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J. J. JARVES, Editor.

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POETRY.

From the Opal, a Pure Gift for the Holy Days.

A THOUGHT OVER A CRADLE.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

I sadden when thou smilest to my smile,
Child of my love! I tremble to believe
That o'er the mirror of that eye of blue
The shadow of my heart will always pass;
A heart that, from its struggle with the world,
Comes nightly to thy guarded cradle home,
And, ceaseless of the staining dust it bears,
Asks for its idol! Strange, that flowers of earth
Are visited by every air that stirs,
And drink in sweetness only, while the child
That shuts within its breast a bloom for heaven,
May take a blemish from the breath of love,
And bear the blight forever.

I have wept
With gladness at the gift of this fair child!
My life is bound up in her! But, oh God!
Thou know'st how heavily my heart at times
Bears its sweet burthen! and if Thou hast given
To nurture such a Thine this spotless flower,
To bring it unpolluted unto Thee,
Take Thou its love, I pray thee! Give it light—
Though, following the sun, it turn from me!
But, by the chord thus wrung, and by the light
Shining about, draw me to my child,
And link us close, oh God, when near to heaven!

COMMUNICATED.

MEXICO.

Report on its Finances under the Spanish Government, since its independence, and prospects of their improvement under the Presidency of His Excellency Don Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna; with calculations of the Public Debt—Foreign and Domestic—Average of Estimates, Revenue and Expenditure; to which are added Tables illustrative of its Commercial, Manufacturing, and prohibitive policy, and Remarks on Colonization;—the whole intended for the information of Merchants, Emigrants, and the holders of Mexican Bonds.

By ROBERT CRICHTON WYLLIE.

(Continued.)

But it will be at once obvious to every one that if Santa Anna had permitted the old system of revenue anticipations, Loan and paper jobbing and usurious contracts to prevail, that desirable period, so longed for by the bond holders, would have been postponed indefinitely; the decree of the 25 per cent assignment, is therefore, on the part of His Excellency, a violent step taken, on the right course, as the only visible means of obviating the destructive consequences of the many violent and illegal steps taken by his predecessors (the congresses not excepted) in their long career on the wrong course; and I cannot help thinking that it will prove a most fortunate circumstance for the bond holders, that the 1st. of October 1847 arrives during the period of his presidency. He has already laid the substratum of a new and better order of things; the state of the country and its finances presents greater facilities for its regeneration than did that of Chile when Don Manuel Rengifo introduced the reforms already mentioned, and with greater power, he has certainly not less inclination, nor less ability, if his mind could only be directed to the adoption of similar means.

Lest a suspicion of my addictedness to him personally should be entertained to the prejudice of what credence might otherwise be given to my statements respecting him, I take occasion here to remark that I have no reason to be partial to him personally, beyond the courteous reception which, as a gentleman, he vouchsafes to all; that if I believed any other Mexican were better adapted to rule the country, for its benefit, than Santa Anna, I would prefer that Mexican to him; and that in nothing that I have said of his character or capacities to work out the regeneration of this country, fertile in resources, do I go beyond the opinion which I have heard twice stated publicly, by His Excellency General Wally Thompson, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, and from the extremely delicate and difficult negotiations with this government which he has brought to a successful issue, it must be admitted that he has had rare opportunities of judging of every thing relating to the personal character of the head of this government.

On a careful consideration of the present

position of this republic, and of what financial reforms may be expected under a powerful, energetic and creative government, it is my conviction, that it would be the interest of the bond holders, to revert to their original rights, pledges and guarantees, under the primitive contracts. They are clearly entitled to one third of all the revenues of all the maritime custom houses, and if that should not be sufficient for all their dividends, to as much more of the general revenues as may be required to complete their dividends, and the stipulated redemption funds, and it is not to be supposed that Santa Anna who has always respected the assignments made to the British bondholders (and he is the only Mexican president who has done so) would object to a course so just and natural.

Besides by adopting that course the bond holders would only act consistently with the opinion of their right in the similar cases of Chile and Columbia, expressed by Lord Palmerston, and afterwards confirmed by Lord Aberdeen to two deputations of the committee, of both of which I had the honor to form one. The bond holders will have the more confidence in asserting their original rights, when they know that several of the Mexican ministers of Finance, in by-gone years have actually recommended the appropriation of the whole net proceeds of all the maritime custom houses to pay the dividends and gradually extinguish the principal of the national debt, foreign and domestic. The ex-ministers of Finance Gortiza, Echeverria and Canseco, in their respective "memorias" for 1833, 1840 and 1841 all support this application of the revenues raised by the custom houses, and the adoption of such a course, is now the more easy that direct taxation has been resorted to, in aid of the general revenue.

As for the assignment of one fifth of the duties receivable by Vera Cruz and Tampico, it is wholly inadequate for the purposes intended, and ought not to be depended upon by the bond holders.

They will remember that in 1837 and 1839, I almost stood alone in my opposition to the first and second terms of composition offered by the agent of Chile, on the ground that the high-minded people of that country would scout arrangements so unjust to the bond holders, so inconsistent with their resources and so unworthy of their fame. The increased dividends now received as compared with those offered is the measure of benefit now accruing to them, from their dependence on Chilean honesty and honor. With the same confidence and knowledge of their character and resources, I now say that the Mexican people will, when duly informed of the arrangement with their British creditors, injurious to their rights, and destructive of their own credit and fame as a nation, haste to redeem the errors committed, and resume their rank amongst honest and honourable nations, for which they possess the most ample means, and to develop which, they have now a chief well able for the task.

Although I join with the Mexican ministers of Finance whom I have named, in just severity upon their own employes, who have defrauded the revenue, reduced the nation to bankruptcy, sullied for a time, its fair fame I am not to be confounded with those who decry the Mexicans as a people, represent them as a race without any virtues, sunk in vicious degradation and moral corruption, beneath even the hope of regeneration. On the contrary I believe and have found them to be, in the mass, a mild, docile, brave, kind and warm-hearted people, of great endurance and capable of every improvement, under good government.

They are not naturally averse or inhospitable to foreigners, if the latter receive their manifestations of good will with becoming gratitude, though the late policy of their government with respect to foreign commerce and industry, may mislead foreign nations into such a belief. I can attest this from my own experience in Rosario, Tepic and Mazatlan, where, after an absence of thirteen years, I lately experienced a kindness and consideration, from the inhabitants of all classes that could not be exceeded in my own country and amongst my own relations.

As for the recent policy of government, to which I have above, and in other places alluded, I am persuaded that it is the emanation of a powerful class interest, that it has

not originated in the deliberate conviction of Santa Anna and his ministers; that it will not stand the test of experiment, and that it will soon give place to a policy more in accordance with the spirit of the age and the interests of the Mexicans, in general.

Reverting to the hypothecation of 125 millions of acres of land, under the law of conversion, if the bond holders fall back upon their original guarantees and assignments that subsequent security will naturally lapse. It would no doubt be greatly for the interest of this country to cancel part or the whole of her debt, in the manner provided for by that law; it is perhaps the only means of preserving her sovereignty over the lands adjoining her northern frontier from sea to sea, of improving the agriculture of her rich littoral on both oceans; but the Mexicans are so blind to their own interest, in this respect, and so wedded to their system of securing the fealty of foreign colonists, by restrictions and regulations calculated only to produce the contrary effect, and it is so impossible for the bond holders individually to avail themselves of the provisions relating to land, under that law, without the intervention of a company, such as I have suggested that it may be more for their interests and more in accordance with the wishes of this government, to give up all idea of commutating their bonds for land, and claim their original rights before particularized.

Were the Mexican government ever to act, in accordance with its plain interests, in the matter of colonization, it might carry into execution, with great advantage, the suggestions made for adoption in Canada, by General Miller, in September, 1840. This officer so highly distinguished in the story of South American warfare, is now here on his way to the Sandwich Islands and others in the Pacific, as H. M's Consul General, &c., and knowing his intimate acquaintance with the character of these people, and how closely he has studied the causes which promote their prosperity or tend to their decline, I very naturally availed myself of the opportunity to consult him upon many points here discussed, and amongst others that of colonization, as a means of developing the resources of this country and preserving the integrity of the Northern frontier. This led to his showing me his remarks upon the colonization of Canada above referred to, from which he kindly permits me to make the following extract:—"If I were asked what I thought would be the best measure to adopt, in order to inspire more life, prosperity and contentment, into Canada, of which there is so much need, I should say it was to establish military colonies, by selecting for that purpose, from each regiment stationed in those provinces, 25 or 30 soldiers deserving reward, from length of service or good conduct, but who should understand something of tilling the ground, and be or become married men. I would grant to each, 100 acres of land and continue all of them on the strength of their respective regiments, giving them their pay regularly, for the space of two years. They should be inspected or drilled once or twice a week, under the eye of a subaltern officer placed in command of each colony, but who at the expiration of the two years should rejoin his corps. At the same time, the men should obtain their discharge but preserve their arms and accoutrements, and be liable to be called out as volunteers or local militia, in case of war or internal disturbances.

"Thus in every direction would spring up numerous villages and towns, composed of clean, hardy and robust colonists, truly grateful, and enthusiastically loyal to their sovereign. They would afford effective aid in preserving Canada; they would be most interested in defending, and know how to defend their own homes, against American sympathizers, marauders and incendiaries, and their sturdy bearing would be an efficacious check to disloyal influences.

"But these are not the only advantages to be derived from this plan of colonization, which would be so simple, cheap and satisfactory to carry into execution. Without incurring scarcely any expense, it would afford the British government an opportunity of munificently and worthily rewarding many brave and faithful soldiers, whose flower of youth or prime of manhood, has been spent in the service of their country, fighting her battles, or under rigid and monotonous discipline. The patronage invested in the commanding officer, of choosing 3 or 4 men

from amongst the most deserving of each company of their respective battalions, would produce an excellent moral effect in the ranks, and if the system could be extended to New South Wales and elsewhere, it would not fail to create great satisfaction as well as a stimulus to good behaviour throughout the British army."

(To be Continued.)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE POLYNESIAN:—

Sir,—Nations are governed among themselves by the Law of Nature, to which is conjoined Revelation or the written word of God. These found the sciences of Moral Philosophy and Ethics. The epitome of Moral science in the law of nations is, that "each nation should do as much good to the other in peace, and as little harm in war as possible;" a counterpart of which is beautifully expressed in holy writ: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them." Matt. vii 12.

Founded upon these maxims nations do not require of one another what would be reciprocated to their prejudice. For, although a powerful sovereign might exact painful compliance of a weak one, yet the *lex talionis* would justify some other powerful sovereign, perhaps more potent than the first, or a combination of sovereigns, in meting out, some way or other, the measure of his exaction. Precedents are strong reasons in diplomacy. One nation can equitably justify a demand upon another by pointing it to some like demand made upon a third under peculiar circumstances, and with propriety contend that what has ever at any time been considered just, in its view is still so. Upon this principle, when will the immoral doctrine of repudiation in the United States, or the dismemberment of Poland by Russia, Austria and Prussia, or the pretensions to maritime search in England, be forgotten? When will the removal of the Italian relics by France, in contravention of the laws of war, be forgotten? It is for the interest of all to keep inviolate the national code, and the word of a sovereign expressed in a treaty, should be deemed as sacred as the Word of Him whose vicegerents sovereigns are. It is not presumable to be intended to be broken, except for self preservation when the political existence of a state is in danger. The rules of eternal justice and morality are a continual tacit convention between nations. To imagine an intention of violating national faith is an insult which would by the etiquette of courts justify a refusal to hold further intercourse with the diplomat that discourteously used it. This is the consolidated guarantee of nations to each other, in which the feeble find a powerful support. If a sovereign can be compelled contrary to the law of nations, to receive or to reject aliens, or having allowed them entrance, can be forced not to control or punish them within his dominions, or can be compelled to pass specific laws prescribed to him by others, or to surrender to aliens privileges and immunities contrary to his internal policy or detrimental to his internal interests, then here is a precedent that these or any of these things can be done to a sovereign, and here is an example for doing the like to others which all feel equally the world over. Thus the national comity, like the gentle rules of private breeding, form a shield to the weak and a dignifier to the powerful, by keeping each respectfully aloof from the other.

Vattel in his preliminary discourse at p. 61, 62, with great propriety observes;—"that it belongs exclusively to each nation to form its own judgment of what its conscience prescribes to it; of what it can, or cannot do; of what is proper, or improper for it to do. And of course it rests solely with it to examine and determine,