

me from having another child baptized in Mexico, for I was determined not to lay myself a second time under similar obligations, and felt sure that had I applied to any other friends, nothing would have induced them to do less than had been done by Count Regla before them.

The extension of one of the sacraments of the Catholic church to the child of a notorious heretic, may be regarded as no mean proof of the diminution of those intolerant feelings with regard to foreigners, which, at the commencement of our communications with Mexico, were so universal throughout the country. As late as May 1825, the Capital itself was not exempt from them; for, in the discussion respecting the religious article of our first treaty, some of the more devout amongst the members of the Senate objected to the concession of the right of sepulture to His Majesty's subjects, as a privilege to which heretics were not in any way entitled. Nor would the point have been carried without some difficulty, had not Mr. Cañedo, (a very distinguished Senator,) placed the arguments of these most conscientious persons in a proper light, by saying that, "Although he perfectly agreed with his worthy colleagues in principle, he foresaw some practical difficulties in the accomplishment of their wishes, which would compel him, though most reluctantly, to vote against them. The melancholy influx of foreigners could not be denied, nor was it to be expected that, amongst so many, some should not be summoned, during their

residence in the Republic, to receive, in another world, the penalty of their unbelief in this. What, then, was to be done with the bodies? He saw but four modes of disposing of them; namely, to bury, burn, eat, or export them. To the first, his Reverend colleagues seemed to object: the second, might prove inconvenient from the scarcity of fuel: in the third, he, for one, must decline any participation; and as to the fourth, dead heretics not being included amongst the exportable commodities mentioned in the Tariff, he feared that such an innovation might seriously embarrass the custom-house officers upon the coast. He should, therefore, upon the whole, incline for burial, as amongst four serious evils it appeared to him to be the least."

The speech, of which the above is a literal translation, put an end to any farther discussion, and the article was carried by a large majority. But the fact of such a question having been mooted at all in one of the chambers of the Supreme Congress, sufficiently indicates how little was to be expected from the lower orders, when even the more enlightened were not ashamed to acknowledge opinions so much at variance with the liberal institutions of the State, and the freedom of intercourse which they professed to court.

The beauty of the climate of Mexico has, I think, been a good deal overrated. It is true that the Tableland is exempt from those diseases which prove so fatal to foreigners upon the Eastern and Western



coasts, (the Vomito, and the Cholera Morbus,) and that, from the greatness of the elevation, the action of the sun upon the marshes in the vicinity of the Capital does not produce agues, or other fevers, to which the *Tierras Calientes* are subject. But, on the other hand, the rarefaction of the atmosphere is fatal to all who have any tendency to pulmonary complaints; while, from the extreme difficulty of inducing perspiration, rheumatism, to which foreigners are peculiarly subject, often takes such a hold upon the constitution, as to set all ordinary remedies at defiance. Inflammatory fevers are likewise very common; and, during the months when the sun is vertical, exposure to its rays is not unattended with danger. I lost a servant, upon my first arrival in the country, by a *coup de soleil*; my little girl was nearly killed by a similar attack; and I conceive the madness of a groom, who accompanied me on several of my journeys, to have proceeded, in some measure, from the same cause. Amongst the natives, scarlet fever, and measles, often become epidemic disorders, and occasion an extraordinary mortality. In 1825 fifteen thousand persons were carried off by them in the Capital alone, and their ravages extended from North to South throughout the Table-land. The number of deaths was, however, attributed by medical men more to the want of proper food and care, than to the virulence of the disease itself, which was seldom attended with fatal effects in families where proper precautions could be taken.

I have said nothing of the organization of society in Mexico, because, in fact, there is none. In the Capital, evening-parties and dinners, except upon some great occasion, are equally unknown. After the Paseo, or evening promenade, which takes place between five and seven, every body goes to the theatre, and after the theatre to bed. The Mexicans have not yet acquired the European habit of meeting frequently in small parties for the promotion of social intercourse. They accept invitations with pleasure from foreigners, but cannot divest themselves of the idea that where any thing is to be given on their side, a degree of superfluous display is requisite, which renders the frequent repetition of such entertainments impracticable. It is only in their Haciendas that they indulge without restraint in the hospitality to which they are naturally inclined. Of the women, in general, it is unnecessary for me to speak in much detail. Their manners and education are just what a person acquainted with Spain would expect to find in a Spanish colony. So little is required of women in the Mother-country, that it would be hardly fair to expect any very great intellectual superiority amongst their descendants. The Mexican ladies, (with some brilliant exceptions, whom it would perhaps be invidious to name,) read and write in about the same proportion as those of Madrid; they speak, in general, no language but their own, and have not much taste for music, or knowledge of it as an



art. They are not, certainly, amongst the exceptions to Madame de Stael's celebrated axiom, that "*hors de Paris, tout le monde parle de son voisin, ou de sa voisine,*" for in this respect Mexico is most thoroughly a "Petite ville." But in return, they have no affectation or hauteur, they are kind and unpretending in the highest degree, and do the honours of their houses with perfect ease and propriety. They possess considerable natural talents; and although in 1824 they undoubtedly were a little fonder of smoking, and a little less attentive to personal appearance at home, than would be thought engaging in London or Paris,—before I left the country in 1827, a wonderful change had taken place. Cigars were banished from all places of public resort, and, even in private, were falling gradually into disuse; while, with regard to dress, European fashions had entirely taken the place of those glaring colours, by which but too many of the prettiest women were disfigured on the first opening of our intercourse with New Spain. Nor can I omit stating, that, from the first, they showed a delicacy of feeling, and tact, with regard to Mrs. Ward, for which she has always felt grateful, by abstaining from smoking whenever she was present, (and that not only in her house, but in their own,) lest it should prove in any way offensive to her English ideas of politeness, or decorum.—In good society the most marked respect is always shown to the female sex, and all the obsequiousness of old Spa-

nish gallantry kept up, although intermingled, at times, with a good deal of that freedom of speech, which, under the name of "*franqueza,*" has so much changed the tone of society in the Peninsula. It must be recollected, however, that this licence, however repugnant to the feelings of Northern nations, prevails more or less throughout the whole of the South of Europe; and that in Italy, as well as in Spain and Portugal, allusions are constantly made to subjects, which would be proscribed amongst ourselves, without any idea of their inspiring that disgust, with which they must always be listened to by a really delicate mind. It is not just, therefore, to blame the Mexicans for doing that of which they had no reason until lately to suspect the impropriety. We ought rather to hope that they may find amongst their new friends better models to follow; in which case, I have little doubt, from the improvements which I have myself witnessed, that in a very few years, a complete reform will be effected.

As to morality, it is a subject upon which it is no business of mine to touch. There is, perhaps, not less vice in Mexico, but there is certainly not more than in many other countries which bear a fair character in the world; and there are many points upon which, as wives and mothers, the ladies of New Spain give an excellent example. I know few countries where, in as far as the means are within their reach, greater pains are taken with the rising



generation. The children of almost every respectable family are learning music, French, and drawing; and although there is a sad want of masters, such good desires cannot fail, in a little time, to be productive of a happy effect.

This anxiety on the part of the parents to secure to their offspring advantages, which have, in many instances, been denied to themselves, is a part of that revolution which the last few years have wrought in the feelings and wishes of the Creole race.

After three centuries of implicit obedience, and uninterrupted mortifications, they have sought, in an entire change of system, that relief, which might have been afforded by a simple modification of the old institutions, had such a concession been compatible with the principles upon which the Colonial policy of Spain was founded during the days of her power.

It is difficult to conceive any country less prepared than Mexico was in 1824 for the transition from despotism to democracy. The principles upon which the present Government is formed, were at first neither duly appreciated, nor generally understood; yet from the mere force of circumstances they have taken root, and have already struck too deeply into the soil to be easily shaken.

Their hold upon the country is founded neither in a general diffusion of knowledge, nor in what might be termed theoretical patriotism; it rests

upon a still surer basis, the passions and interests of the most influential classes of the inhabitants.

To the mass of the people all forms of government are indifferent, and many do not yet know under which they live; but amongst those who alone possess a political character, the resident landholders, the merchants, the military, the lawyers, and the parochial clergy, considerations of local and personal advantage have created a decided feeling in favour of the Federal system.

In each State, a field is opened by it to every citizen, upon which few think themselves too obscure to venture, although they might not have aspired to political honours beyond the limits of their own provinces. In a small circle every thing is a source of distinction; and thus the multiplicity of petty offices created by the State Legislatures, though disadvantageous in one sense, by increasing the expences of the country, is of use in another, by bringing home to all classes the advantages of a change, which places employment, and a sort of rank in the world, within the reach of the humblest individual.

It was natural that, in a country where the natives had been excluded for three centuries from any share in the management of their own affairs, these considerations should have great weight; but I confess that I was not prepared to see *State* interests, and *State* feelings become so universally predominant as they have done during the last two years.

Another advantage with which the subdivision of



authority has been attended, is the neutralization of rival interests. The Revolution left behind a number of turbulent yet influential officers, who, under any central form of government, must have proved dangerous candidates for power, but who have now found in their respective States that employment which the Supreme Government could not have given to all. Many have become, under these circumstances, useful and efficient servants to the public, whose restless spirits, if not provided with a proper vent, would have involved them in enterprises fatal to the tranquillity of their fellow-citizens.

No inference can be drawn as to the feelings of the country in general, with regard to the present institutions, by those displayed in the Capital, or its vicinity; where a party spirit of the most violent kind has been gradually engendered, which, in a very recent instance, has led to disturbances of a most alarming nature.

With regard to the origin of these disturbances, it is difficult for me to enter into any details without overstepping those limits, within which it is my duty to confine myself. As it is, however, upon their tendency to affect the tranquillity of the country that its prospects in every way depend, I may, I hope, venture to lay before my readers a few remarks, without being thought to trespass upon forbidden ground.

The two parties which, under the denomination of Escoceses and Yorkinos, have been recently arrayed

against each other, are both Mexican in their origin, and entirely unconnected with Spain. The first is said to be composed of many of the largest proprietors of the country, (particularly those who possessed titles of nobility before the Revolution,) with a number of officers of distinction, and individuals of different professions, connected together by the bonds of a masonic society, supposed to be of Scotch origin, from whence their name of "Escoceses" is derived.

The reputed members of this association, (which is very ancient,) are mostly men of moderate principles, and sincere advocates of the cause of Independence. Many of them, however, belonged to the Creole army, and consequently opposed the leaders of the first insurrection, while others held situations under the Spanish Government upon the re-establishment of the Constitution in 1820, and were sent as Deputies to the Cortes of Spain before the declaration of Independence by Iturbide in 1821. It is upon these grounds that they are accused by their adversaries, the Yorkinos, of "Bourbonism," that is, of an attachment to the Mother-country sufficiently strong to induce them to wish for a Prince of the Royal blood of Spain as Constitutional king of Mexico. In this project there would have been no impropriety before the adoption of the present Constitution. I do not myself believe, however, that it extended, even then, beyond a very limited number of individuals; and I am convinced that it does not



exist as the object of a party in Mexico at the present day.

The Escoceses may more properly be assimilated to the "Federalists" of the United States, who, on the establishment of the Constitution in 1787, thought the Government founded upon it too weak, and were consequently reproached by their opponents, the "Democrats," with aristocratical notions, and a desire to convert the Republic into a monarchy. Yet General Washington was a Federalist, as was his successor, Mr. Adams, the father of the present President. In like manner, in Mexico, many of the most moderate and best-intentioned men in the country may be found amongst the Escoceses, upon whose interest General Bravo, (whose mild yet unvarying patriotism I have had occasion to dwell upon in the history of the Revolution,) came forward as a candidate for the Presidency in 1824. He was defeated by the superior influence of General Victoria; but next to Victoria's name, none stood so high as that of Bravo, and none had deserved more of his countrymen.

Up to 1825, the Yorkinos did not exist as a party. In the summer of that year, a number of individuals, not connected with the Escoceses, but not violently opposed to them before, were united as a rival sect, denominated "Yorkinos," because they derive their origin from the Masonic Lodge of New York, which transmitted, through Mr. Poinsett, the American Minister, the diplomas and insignia requisite for

the establishment of a branch lodge in the capital of New Spain. Without any disparagement to its members, of whom many are both useful and distinguished men, I may say that the largest proportion of the Affiliés of this society consisted of the *novi homines* of the Revolution. They are the ultra Federalists, or democrats of Mexico, and possess the most violent hostility to Spain, and the Spanish residents; whom the Escoceses have uniformly protected, both as conceiving them to have lost the power of injuring the country, and because, from the large amount of the capital still remaining in their hands, they think that their banishment must diminish the resources, and retard the progress of the Republic.

Having pointed out the characteristics of the two parties, it is neither my wish, nor my intention, to animadvert upon the manner in which the contest between them has been carried on. In a country just emerging from a great political crisis, there must ever be a bitterness of feeling on political questions, which older nations can hardly comprehend; although, a century ago, our own annals might have furnished a counterpart to its violence. In Mexico this feeling has been carried very far indeed. The Yorkinos, as new men, struggling to dispossess their adversaries of that power, which is the real object of both, were undoubtedly the assailants; but acrimony has not been wanting on the other side, and the personalities in which, for two years, the newspapers of the two parties have