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DONA ISABEL DE SOLIS, QUEEN OF GRANADA.
An Historical Novel.
By D. FRANCISCO MARTINEZ DE LA ROSA.
Spanish historians and annalists of the fifteenth century relate that Muley Abu Hacen, king of Granada—under whose son the destruction of the empire took place—had two wives: one his cousin Aixa, or Ayscha, mother of Abdallah, or Boabdil (as he is differently named by different writers), the other a Christian captive, daughter of De Solis, the Alcaide of Martos—whom he is said to have passionately loved. The jealousies and disputes between the two rival Queens induced the King to divorce his elder wife. This led to the dissensions which cast him from the throne, and weakened the kingdom when assailed by Ferdinand and Isabella,—by offending the powerful family of the Zegries, to which Ayscha belonged, and dividing Granada between their party and that of the Abecerrages, who partly held with the King. His younger sultana, Isabel—called for her exceeding beauty, by the Arabs, Zoraya, or the Light of the Morning—is, as the title imports, the heroine of this novel. It begins with an account of her capture by a roving party of Moors at the moment when the aged Alcaide of Martos was celebrating his daughter's marriage with a young knight named Venegas. The willingness of the captive to change her faith and become the wife of the King—to whom the captor presents her—the author shows considerable anxiety to excuse. The maiden, whose mother died in giving her life, had been brought up, we are told, under the care of a Moorish slave who daily instilled into her ear praises of the beauty and happiness of life in Andalusia. She could but little regret leaving a gloomy frontier castle and a husband whom she had never seen before the espousals. The temptations of every kind offered by the scene to which she was transferred are described as rapidly ensnaring a young creature somewhat vain and lightheaded, and hopeless of returning to a home where her father had been slain when she was captured. The Moorish nurse, desirous to fly with the girl to Granada, had concerted the plan of an assault with the band, and gave them access to the Castle of Martos. She now used uncontrolled influence over her foster-child, and by degrees persuaded her to accept the dazzling prospect offered her by the passion of Abu Hacen.

At this point, however, a care for the heroine's fame has induced the author to depart altogether from the facts of history. He represents Isabel—who lived, in reality, for many years, in joint possession with Aixa of the harem of Muley Hacen—as refusing to become his mistress; and ascribes the discord which succeeds to this refusal,—in consequence of which Aixa, he pretends, was repudiated to make way for the captive Zoraya. From this point, after describing the festivities of the marriage—at which the final rupture between the Zegries and Abecerrages broke out—the story has little to say of the heroine; and, in the second part it becomes a rapid historical sketch of those events of the warfare with the Christians, and of the civil tumults in Granada, which influenced the personal fate of the monarch whom she espoused. This portion of the book is to us by far the most attractive. It relates with considerable animation many of the chief incidents of that remarkable contest,—with which the readers of history are familiar, but which never weary however languidly through the ornate descriptions of the first part rises as we arrive at the story of Abu Hacen into the territories of the Marquis of Cadix;—witness the capture and successive sieges of Alhama,—the warm defence of Loja by that Aliator whose name is high in the Moorish ballads,—the dire slaughter in the Xarquia of Malaga, of the Christian troop the finding of whose bones whitening on the hill-side by the warriors of Philip the Second gave to Mendoza one of the sublimest passages in his great history,—or the famous batalla del Rey moro, in which Boabdil became prisoner to Ferdinand and the famous old Allatar fell, as the well known romance truthfully records. With the battle of Luena, which restored Abu Hacen to the Alhambra for a short period, the second part concludes: and it will be seen that there is a long series of events yet to be told, if the story shall be continued beyond the surrender of Granada to the submission and baptism of the two sons of Zoraya;—who, also, after the death of Muley Hacen, and capture of the city, resumed, as the chroniclers tell us, her Christian name and the faith in which she was born.

The character given by Martinez de la Rosa of the King is quite at variance with what we find in the historians; and, what is curious, this liberty he has taken in a manner calculated rather to impair than enhance the interest of the tale. Abu Hacen is depicted in this novel as a man grown luxurious, indolent, and fickle in his advanced years; but easy to a fault, averse to bloodshed, and impatient of nothing so much as of the necessity of making a new effort or taking a decisive resolution. This is the very contrary of what the records of the time say of his disposition; and is contradicted also by every recital of his actions during the period preserved by historians. We say nothing of that slaughter of his sons in the Court of Lions which is ascribed to the influence of Zoraya: nor of his two furious attacks on his own subjects in the streets of Granada during the civil war. It will be remembered that this was the monarch who returned that spirited reply to the ambassadors of Ferdinand and Isabella when they sent in 1476—Abu Hacen being then advanced in years—to demand the arrears of tribute due under former treaties by the Moorish kings. "Go, and say to your sovereigns," he replied, "that those kings of Granada who paid tribute to Christians are long since dead; and that the mints of Granada now coin nothing but sword blades and lance heads to use against our enemies."

Coode, the learned historian of the Arab dominion in Spain, calls him *muy buen caballero, valiente y animoso*; and elsewhere styles him "magnanimous and vehement, a lover of war and of its horrors and dangers." The rebellion which broke out against him in favor of Boabdil is partly ascribed by the same author to the "hard and cruel disposition of the king," which irritated the chief men of the city; and this account of him is further confirmed by his many ravages on the Christian soil, and by the remorseless sack of Zahara which he commanded in person in time of peace. A similar character of this king is given by Mariana; and De Castro, in his "Reyes Godos," comprises the same features in this brief sentence—"caron fuerte y belicoso, aunque soberbio"—a man of prowess, warlike and strong, but haughty and withal. What object the author of the novel can have had in defacing these striking outlines of character, and giving, instead, a picture of feebleness, irresolution and voluptuous sloth, does not very clearly appear. The travesty, while it conceals the true historical features of the Moorish sovereign, makes his presence contemptible,—and chills any interest with which the reader might have been taught to excuse the devoted passion of the heroine for her husband.

Our extracts will be chosen from amongst the passages in which the author appears rather as a novelist than as a zealous antiquarian or exact topographer;—in which characters, however, as we have said, he seems to be more at home than in the former. The following describes how the ceremony of Isabel's marriage was interrupted at the Castle of Martos, at the close of a three day's rejoicing.

The night appointed for the nuptials at last arrived; and a kind of silent calm succeeded to the uproar and confusion of the evening, as is usual at sea after a hurricane. The commoner sort of the people, quite wearied out, were dispersed in all parts of the castle, lying, overcome with intoxication and sleep, in the courts and passages; the older servants, alone, besides the ladies and gentlemen of the household, were at the door of the chapel, awaiting the hour fixed for the august ceremony. A dull sound re-echoed through the narrow galleries, announced the approach of the bridal party and their company; and in an instant afterwards were seen entering, in two files, some dozen of pages with wax tapers in one hand and their caps in the other, marching up with sedate gravity: after these came the married couple that were to be each equally absorbed, though in different emotion, and neither of them venturing to raise their downcast eyes.

Not so the *Comendador* and Don Alonso, who closely followed their steps—but with heads elevated and joyous countenances, as the author and paternal guardian of the marriage festival; the procession being closed by the maidens of Isabel, all veiled in their mantas, and certain squires more favored than the rest, who by force of entreaties had obtained this distinction. The castle chapel was dark and narrow; composed of one nave only, roofed with beams of walnut: the altar place decorated with wooden statues and gilt carvings;—but the very antiquity of the place and its dusky ornaments seemed the more impressively to withdraw the mind from the things of this world by exciting religious emotions at once melancholy and soothing. It could not but aid this impression to be reminded that there also were resting in peace many of the *Comendador's* ancestors: reposing, while their dust mingled with that of the ground they had rescued from the heathen, under the shadow of the altar they had defended.

And now Isabel found herself kneeling at the foot of that altar, colorless, trembling; at her side her betrothed, scarcely daring to breathe; the sacred minister pronouncing the holy words, and now on the point of receiving the "Yes," which was about to unite them both forever—when, on a sudden, there was heard a clamor so shrill that all were struck mute with surprise. For an instant they supposed it might be some disturbance amongst the servants of the castle, grown turbulent with wine and rejoicing; but a moment afterwards was heard a cry of *Fire!* which appalled the hearts of all; and the tumult now growing nearer and nearer, the clash of arms might be clearly heard, the rushing of men in flight, the groans of the dying! Isabel sank fainting into her husband's arms: the friends and relations around them flew in dismay, and the *Comendador* rushed out like a thunderbolt to learn for himself the cause of the shameful uproar—Zubueros closely following, to aid him in case of need. But on reaching the chapel door, the crowd had blocked up the passage, in haste to take shelter in this sanctuary as a kind of refuge. The *Comendador* shouted to them, but no one listened; to his thousand questions no one gave a reply; there was nothing heard but lamentations, sobs and shrieking, as if death were pressing hard upon them all. And so, unhappily, it was. The castle had been entered by some of the Moors of the frontier, availing themselves of the night, and relying on the negligence of the Christians inspired by the existing peace, as well as on the disorder and fatigue after the festival. * * * There, (in the chapel) was the chief slaughter, there the destruction most frightful. The rage of the infidels was inflamed by the view of the holy spot; and into it they forced their way like wolves bursting into an unguarded sheepfold.—Sword in hand, motionless as a statue, the *Comendador* received their assault, without ever uttering a single word; you could hardly have perceived whether he were living or dead. After bearing a hundred wounds he still remained standing; at last he tottered and fell prone on the ground, dragging himself with difficulty to expire on the tombstone of his wife. Before the altar, supporting Isabel, and as if to shield her with his own body, stood the youth Venegas—though seemingly unconscious of what was passing around him. He neither seized a weapon to defend himself nor looked for any

human help whatever—but for his own life he had no care, his heart being torn by the feeling of the danger of his beloved. *Surrender or die!* shouted to them, from a distance, the leader of the savage troop; and as he rushed forward to part them, the youth embraced his spouse, and at the same instant, receiving a wound in the forehead, fell, bathed in his own blood. Very few were the unfortunates who escaped alive from this night of tribulation. * * * The luckless Isabel, lifeless to all appearance, was amongst the number of the captives.

In the next passage which we shall quote, the young captive, soon reconciled to her condition, has consented to espouse the King after he has divorced Aixa for her sake; and prepares herself in an apartment of the palace to expect the approach of her lover.

Her Moorish nurse led her to the sumptuous chambers prepared for bathing the queens of Granada; in which all that nature and art can produce was united to gratify the mind and the senses. The pavements were of polished marble, the surbase composed of tiles of the brightest colors, inlaid with rich ornaments; on walls smoother than burnished silver, the ceiling rose in a lofty vault, sprinkled with skylights in the figure of stars, designed to diffuse through this voluptuous apartment the subdued glimmer of twilight. Spacious baths of marble (which time, after the lapse of three centuries, still respects) received the exquisitely pure water, that seemed to be distilled from the walls, and invited by its delicious coolness, a longing wish to enjoy it. And, that nothing might yet be wanting to recreation and delight, you saw, not far from the bath, two *alhamis*, or alcoves, slightly raised from the ground, with Persian carpets and pillows; while from a gallery near the roof (but concealed from sight behind perforations in the walls, as finely wrought as the most delicate lace work) were heard the echoes of soft music, inviting repose and slumber. * * * Whether owing to the state of languor into which she had fallen, or from shyness and reserve, or it may be, in reliance on her own beauty, (as pride itself often takes the form of modesty,) Isabel on this occasion had refused to adorn herself with a rich or showy costume—and preferred a plain robe whiter than driven snow, with a sash of dark blue silk, and a veil of a softer tint of the same color, like that with which the young flower of the flax adorns the fields. Nor would she allow any rich strings of pearls or jewels to ornament her tresses, her neck or bosom; and, at the instant when she was refusing to decorate herself in this manner with the most precious jewels—either at some signal from Arlaja or because the appointed hour had arrived, there was suddenly heard at the door a slight sound, as of some one trying to open it with timid care. Isabel was startled and confused; the Moor smiled, slave girls entered, and they saw, at the half opened door, like one delighted to be the messenger of her lord, a graceful gazelle that had been sent to Abu Hacen from Africa, and nurtured by him within the palace. The nurtured creature, as if guided by a kind of instinct, bounded with quick paces into the apartment, and stood still directly before Isabel, with head raised and eyes fixed on her countenance, until the maiden observed that it carried a small basket suspended from its neck, filled with orange and violet flowers, and amidst them lay a pair of rich anklets of gold, enamelled with colors as bright and variegated as the wings of a butterfly. On each of them was engraved an ingenious distich, to the following effect:—

Slave to Love though I may be
My Lord is more enslaved by me.

The maid was delighted with this attention of the King more than if he had offered her all the treasures of the world; and, as if longing to express her gratitude to him, by caressing the charming gazelle, she kissed it on the forehead, throwing her arms around its neck. In this attitude the King surprised her, unexpectedly appearing at the door.

In contrast to this voluptuous picture, we shall subjoin, for a closing specimen, the last scene of the disaster of the Christian expedition in the mountains of Malaga;—remembered with horror to this day in Spain, where the site of the principal slaughter still bears a name that records it. The Spanish knights, led by the *adelantado* of Anhalusia, the Count of Cifuentes and the Marquis of Cadix, with three of his brothers and other famous partisans, had thought to execute their foray and return before the Moors could take the alarm; but they were miserably deceived, and paid the penalty of their rashness, when, entangled as they were in the rugged chain of the *Xarquia* of Malaga, the whole country rose in arms to surround them, and retreat became hopeless.

Surprised in their turn, they sought in a hundred directions an opening for flight, and not one of the hundred availed them. They were encumbered with booty, impeded by the nature of the ground and the weight of their armour; when they climbed an ascent they found it crested already with troops of the infidels; if they raised their heads to look upwards, a shower of darts and javelins fell upon them. Finding neither refuge nor exit, they drew together in a deep valley, formed and encompassed by two mountains, as if in this situation the unhappy men might hope to find defence and shelter; but here the danger only became more imminent.

And now the destruction of the whole band appeared to be inevitable; for at the darkening of the night, which was more rude and inclement than is usual in the month of March, they had seen the hill tops all bristling with the Moorish hordes; and around them were now kindled more than ten thousand alarm fires, which increased the horror and dismay. Too clearly and distinctly could they hear the shrill cries of the infidels, already celebrating their triumph, certain of their prey; and that no circumstance of terror might be wanting in this moment of distress, deep thunders were heard from the rocks and crags overhead, which came

rolling and crashing down upon them, launched from the summits above into the hollow where they were crowded together. Imprisoned here, and in a space so narrow that they had not even room to turn their arms, without hope or human succour, nor other aid than they might implore from Heaven, did the Christians wear out more anxious and dismal was ever passed by mortal men; and in part fearing its approach, as the sure signal for their destruction or captivity. * * * A few tried desperately to break their way out. * * * Vain was their temerity! the Moors, masters of the heights, hurled stones and arrows upon those who tried the ascent; dashed them headlong down the ribs of the mountain, pierced them with wounds at a secure distance;—and after the lapse of a few moments the slope might be seen already thickly strewn over with dead bodies, like swaths in a harvest field. Such was the carnage that the Moors themselves beheld it with horror. In that day of desolation they named the place the *Hill of the Massacre*, and the memory and the name survive to this day.

In conclusion, while praising the precision and color of his local descriptions and the pains with which historical materials have been gathered, or admiring the eloquence with which the striking events of the period are often told, we cannot say that Don Martinez has very successfully accomplished his patriotic design, nor receive his novel as a fortunate attempt to give to the national literature a Spanish Walter Scott. The most complete study of other times and customs will not suffice to make a good historical romance; and we feel throughout this book that its author lacks the gift of calling up that life of the past—which is the great merit of the Waverley Novels. The matter borrowed from history, precious though it be, lies like an unmetalled mass amidst the invented incidents of the tale; and evidently has not obtained that entire genial possession of the author's mind which would enable him to restore the material substance of real records in the vivid forms of a poet's imagination. Nevertheless, the performance, if greatly inferior to the poorest attempts of Scott, and even beneath the standard of Manzoni, is far from being either trivial or discreditably to Spanish literature;—and to the foreign reader it may be valuable for the special reasons already given.

Of the style it may be presumptuous for an English critic to speak. Yet we cannot but feel, in reading this book, if it may be taken as a fair specimen of modern Spanish, that a change has come over that noble language scarcely less marked than the political decline of the nation. The reader familiar with the classics of its best times will meet at every step with sickly phrases and tiresome affectations, of native and foreign growth, that sadly detract from the majestic features of the pure Castilian;—and may be reminded that as the speech of a people is the most immediate utterance of its being, the vicissitudes which enfeeble the one will in time pervert and weaken the other.—*Athenaeum.*

MOZART'S REQUIEM.—One day when Mozart's spirits were unusually oppressed, a stranger, of a tall, dignified appearance, was introduced. His manners were grave and impressive. He told Mozart that he came from a person who did not wish to be known, to request he would compose a solemn mass, as a requiem for the soul of a friend whom he had recently lost, and whose memory he was desirous of commemorating by this solemn service. Mozart undertook the task, and engaged to have it completed in a month. The stranger begged to know what price he set upon his work, and immediately paid him a hundred ducats and departed.

The mystery of this visit seemed to have a very strong effect upon the mind of the musician. He brooded over it for some time; and then suddenly calling for writing materials, began to compose with extraordinary ardor. This application, however, was more than his strength could support; it brought on fainting fits; and his increasing illness obliged him to suspend his work.

"I am writing this requiem for myself!" said he abruptly to his wife one day; "it will serve for my own funeral service; and this impression never afterward left him. At the expiration of the month, the mysterious stranger appeared, and demanded the requiem. 'I have found it impossible,' said Mozart, 'to keep my word; the work has interested me more than I expected, and I have extended it beyond my first design. I shall require another month to finish it.'

The stranger made no objection; but observing, that for this additional trouble it was but just to increase the premium, laid down fifty ducats more, and promised to return at the time appointed. Astonished at his whole proceedings, Mozart ordered a servant to follow this singular personage, and, if possible, to find out who he was; the man, however, lost sight of him, and was obliged to return as he went. Mozart, now obliged to return as he went, was more than ever persuaded that he was a messenger from the other world, sent to warn him that his end was approaching, applied with fresh zeal to the requiem; and in spite of the exhausted state both of his mind and body, completed it before the end of the month. At the appointed day the stranger returned; but Mozart was no more.

Mr. Hogarth, in his very pleasant work, entitled *Musical History*, allude, with reference to this remarkable transaction, that it still remains in some degree a mystery. Reasons have been adduced for supposing the stranger to be the steward of a Count Walsdeck, who, having lost his wife, took it into his head not to obtain, but to pretend to compose, a requiem to her memory; and for this purpose applied for such a composition to Mozart, desirous to set it off as his own.

☞ Catching fleas in a fish net, is considered absurd.

rolling and crashing down upon them, launched from the summits above into the hollow where they were crowded together. Imprisoned here, and in a space so narrow that they had not even room to turn their arms, without hope or human succour, nor other aid than they might implore from Heaven, did the Christians wear out more anxious and dismal was ever passed by mortal men; and in part fearing its approach, as the sure signal for their destruction or captivity. * * * A few tried desperately to break their way out. * * * Vain was their temerity! the Moors, masters of the heights, hurled stones and arrows upon those who tried the ascent; dashed them headlong down the ribs of the mountain, pierced them with wounds at a secure distance;—and after the lapse of a few moments the slope might be seen already thickly strewn over with dead bodies, like swaths in a harvest field. Such was the carnage that the Moors themselves beheld it with horror. In that day of desolation they named the place the *Hill of the Massacre*, and the memory and the name survive to this day.

In conclusion, while praising the precision and color of his local descriptions and the pains with which historical materials have been gathered, or admiring the eloquence with which the striking events of the period are often told, we cannot say that Don Martinez has very successfully accomplished his patriotic design, nor receive his novel as a fortunate attempt to give to the national literature a Spanish Walter Scott. The most complete study of other times and customs will not suffice to make a good historical romance; and we feel throughout this book that its author lacks the gift of calling up that life of the past—which is the great merit of the Waverley Novels. The matter borrowed from history, precious though it be, lies like an unmetalled mass amidst the invented incidents of the tale; and evidently has not obtained that entire genial possession of the author's mind which would enable him to restore the material substance of real records in the vivid forms of a poet's imagination. Nevertheless, the performance, if greatly inferior to the poorest attempts of Scott, and even beneath the standard of Manzoni, is far from being either trivial or discreditably to Spanish literature;—and to the foreign reader it may be valuable for the special reasons already given.

Of the style it may be presumptuous for an English critic to speak. Yet we cannot but feel, in reading this book, if it may be taken as a fair specimen of modern Spanish, that a change has come over that noble language scarcely less marked than the political decline of the nation. The reader familiar with the classics of its best times will meet at every step with sickly phrases and tiresome affectations, of native and foreign growth, that sadly detract from the majestic features of the pure Castilian;—and may be reminded that as the speech of a people is the most immediate utterance of its being, the vicissitudes which enfeeble the one will in time pervert and weaken the other.—*Athenaeum.*

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THE POLYNESIAN.

HONOLULU, SATURDAY, FEB. 10.

In another column will be found an extract from a letter penned by a person at the time of writing, and perhaps now, resident in Honolulu, which appeared in the "Daily Union," published in the city of Washington, on the 1st of September, 1847. Knowing the variety of passions which a single human heart is capable of containing, we read the extract more in sorrow than in anger, and we regretted at the same time, that in a country so noble and so free as the United States of America, a system should still exist, the effect of which upon the minds of some of her citizens, is to produce a feeling of contempt and sometimes of abhorrence for people whose skins are less white than their own.

We cannot but imagine that the publication here of this ungenerous document will give pain; should it meet the eye of its author he must feel chagrined, not perhaps at having committed such a trespass upon humanity to paper, (for that we can hardly expect) but that his indiscretion should have been made known. Whatever was the master-passion beneath whose yoke he bowed, as he wrote, we almost fancy we detect him pursuing the same line of thought as Mr. Fag, the polished, and declaring that though he scrupled not to epistolize in that way to serve his master, yet it hurts his conscience to be found out.

Fortunately for these islands, the writer does not represent the feelings of the American citizens who live upon them, and it gives us satisfaction to be able to show how different are the expressions contained in the extract, and how opposed in color and tone to certain sentiments to which we have all of us perhaps, within a few weeks had our attention directed. The following words appear in the extract: "They, the natives—and I had almost said their white managers—are most emphatically a race of animals; and by their licentiousness and consequent horrible diseases, are dying off by scores and hundreds. They seem decreed, like the North American Indians, to give place to the Anglo Saxon race, and the sooner they are gone the better for themselves and the country they inhabit. . . . They are a doomed race," etc. And again, speaking of the white officers of government, "I have little or no patience with these miserable, narrow-minded, conceited men, who control this poor, imbecile, ignorant black King, and administer his government to suit their own selfish purposes."

How antagonistic and ill-assorted are feelings and views like these, with those of Mr. Ten Eyck, the United States Commissioner, pronounced before the King in his palace, no longer ago than the 13th of December last. Read them and compare them, if comparison can exist between them.

"I commence with the sincere assurance to you, that my Government, and I, as their honored representative, entertain the most constant and unabating friendship to you and your nation," etc. And in the next paragraph, "If any man or set of men, have dared to persuade your Majesty, that the Representative of the United States, would condescend to intrigue and plot for the overthrow or injury of your Government, or dishonestly to curtail your prerogatives, or to deride your person or your office, or to involve your nation unwarrantably, I say to your Majesty, he or they have done so unwisely, and falsely, and from bad motives. It would be my pride—my pleasure—it is the ardent wish of my heart—to see your Government free and independent, through all time—to see your constitutional prerogatives preserved unimpaired—to see your person beloved, and your high rank respected—to see your nation inhabiting the feeling, and marching on in the high road of prosperity, happiness, and progress, which marks the progressive spirit of the age in which we live."

But the United States Commissioner does not stop short here; he claims to himself consideration for something more than good wishes. It appears he has been busy in the cause of Hawaii, and promises to continue in the same course. We italicize one word. "During the few short months I may have to remain at your Court, it will be no less my duty, than my pleasure, to continue to do what in me lies, to promote results so desirable."

gard to the designs of Great Britain upon these islands, and foretold their passing into the hands of Queen Victoria, "and that before many months." Yet here they are, with the Hawaiian flag still flying and likely to do so. "Everything here and elsewhere," he says, "seems to point that way." Perhaps to his mind it does so still, and it is possible it may continue in the same position, as hand-posts direct always to one place and never get there. Speaking of the "News," he seems to entertain a strong desire to see certain of its articles republished in America. Why this anxiety—can he be a contributor?

In looking over the extract, or that part of it which concerns these islands, one jumps at the single truth it contains as a person freezes to a friend that he meets with amongst a room-full of strangers. It is a fact that one of the pupils in the Chief's school became eniente whilst there, was dismissed under a cloud and married to a man who very likely thought her rank an equivalent for anything she might have lost. Our author was possibly brought up in those remote and more unbragous regions where schools are rarities, or he could hardly have failed to call to mind instances where similar accidents have happened in older countries and perhaps better regulated families. There was a seminary in the fashionable part of London, also 'much puffed up' to which the children of county people and the nobility were sent, and high enough the terms were. But after a while it came out that not one, but several of the elder girls had not fallen but led into indiscretions which were multiplications of the offence committed by the young chiefs whom the writer has seen fit to single out and make a mark of in the public press of Washington itself. In the case we allude to the party who kept the school encouraged these transactions and made money out of them. We are sorry to say boys and girls are no better in Hawaii than they are in England and America.

Our author, if he be still amongst us, very probably ranks with those American citizens and other foreigners who feel strongly in regard to the abstraction, so notorious here, of certain manuscripts from the office of the "Sandwich Islands News." In that case, he would do well, we think, to say as little as possible about the affair, for in fixing blame upon the individual who instigated that proceeding he must establish a standard by which public opinion is likely to measure his own conduct; and the popular sentiment he endeavored to arouse in disapproval of another's act, would probably as soon as it was wide awake, pounce upon his own. "Good name in man and woman," says Iago, "is the immediate jewel of their souls." And of what is the writer of the extract, through his instruments in the far away United States, endeavoring to rob the King and chiefs and people of these islands, if it be not their good name? A theft, 'which not enriches him, and makes them poor indeed.' As compared with a good name, Iago speaks of the purse as 'trash,' and we all know that newspaper copy is very often worse than trash. But enough of this extract.

The following was written to a gentleman residing at San Francisco, and contains some things of interest to those who intend visiting the "gold diggings."

DAY DIGGINGS, Dec. 18th, 1848. DEAR SIR:—Believing that yourself and the world generally must feel no slight interest in what is going on in this important region, I hasten to lay before you the weighty matters recently transacted in our city of mountains. "When in the course of human events, a people" having the fear of Indians, horse-thieves and house-breakers before their eyes, believe that they are and may be, menaced by danger, a decent regard for their own interests would seem to call for some measures of protection and advantage to the public weal. So at least thought the people of our valley, who accordingly assembled themselves for the high purpose of choosing an Alcalde and other officers. But there rose "a wise man from the east," who was raised within the sound of church bells, who said it was the Sabbath, and all proceedings would be illegal. Some seemed to think that "better the day, better the deed," while others tried to calculate the number of weeks or months since they had seen or known Sunday before. But all departed—every man to his log cabin, except those who returned to their holes in the ravines to dig, growing at the interruption.

Yesterday the citizens again met, and everything being propitious, the important objects of the gathering were completely effected, Levi Sigler, Esq. being chosen Alcalde, and Thompson, Esq. elected sheriff.

I regret that I cannot give you a statement of votes that would show the comparative strength of parties, but as a general thing, our people don't care a copper about either Whig or Democrat, their thoughts and time being fully occupied with more weighty matters. The order and decorum of the election reflects the highest credit on our citizens, particularly when it is known that the only object of some in attending, was the prospect of a "fid," for "the critter" is to be found in "these ere diggings." You may walk up to the counter and for the trifling of fifty cents receive a glass of the stuff that makes you feel as though you had just found a pound piece of gold; and a few more glasses of which, sends you to the earth hunting for that same piece, or dreaming thereof, while the vender can point to you in proud exultation, in proof of the good quality of his liquor.

It would ill become my humble pen to attempt the description of a place so famed in story (mine's yarns) as the city of the "Dry Diggings," nevertheless, I will endeavor to give you some faint idea of it. In the approach by the road from the Mill and Fort, there is but little of the grand or sublime in its appearance, but all our citizens allow that in entering, as they catch sight of the houses and the smoke of their own cabins, and remember the comforts therein contained, few spectacles are more gratifying; that if they are from the Middle Fork with a heavy pack on their backs, cold, footsore and weary, with their last piece of jerk gone, and the last bit of bread devoured, tired as man can be and walk, and hungry as a starved wolf;—the sight produces a feeling of unutterable pleasure, that is worth, as they think, all the grandeur and sublimity from Boston to Bearbebe. Near

where the road above mentioned enters the valley, is situated the greater part of the houses, which are of various dimensions and different degrees of comfort and convenience—all built of logs. One quarter of a mile beyond, is another collection of houses, with others scattered along still further up, numbering altogether about fifty, whose inhabitants vary from four to eight each in number.

The valley contains quite a strip of level land in which is the watercourse, now dry, but which is to run with the water, which by and by is to wash the gold, which is to make the Dry Diggers, their children and their grand children rich as nabobs of course.

There are several families here and numerous places where goods are sold. We have no school-house or church, but there has been religious services here. Think of that and blush you of San Francisco, where some months since, no place of public worship could be found on the Sabbath. Nearly three fourths, as some say, of our population, are from Oregon, and they are among the most industrious, persevering and successful of miners.

The mining region is supposed to have been inundated with no less than 1500 men from Oregon, and most of these say, or have said, as I did to me, "there's gold in this country, and I'll be darn'd if I don't have a share of it." Such determined resolution, of course fills the buckskin bags. Many of them are "out and out" backwoodsmen, accustomed to camping out in all weathers, can live on acorns and broun, (if no game offers) and grow fat; can out-trace a coyote (prairie wolf) at any time, and of a stormy night when out, will fight a grizzly bear for a bed in his den, and his warm skin for a blanket. Many people from here are said to be in the Middle Fork, at work in spite of frost and snow and rain.

We have just had a severe storm of snow and rain, and some people who arrived in it suffered severely. A night out in such a storm must be somewhat like all night on deck off Cape Horn, in a gale, in the month of August. After a rain we have the weather so cold that water freezes, and the mornings are quite uncomfortable for working.

The old hands here now average only from one to two ounces of gold per day, and the new ones still less. The days are quite short, as one old Sol don't turn out before eight or nine o'clock—that is, he is hid behind the mountains. I suppose the rush for these northern climes is over for the season, or I would just say to any coming, "look before you leap."

BILLY ANONYMOUS, Esq.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

MR. BUCHANAN'S LETTER TO MR. RUSH.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Washington, March 31, 1848.

SIR—I received last evening your dispatch of the 4th inst., (No. 17) containing a sketch of the progress of the French Revolution, and of the course you have adopted towards the Provisional Government, I am happy to inform you that the President cordially approves your conduct. It was right and proper that the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States should be the first to recognize the Provisional Government of France. Indeed, had the representative of any other nation preceded you in this good work, it would have been regretted by the President. Your speech on the 25th ultimo, at the Hotel de Ville, to the members of the Provisional Government, was eminently judicious. Whilst it truly expressed the feelings of the President and people of the United States for the success of the new Republic, it did not omit our cherished policy, of leaving to other nations the choice of their own forms of Government.

I transmit to you, herewith, a letter of credence from the President to the French Republic. You are also furnished with a copy of this letter, which you will communicate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on asking an audience for the purpose of delivering the original to the chief authority in France. At this audience, you will make such remarks as may be dictated by your own good judgment and discretion, and by your knowledge of the lively interest which the President feels in the prosperity and stability of the French Republic.

In its intercourse with foreign nations, the Government of the United States has, from its origin, always recognized de facto governments. We recognize the right of all nations to create and reform their political institutions, according to their own good judgment, and we do not interfere in the question of legitimacy. It is sufficient for us to know that a government exists capable of maintaining itself; and then its recognition on our part inevitably follows. The principle of action, resulting from our sacred regard for the independence of nations has occasioned some strange anomalies in our history. The Pope, the Emperor of Russia, and President Jackson were the only authorities on earth which ever recognized Don Miguel as King of Portugal.

Whilst this is our settled policy, it does not follow that we can ever be indifferent spectators to the progress of liberty throughout the world, and especially in France. We can never forget the obligation we owe to that generous nation, for their aid at the darkest period of our revolutionary war, in achieving our own independence. These obligations have been transmitted from father to son, from generation to generation; and are still gratefully remembered. They yet live freshly in the hearts of our countrymen. It was therefore with one universal burst of enthusiasm that the American people hailed the late glorious revolution in France in favor of liberty and republican government. In this feeling the President strongly sympathizes. Warm aspirations for the success of the new republic are breathed from every heart. Liberty and peace are our constant and our prosperous. Her desires have been transmitted to the French people. Let them, by their wisdom, firmness, and moderation, refute the slanders of their enemies, and convince the world that they are capable of self-government.

In our exultation, however, we cannot forget that republican France will have to contend with many difficulties. Among the chief of these is the danger that she may be involved in war with the monarchial powers of Europe. This she ought to avoid by every honorable means; and I am happy to believe that such will be the policy of the French government, from the note of M. Lamartine to yourself, of the 27th ultimo, in which he eloquently observes that the principles of peace and the principle of liberty were born on the same day in France. By abstaining from all aggressive movements, France will probably be able to perfect her republican institutions in peace. It can scarcely be conceived that any nation would commence hostilities against her simply because within her own limits she had abolished monarchy and established a republic.

It has been the policy of our government from its origin never to interfere in the domestic concerns of other nations, and experience has demonstrated the wisdom of this policy. In this respect, France may profit by our example. If war must come, she ought carefully to avoid even the appearance of being the aggressor. Should she then be attacked by the monarchial powers of Europe for adopting a republican government, this would be an outrage upon her rights as an independent nation. It would be an attempt to punish the French people for having chosen that form of government which they deemed best calculated to promote their own happiness, and to force upon them a monarchy by foreign bayonets. Such an invasion of these most sacred rights would be condoned by all just and wise men in every nation, and would be reprobated by an irresistible public opinion throughout the world.

If the new republic can preserve peace with honor, it will avoid the many dangers to liberty which must always follow in the train of war. In a conflict with the great powers of Europe, France would be compelled to put forth all her energies, she must increase her armies to the highest war standard, and yet may have to maintain them in the field for years. The sympathy of common dangers and the glory of common victories throughout a long and successful struggle are calculated to excite feelings of enthusiastic attachment in armies towards their triumphant commander. Under such circumstances, the history of the world proves that soldiers are too prone to forget their admiration for their leader. From Caesar to Cromwell, and from Cromwell to Napoleon, all powerful republics have been destroyed by successful generals fresh from the fields of their glory. It would be most lamentable, indeed, should the new republic sink upon this rock. In that event, the very spirit which she had employed to defend her liberties, would be employed to establish a military despotism at home. Such a catastrophe would, probably for many years, arrest the progress of constitutional freedom throughout Europe.

Even with a view to the extension of human liberty and free government throughout the world, France can do more by her peaceful example than she could accomplish, powerful as she is, by the sword. The example of a great and enlightened nation, in the midst of Europe, in the pursuit of the enjoyment of constitutional liberty, could not fail to produce an irresistible influence in ameliorating the political condition of neighboring nations. Free institutions are in their very nature progressive, and if permitted to extend themselves by their own intrinsic power and excellence, they must gradually and surely pervade the civilized world. The people of each independent nation will then decide for themselves what degree of liberty is best adapted to their condition, without any forcible intervention of other nations. If France can maintain peace with honor, a general war in Europe between opposite and contending principles will be avoided; and the cause of the human race will not be staked upon the result of a few great battles, nor be decided by mere brute force.

I shall mention another difficulty which might possibly interfere with the final success of the French revolution, but which I hope may be overcome. It is the question of the influence of every philosophical observer of the working of our institutions, whether if the State governments were abolished, a central republican government could long be maintained even in this country. These State governments are the citadels of liberty, and the watchful guardians of the rights of the people against the encroachments of federal power. Even were it possible that the federal government could, by any sudden convulsion, be overthrown, the State governments would still remain in full force and vigor, affording protection to the liberties and the property of their citizens. These sovereignties are the main pillars in our political edifice; and whilst they stand firm, the federal government, which is a constitutional emanation from them, cannot be seriously shaken. And yet, it was deemed necessary to guard against the danger of any forcible interference by excited multitudes, with the high duties of the President and Congress, and, for this reason, they have been engaged in the manufacture of wine and brandy. The wine has been brought here, and pronounced it very good. Yankee enterprise and ingenuity will of course soon invent or introduce an improved mode of manufacture, and of consequence an improved article. The mines not far from the coast, and easily accessible, are said to be rich in ores of silver, quicksilver, lead, and some other metals. The climate of Upper California is said to be 35 deg. north, is said to be all that can be desired; it is quite equal to that of these islands; northern men like it better. It is of a very uniform temperature, averaging about 65 degrees of Fahrenheit—not so warm and more bracing than that of these islands. Farther north at San Francisco they have colder weather—nothing however that would be called winter by a northern man; no snow, no freezing, but considerable rain during the winter months. Altogether it is a most inviting region, and for the next five or ten years will attract the attention not only of the "universal Yankee nation" but of the nations of Europe, and will astonish them at the rapid development of its peculiar and great natural resources and capacities, and its giant strides towards national wealth and distinction. The United States by retaining it as a part of their territory will have secured a most valuable country, and can greatly aid its advancement. Under any circumstances, it is a country which should form a portion of Mexican soil, and must be independent of that power; and settled principally as it will be, and is already, by citizens of the United States, it will go ahead and be a "great country," whether governed by the laws of the Union or by those of its own adoption. So note it be. Already the spirit of speculation has infused itself into the inhabitants, and I hear that towns and cities are being surveyed out, and probably ere this, have been surveyed, and possibly are now being surveyed out in black and white in the principal cities of the United States. What the next Congress will do in regard to extending the jurisdiction and laws of the United States over California, of course, I cannot say. If, however, peace is negotiated with Mexico before their next session, I presume it will be on the condition that California is surrendered to the United States; in which case, I suppose a Territorial Government will be at once organized—at any rate, in my opinion. It is an organization should take place immediately. If all the accounts that we hear of the emigration into California already, and that which is on its way there, approximates at all to the truth, before Congress meets in December next there will be eight or ten thousand Americans there.

Whether the lands in California are better and more productive than in Oregon I cannot say; certain it is they are not inferior, and that the skies of the former country are much more inviting and brighter than those of the latter. In Oregon, west of the Cascade Mountains, it rains nine months in the year. Most excellent wheat however is raised there, and already in large quantities. They have also fine flouring mills in operation, where excellent flour is manufactured in large quantities, and exported to California and these islands. Had it not been for the flour of Oregon, our emigrants, sailors, and soldiers, now in California, would before this have been well nigh starved out. Flour has been selling here and on the coast at twenty dollars the barrel. The arrival of vessels here from the United States and Chile lately with flour has brought it down to fifteen dollars at this place, though I presume it is still worth twenty dollars on the coast. Flour in the Columbia River is purchased for \$4.50 to \$5 a barrel. Freights in this ocean are enormous; \$1.50 to \$2 a barrel from this to the coast and to the Columbia River is the ordinary charge, and not the safe vessels at that. An ordinary run for a tolerable sailor from here to California by the Columbia River is from 20 to 25 days. They come down here with the northeastern trades in an average of about 15 days. The above rates of freight hold good any where along the coast and to China. Good coal can be readily procured at the various ports of the eastern Pacific, I know of no better speculation for our enterprising countrymen than the introduction into this ocean of good steam propellers, or staunch ship or schooner rigged steam boats, such as navigated our lakes before the high and hazardous deck cabins were introduced. So far as the navigation of the Pacific is concerned, it is as safe if not safer than our lakes. Liverpool coal can be procured in abundance at Valparaiso, and as cheap as at Boston. It could probably be contracted for there (Valparaiso) for five or six dollars a ton. I understand good coal has been found at Queen Charlotte's Island, in some easily accessible points in Oregon, and in California. The introduction of steam vessels into the Pacific by some English company, running to and from Panama and Valparaiso, has proved most

profitable. It would be found equally so on the Panama north along the western coast of Mexico and California, to Oregon and these islands. It would shorten our voyage wonderfully, would offer additional inducements, and afford a route to the Pacific coast of North America, for the government of the United States over the interests of the west, especially as they (the government) have invited their emigration to that point, to employ one or more steam propellers or vessels to run from Panama to San Francisco, and thence to the Columbia River. With a regular steamer on the route from San Francisco to Panama, and from Chagres to some port in the United States, a person could make the route from San Francisco to New York in thirty or forty days. It is due to our countrymen, and to their families, that they may be provided with some certain and regular mail facilities. Aside from those of our citizens residing in California and Oregon, it would be greatly accommodated and benefited by this mode of intercourse with their friends at home, it would be a source of incalculable pleasure and benefit to the fifteen or twenty thousand American seamen engaged on the whole globe, in the North Pacific, who, as matters now stand, frequently remain out here three or more years, without hearing a word from their families, friends, or their country, except what they may accidentally hear at some of the ports to which they may resort for supplies. No one, who has had experience, can appreciate the value of such facilities as I have spoken of. If our members of Congress, (and our Postmaster General might be added) who are enjoying large salaries from the people, and luxuriating every moment in the personal and numerous daily newspapers, and the thousands of periodicals and tracts, and the production of the press is constantly increasing, and who have only to walk across the street to the office of the magnetic telegraph, to communicate and receive communications at an instant of time from their families and friends, hundreds and perhaps thousands of miles off, they would for a moment remember that their fellow-citizens in California and Oregon, and the various parts of this ocean hear from their families and business connections in the United States, once, perhaps in a year, or sometimes more, frequently remain out here three or more years, without hearing a word from their families, friends, or their country, except what they may accidentally hear at some of the ports to which they may resort for supplies. 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