

your intercourse with them, all the more refreshing that, in this world of conventionalities and of "outward shows and forms," it so seldom crosses the beaten path of life.

Mr. Calderon at once addressed me as an old friend, and told me he had of course heard of all our adventures. He hoped we would stay a few days among them—asked me to bring H— to dinner that day, as they had a little party; and he expressed his regret that we had just missed a presentation (or *levée*), as there had been one the day before, when we might have seen all the notabilities. I told Mr. Calderon that an old friend was dining with me that day; but that I had called expressly to ask Madame and himself to allow us to spend the evening (Saturday) with them, as we were under the absolute necessity of returning to New York on Monday morning. "We may *then*, Mr. Calderon," I added, half joking, "perhaps see some of the notabilities." "Muy bien—muy bien," said the Minister; "but come early—come and take your wine with us, while your daughter makes the acquaintance of Madame."

I next proceeded to call on Mr. Crampton, who

received me with the affability for which he is distinguished. When he heard how I was pressed for time, he took some trouble to procure me an interview with Mr. Clayton. We spent the better part of an hour with the State Secretary. He gave Mr. Crampton and myself every assurance that he would willingly lend his assistance in giving all the practical effect which the United States Executive could legally extend to the Mexican Bondholders, when my ratified Convention should come before it; and that he should at all times be happy to have Mr. Crampton's suggestions on the subject, with a view to carrying them out if possible.

This matter satisfactorily discussed, Mr. Clayton threw himself back in his large easy chair, which he amply filled, and began to discuss, in the freest terms, the relative position of the United States in Mexico, in the first place, and the inevitable dominion and progress, *per fas aut nefas*, of the Anglo-Saxon race. I retired strengthened in my conviction, that *l'idée fixe* in the bosom of every citizen of the United States is—the Old World for England—the New World for her descendants.

Finding I should meet Mr. Crampton again in

the evening, I hurried to overtake H—, who was to set out at noon to see the lions, accompanied by an old friend whom I unexpectedly found at our hotel, Mr. Parrot, the American Consul at Mazatlan. "We met accidentally," said he to H—, "five years ago in London—then in Mexico—now at Washington—and next, I suppose, it will be in Paris."

I overtook them at the Capitol: a magnificent building, on a magnificent site, for "Capitol Hill" commands the country round, both far and near. You know the incompleteness of Washington as a capital; so we finished our tour and saw everything before the close of the day.

Mr. Parrot dined with us; and in the evening we proceeded to the residence of His Excellency, M. Calderon de la Barca. We were not only received in the kindest manner both by the Minister and Madame, but the latter told H— that they had been endeavouring to get together, on so short a notice, as many of their friends as they could. Indeed, ere we left, there was quite a brilliant assemblage, including the Russian Chargé d'Affaires (a person of fascinating manners), and other members of the Corps Diplomatique; and presided over by

the accomplished and talented Madame Calderon, you may imagine how agreeably the evening passed. Madame, I am proud to say, is a country-woman of my own, and belongs to one of our old Scotch families.

Mr. Crampton invited us to his pew for the following day (Sunday), where, he told us, we should have an opportunity of seeing the President and his family. We went accordingly, and in a pew only two removed behind us, there, as a plain citizen, sat Zachary Taylor. He carried not with him the slightest outward indication of his being the chief magistrate and ruler of one of the most powerful nations on the face of the globe. Here was no "Prince President," surrounded by glitter, and show, and pomp. General Taylor simply made one of the congregation, undistinguishable and unremarked. There was something grander in this than in mere regal display, in so far as solid power without show, impresses the mind much more strongly than show without solid power.

Nothing could well be more original than the personal appearance of the late President of the United States, to whom his countrymen gave the

soubriquet of, "rough and ready." He was dressed in a suit of plain clothes; his blue coat of anything but the last Bond-street cut. The weather being cold, he wore coloured worsted gloves, which were something too long. His straight hair fell smoothly on his forehead; while his face, browned under many a sun—his temples furrowed with many a thought, gave token of the deeds he had performed, and of the anxieties he had suffered in his country's cause. He had a pleasing expression in his eye; and now humbly standing in the presence of his Maker, surrounded by his fellow-citizens, all within seemed tranquil and serene. There was not the slightest approach to aristocratic bearing about the man: quite the reverse. I could have fancied I was in the parish church of Deal, contemplating the figure of some bold, tried and weather-beaten pilot, scrupulously dressed in his Sunday suit, donned for the decent performance of the solemn ordinances of the day.

After service, we had a pleasant and pretty drive to George-town, two or three miles from Washington. Then we had farewell calls from M. Calderon de la Barca and Mr. Parrott, and starting at five P.M., we retraced our steps to New York, where we arrived next day at two P.M.

We had all our old friends about us on Monday; several of them dining with us, and in the evening we went to a pleasant *tertulia*, which Mrs. Zimmermann got up for us, and where we had an opportunity of seeing many of the New York belles. They were all very ladylike in their manners, lively in conversation, and (including our hostess's fair daughters) some very pretty. I also met that evening with good specimens of the American gentleman; and pleased with all we had seen, we retired, at a late hour, to prepare for our departure on the following day.

But, before I leave the United States, I am desirous of saying something of the impressions left on my mind, after a sojourn of a month and a day (in the States a day is something), in that colossal confederacy. It will be said that a month is much too short a time to study a nation's character, and to be able to arrive at just and correct conclusions. That would be true, were we speaking of any great independent State, differing from England in language, manners, customs, institutions, — everything. Instead of that, however, the United States is but a modification of Great Britain, and a month to

an English observer there, is worth a year to him at Constantinople or Saint Petersburg.

The great difficulty we have to contend with, on a first visit to the United States is that, generally speaking, we go there full of false views, erroneous information, and multitudinous prejudices, all the stronger that they turn on the minor differences of character existing between the American and the Englishman. Admitting that I was one of the many in this case, I am certainly well pleased that I went to judge of the Americans by my own personal observation.

In coming to a right conclusion on the manners and habits of the people of the United States, a very great deal depends on *how* you travel through the country, and on the opportunities you have of seeing all classes. We have over and over again had accounts from travellers, of a class which may be denominated that of the *fast men* of the States; and they have been held up to us as a fair specimen of American society at large. You might as well travel over England, and at all the towns restrict your intercourse to what is found in second-rate hotels, and called the "Commercial Room," appropriated to travellers for

commercial houses; and then assert that the very amusing, but not very highly polished society which you there meet, is an epitome of English Society at large.

It is a mere vulgarism thus to judge of American customs; but yet one so generally spread abroad, that it will scarcely be credited when I say, that in traversing the states with my party, from one end to the other, we never, except in railway trains*—where, as there is but *one class*, the society is of a *very mixed kind*—were once hurried at our meals; never saw heels over the backs of chairs—were never offended by expectoration—were not astonished by nasal pronunciation—had no impertinent and long sets of queries put to us: in short, I shall be "pooh-poohed," when I say that with few exceptions, we found society in the United States, its habits and its customs, pretty much assimilated to those of England.

It is said that the Americans are a vain-glorious, and boasting people, when speaking of their own country, and that they are insufferably tiresome on this prolific theme. Well, that is more or less

* As illustrated in our five A.M. breakfast, and nine A.M. dinner on the Buffalo and Albany Railway.

true, according to the class of Americans with whom you converse. Among the best informed and best educated of the commercial community—among men of property and of standing—men of letters—and among all those generally, moving in respectable and upper ranks, I do not think you will find this over-weening vanity thrust upon your notice. We too are proud of our position, our country and our institutions, and I should like to know if John Bull is very modest, among the nations of the Continent, in asserting his own superiority, and in expressing his contempt for everything which is not English.

As a test of the difference of civilisation in England and America, I may be told to look at our House of Commons, and at their House of Representatives. As our members are said to be the quintessence of the English gentleman, so we ought to take theirs as the most favourable representation of the Americans. And then the proceedings of the Lower House of Congress are pointed to as shewing the great inferiority of the staple.

But look at the constitution of our House of Commons and that of the House of Representa-

tives. Look at the innumerable new, distant, and scarcely civilised States sending to the great national assembly men elected by universal suffrage. Consider that their House is of but seventy years' standing, and ours of ages. Consider that the members are sent up, in the majority of instances, by rough Republicans, and are not the nominees of princely houses, or of venal coteries. There is no point of comparison.

There is but one degrading—but alas! *how* degrading—a characteristic in the national character of the American, which seems to place a gulf between him and rapid civilisation. I need not say that I allude to *slavery*, legalised by the nation, and held with the grasp of death by one-half of the States. Till this foul blot disappears, the United States will in vain strive to assert for her people at large, a civilization equal to that of Great Britain, or any other country where slavery is repudiated and loathed.

Many of my readers will be shocked to hear me say, that, in my opinion, a great countervailing benefit which the United States enjoy, is that of having no national Church. In saying this, I do not mean to attack, directly or indirectly, our

own. I belong to it. But I say, that if England were to be re-constituted to-morrow, our Church would not be re-constituted as it exists now. If so, the Americans did right to have no national Church. There you have none of the *Odium Theologicum* which tears and distracts Great Britain and Ireland. There you have no Popish aggression to fear, no hierarchical schemes to denounce. There you have no pampered pluralists to provoke satire and scandal—no half-famished curates to draw forth a sigh. There you have not a Protestant hated by a Roman Catholic population. There you have *toleration* as a word unknown, and *freedom* of religion as the substitute.

But if you have none of our church grievances in America, I can fearlessly assert from a pretty close examination, that there, in the more enlightened of the States, you have *at least* as much true religion as we have at home. I am almost tempted to believe, although I really hope I am wrong, that, with fewer pretensions, the Americans have almost more religious sincerity than ourselves.

The Americans, it is allowed on all hands, have

all the enterprise and industry, with a large share of the mechanical genius, literary attainments, and noble aspirations, of the stock from which they sprung. Their sagacity and quicksightedness are proverbial. Their social qualities are of a high order; and, from the nature of their country, they outstrip us in hospitality. Their love of country and ambition are both unbounded: but when I have reproached some of them for the unscrupulous means they have used in carrying out their plans of spoliation, I have invariably been answered with the *Tu quoque*, "What have you done in India?" And there we must leave the matter to rest.

I must not proceed any further; but with these reformed views on the subjects at which I have glanced, and on others which have equally disabused my mind, you will not wonder that I now say to all who would argue with me on the United States—first *visit* the United States, and then let us talk about them.