whilst other countries have been moving on in constant career of improvement in every way, she has folded her arms in sullen pride; and, as she has refused to advance, she has of necessity retrograded, for nations cannot long remain stationary. I believe that it is true, and it is most remarkable if true, that there is not in the world such a thing as a railroad in any country where the Spanish language is spoken, with the exception of a short one in Cuba, which owes its existence to American enterprise. During my residence in Mexico, constantly as the contrast between everything there and in my own country was presented to me, the feelings which were excited were not so much of pride and exultation in our own happier destiny, and superiority in everything, as the more generous one of a profound sympathy for the wretched condition of a country upon which a bountiful Providence has showered its blessings with a more profuse hand than upon any other upon the face of the earth. Whilst in our cities and towns you hear the busy hum of incessant industry, and the shrill whistle of the steam-engine, there you hear nothing but the drum and fife; whilst we have been making railroads, they have been making revolutions.

A more striking proof of the unconquerable repugnance of the Mexican to labor cannot be given, than the fact that short staple cotton sells there at from forty to forty-five cents per pound, while they have land and climates as well adapted to its culture as ours, and their lands are fertile; yet they never make enough for their own small consumption. The importation of cotton is positively forbidden by law; but this law is often relaxed, by selling the privilege to mercantile companies to import a certain number of bales. If such prices should be obtained at home, our northern people would discover some plan of raising it profitably in both halves.

Although the whole road from the city of Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico passes through a country inexhaustibly picturesque and beautiful, yet the ignorant, idle, and degraded population, the total absence of cultivation and improvement, and a general appearance of wildness and desolation, produced with me feelings partaking of gloom and melancholy. Neither in going nor returning did I see one human being, man, woman, or child, engaged in any work of any sort. The great mass of the population doze out their lives with no higher thoughts around them.

Robbers are numerous, but they are on the whole cowardly. Not a few of the offenders are persons who having lost their all at the gaming table take to the highway to replenish their purse, and some of them are even of rank and consideration in society. Take the following.

Shortly before I left Mexico, the stage was robbed near Puebla. The robbers all had the dress and bearing of gentlemen. When the operation of rifling the pockets and trunks of the passengers were finished, one of the robbers said to them—"Gentlemen, we would not have you to suppose that we are robbers by profession; we are gentlemen [somewhat abashed], but we have been unfortunate at Monte, and that has forced upon us the necessity of this unbecoming job, for which we beg that you will pardon us." Unnumberable are the stories of robberies which one hears in Mexico, some of them of thrilling interest and romantic character. The case of Colonel Yanes, who was executed a few years since, is full of incident of a character deeply dramatic. I will briefly sketch them as they were told to me.

The Swiss consul resided in the street of St. Cosme. About twelve or one o'clock in the day time, a carriage drove up to his door, and three men got out, one in the dress of a priest, they were admitted by the porter, and the door closed, when they immediately seized and dragged him, went into the house, and robbed and murdered the consul. The only clue for the discovery of the murderers was a metal button with a small piece of blue cloth attached to it, which was found clenched in the fingers of the murdered man, and which he had torn from the coat of one of the robbers. Suspicion at last rested upon a soldier who was seen with more money than he could account for. His quarters were searched, and the coat from which the button had been torn was found there. He was convicted, but he relied with the utmost confidence upon a pardon, as Colonel Yanes, the favorite aide-camp of President Santa Anna, was his accomplice. He was brought out to be executed, and had actually taken his seat on the fatal bench, with the collar placed round his neck, and the crank about to be turned, when he said—"Hold! I will disclose who are my accomplices—Colonel Yanes is the chief!" The execution was suspended, and on searching the house of Yanes, a correspondence in cipher was discovered which fully established his guilt in this and in other robberies. Yanes was the paramour of a woman in Mexico very nearly related to one whose word was law, and whose influence over her relative was known to be very great, and upon that reliance was placed for a pardon at least; but she was not disposed to trust to that, and let her lover suffer the disgrace of conviction—she went to the judge with whom the cipher had been deposited, which furnished the evidence of the guilt of Yanes, and offered him a large bribe to give it up.

He was an honest and an upright judge; he sternly refused the bribe, and firmly resisted the importunities of this powerful woman. In a day or two he died suddenly, as all supposed by poison. A successor was appointed of principles less stern, who accepted the bribe, and promised to destroy the paper;

but when, in confession to his priest, he disclosed his corrupt conduct, the worthy man prevailed upon him, if he had not destroyed the paper, not to do so, and he did not. Yanes, in the meantime, was informed that this evidence would not be produced against him, and that the prosecution would rest entirely upon the testimony of his accomplice. Upon his trial, with the habitual air of command of an officer, and the habitual fear and submission of the common soldier, Yanes browbeat and confused his accuser to such a degree, that he felt secure of an acquittal. At this moment the fatal paper was produced, and he was condemned and executed. His not less guilty paramour still resides in the city of Mexico.

produce a heavy crop. On some soils the effect will not be so manifest as on others. As soon as the clover is past blooming, turn it down in the following mode: Turn the harrow upside down and drag it over the field in lands, or such form as the field is intended to be plowed in, follow with the plow; immediately, and turn it down as deep as possible; then harrow it, that the furrows may completely turned may be laid compact and close. It would amply repay the farmer for his trouble and expense, did he furnish himself with a plow to follow the common one, in the same furrow, so as to plow from 12 to 13 inches in depth. This might save the harrowing—still, however, it would be well to harrow when thus plowed. The difference in the latter named from the former plow, need only to be in the shape of the Clovis. Or a Subsoil plow may be used with advantage. By continuing this course, there is no doubt that heavy crops would be made, until a maximum be reached; and the soil be constantly improving. Shallow plowing practiced by so many of our farmers, is a detriment to the soil. Another mode of plowing down clover is to fix a long chain to the Clovis of the plow—letting the end drag in the furrow just so far back as to escape the falling furrow as it is turned over; this binds the clover and keeps it in such a position that the whole will be turned beneath the furrow. It is very necessary that all the clover be well covered to prevent its further growth and cause decomposition.

Political Differences.

BY EDWARD LEE.

Another lesson which ought to be learned from the painful dealings of Divine Providence, to which allusion has been made, is that of greater moderation and mutual forbearance in our political differences. Why should an election be a signal for the indulgence and display of so much bitterness and rancour? Why, if citizens differ in their views of public measures, or in their predilections for candidates for office, can they not differ as men, as brethren, and as Christians? The increase of heat and animosity during a few years past, is ominous of evil to our free institutions, and most alarming to the genuine patriot. What is gained to either side by misrepresentation and falsehoods, by irritation and contumely, by invective and abuse? Why should the bringing forward of a man's name as a candidate for office, set loose against him so many slanderous tongues, and make him a target for the darts of calumny and malice? Why should the ordinary charities of life be suspended or poisoned, and political differences separate friends and kindred? These things ought not to be. And surely there is a voice from the recent graves of those who have been suddenly taken from the seat of authority, to rebuke this foul spirit. How near are these eager combatants, how near are the candidates for whom they are battling, to eternity? How soon will animosities and differences be buried in the grave? The fashion of this world passeth away. While men are fiercely disputing with each other, the ground opens beneath their feet, and they go down into the sepulchre. Surely, when tempted to employ the unhallooed arts of partizanship, they should call to mind the nearness of another world. When they are about to let loose the slander and circulate the calumny, to depreciate the public services, or to detract from the private worth, or to disturb the domestic peace of an opponent, they should bethink them of things else to live for than the victory of party. There is fearful havoc made of immortal souls in these fearful strife and hot contentions. And our hope and prayer should be that such solemn interpositions of the Almighty, as that which has again occurred, may be as oil shed upon the perturbed waters. Let the statesman in his coffin be a silent preacher of peace and good will. Let there be a voice heard as it were from the fixed and pallid lips, testifying the lightness of all that is earthly, and the wickedness and folly of this embittered warfare. Let the dead yet speak a message of kindness, moderation and brotherly love. Let those differing in their political views remember that they are of one country and of one faith; that there is a house appointed for all the living; and that they must lie down together in the grave. Will not their ashes rest together in quietness? Or will the silence of the tomb be broken by harsh recriminations? Differ then, but live together in harmony, and differ though they do as citizens they may yet "love as brethren, and be pitiful and courteous."—Sermon on the death of Gen. Stockton.

Carrots versus Oats.

A correspondent of the American Agriculturalist says:

"It has been stated in the New York Farmer's Club, that a bushel of carrots cut fine by a root cutter, is fully equivalent to a bushel of oats for horse feed in winter. If so, of how much importance is the cultivation of this crop to the farmer, who works horse teams, or keeps brood mares and raises colts? Of the comparative value of these two crops, I cannot speak advisedly in mild weather, and the horse moderately worked; but in cold weather and the horse hard worked, roots of any kind are poor feed. Under these circumstances, a horse must have grain in our climate. I would leave it to the intelligent farmers to make experiments, taking into account the cost of each. This much we can do.

"I have raised upwards of 800 bushes of carrots to the acre, but never raised over 66 bushels of oats; the whole of the work of cultivation of the carrots was done with harrow and cultivator, except the pulling up a few weeds with the fingers, where the two implements would not reach without injury to the carrot; making the labor of cultivating the harvesting. I always have ready an excellent feed for all kinds of stock, but especially for milk cows. For carrots as well as other root crops, plow deep. Plow the subsoil plow, after the common plow, as deep as it will go, and manure highly, and I will warrant a good crop, let the season be wet or dry.

"I once had an Irish gardener, famous for large stories. He said while in the employ of a nobleman who was very fond of trying experiments, he dug a hole in the ground as big and as deep as a barrel; set a pole into the hole twelve feet long; then built a pyramid of earth round it, to the top; mixed the whole well with compost; pulled out the pole and filled up the hole with a rich loam, mixed with chemicals; planted his carrot seed, and when it had come up, pulled out all but one stand. This he watered with liquid manure through the summer, and in the fall, he took away the dirt from the carrots. And faith, Mister, added he, I sure it had grown to the bottom of the hole, twelve feet long, and as big as your thigh.

"Your readers may believe as much of Patrick's story as they choose; yet this is certain, that I have occasionally grown the Belgian white field carrots three feet long, and four inches diameter at the top, in a rich, deep, alluvial loam."

Farmer's Department.

Culture of Grasses.

Among the grasses cultivated here are, probably, some of the best varieties known; at least it is doubtful whether a better grass exists than the Red Clover, both for food and manure. It grows luxuriantly; comes forward early in the spring, and affords two crops in one season. To enrich and prepare the soil, the farmer need desire no better. While it affords abundance of nutrition for the plants, it mellows the soil and brings it into excellent condition for their maturation. It is an excellent condition for their maturation. It is an excellent condition for their maturation. It is an excellent condition for their maturation.

Quite a number cultivate it with the ostensible view of enriching their land, but still are careful or let a necessity of their own creation induce them to take off every year all that grows on the ground, either moving or grazing; so that the soil has received little or nothing for its support to produce a crop except the roots and very short stubble, with the trifling raker cannot gather. Although this is far from the real object, yet if the husbandman only took so much in due time, and kept up the course regularly, our soils would not have been run down as much as they are, and will continue to be more and more, until they will not be able to produce anything but sheep sorrel. Let us every four or five years at least, or oftener, especially on old exhausted fields, turn down a heavy clover as possible. That is, indeed, putting a peck or more plaster on the acre in April, will have a wonderful effect to

DESTRUCTION OF THE APPLE CROPS.—Mr. Enock Gore, Wilson, Samuels, Esq., and other farmers of this country, inform us that a species of worm has lately taken up its quarters in their apple orchards, and are destroying their whole crops of young apples. This worm is different from anything that has been known in this region heretofore, and even its name is unknown.—Bardonia (Ky) Gaz.

CROPS.—A correspondent of Ann Arbor, Mich., writes: "What never looked better, but many farmers think it is too fat for the season. There will be fruit in great abundance, if the frosts are not too severe. The wheat crop of this section of the country in most instances looks very well. Considerable injury has been done to some fields by a small white worm, which enters the root and eats it nearly off. Good ground is being sown by the farmers that the crop would be materially injured, but its ravages have nearly ceased."—Rock, American.

Why are modern Indians, like the Illis of the field? Because they feel not, neither do they spin—yet Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of them.