

## AT THE BOOKSELLER'S.

Mr. A.—Is Mr. C. here, please?

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, I am Mr. C.

Mr. A.—I want to see two or three editions of Shakespeare's works, if you please.

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, we have them in different styles of binding; I will show you some.

Mr. A.—I like this one in three volumes; what is the price of it?

Mr. C.—That is ten dollars, sir.

Mr. A.—Very well, I will take it. Now, let me see an edition of Herbert Spencer, his complete works.

Mr. C.—I do not think we have all his works, sir.

Mr. A.—Well, show me what you have.

Mr. C.—These are all, sir; eight of his latest.

Mr. A.—They are beautifully bound; where were they done?

Mr. C.—Here, in Mexico, sir.

Mr. A.—You surprise me.

Mr. C.—Indeed, sir, this is by no means the best style of binding produced here; what do you think of this?

Mr. A.—That is indeed, very beautiful. What is the price of the Herbert Spencer?

Mr. C.—Fifteen dollars, sir.

Mr. A.—I will take them. I see you have a great many toys; why do you keep those things?

Mr. C.—Well, sir, we supply a large number of private schools with books and other things, and the teachers often want toys as little prizes and presents; so we do a very large business in that line.

Mr. A.—You seem to keep everything in the nature of school furniture and supplies.

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, that is so.

Mr. A.—Well, to go back to the books; I want to see some Readers, as many as you can show me; in Spanish first.

Mr. C.—Here is a very good one, compiled by Mr. Rébsamen, whose name, no doubt, is familiar to you; he is the Director of the Normal School.

Mr. A.—Yes, I know him very well; a better man could not be found for this work; his name is a sufficient guarantee; I will take a dozen of his books. I rather like the nature of this little book, is it much used here? I mean the "Lector Mexicano."

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, very much; it is a popular book and all the children appear to like it.

Mr. A.—You may send me a dozen of them. I have often wondered why you do not bind your school books in a better manner, and print them on better paper. You must notice the difference between your books and the English and American ones, in this respect. Put your "Lector Mexicano" by the side of one of Appleton's series or of the "Royal Readers" for instance, and the difference will strike you at once.

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, I admit there is a great deal of truth in what you say; and I think we shall improve in that matter as time goes on.

Mr. A.—What English readers have you?

Mr. C.—We have the Royal, Appleton's, Wilson's, Barnes's and one or two others.

Mr. A.—Yes, but these are all American or English publications; have you nothing written in Mexico?

Mr. C.—No, sir, absolutely nothing; we are compelled to go abroad for everything of that nature.

Mr. A. — You surprise me. Are there no teachers of English in this large city capable of compiling a set of readers?

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, I have no doubt that there are; but they have not done so yet; they have written "methods;" some very good ones, but not actual "Readers;" I heard the other day, however, that there was a set in preparation by an English teacher, one of the professors in the Normal School; and that they will be ready in a month or two.

Mr. A. — I should very much like to see them; who publishes them?

Mr. C.—The house of Bouret in Cinco de Mayo.

Mr. A.—Thank you, I am going that way, and will call and make enquiries about them. What copy-books have you?

Mr. C.—Here are two or three sets, sir.

Mr. A.—I do not like any of them. Are there any special ones for use in the Government schools?

Mr. C.—Yes, sir, Vergara's.

Mr. A. — I notice that these books are very different in style one from the other; the capitals too are very peculiar: an "I" in one book is like a "Y" in another: a "T" is like an "F;" a "Q," like an "O," and so on. I think this is a great fault. Capitals should be written in such a manner that it would be impossible to mistake one letter for another. Then, too, the paper is very inferior. That is fatal to good writing.

Mr. C.—Well, sir, you appear to know more about this matter than I do; and I daresay what you say is correct; but that is the best we can do at present.

Mr. A.—Please send me these things; I have made a list of them; do not forget to pack them well, as they are going a long way by train. I will now go to Bouret's

house and enquire about the books you mentioned. Good day.

(At Bouret's.) Mr. A.—I am told, sir, that you are about to publish a set of "Readers" in English, for use in Mexican schools, is that so?

Mr. M.—Yes, sir, and a very good set, too: there is nothing like them in the Republic. All our Readers are English and American publications, and, good as they are, the subject-matter is not always of such a nature as to interest the Mexican student. The books of which you speak have been compiled especially to meet this objection: the contents will be largely chapters on Mexican matters, historical, social and otherwise. The gentleman who has compiled them has given a great deal of attention to the subject; and, to read his books you would think he were a native of the city; but he has lived here only fifteen months.

Mr. A.—I am glad to hear you speak so well of the undertaking; when will the books be ready?

Mr. M.—One is just finished, as far as the printing is concerned, and is now in the hands of the binders; the other three I am about to send to Paris to be printed. I think I may venture to say that the whole set of four will be ready by Christmas.

Mr. A.—Thank you very much; here is my card; I will ask you to be good enough to send me copies of the four when they are ready.

Mr. M.—The gentleman has another little work ready for publication: it is a book of dialogues, chiefly on Mexico and its surroundings, and is written in the colloquial language of every-day life.

Mr. A.—Please send me a copy of that also. Good day.

Mr. M.—Good day, sir.

## Exercise.

1. What author does Mr. A. ask for when he enters the bookseller's shop? 2. Do you know the names of any of Shakespeare's plays? 3. How many plays did he write? (More than thirty). 4. Which set does the gentleman choose? 5. What is the price of the set? 6. What does he ask for next? 7. What remark does he make about the binding? 8. What is the shopman's answer? 9. The customer being rather surprised to see toys in a bookseller's shop, what is the explanation given? 10. What does Mr. A. ask for next? 11. What set does he see first? 12. What does Mr. A. say in reference to this gentleman? 13. Why does he buy several copies of the "Lector Mexicano?" 14. What strikes the customer with reference to the binding of the school books? 15. With what does he compare the Mexican Readers? 16. What English Readers has the bookseller? 17. At what does Mr. A. express great surprise? 18. What does the bookseller tell him? 19. What Readers are in preparation? 20. Who is publishing them? 21. What does Mr. A. decide to do? 22. What else does Mr. A. wish to see? 23. What fault does he find with the copy-books? 24. Are these reasonable objections? 25. What instructions does the customer give with regard to the packing of his goods? 26. Where does Mr. A. go when he leaves this shop? 27. What is he told about the Readers? 28. What order does he give at Bouret's? 29. What other work is in preparation? 30. What request does the gentleman make before he leaves the shop?

## THE TODOS SANTOS.

Mr. Saenz.—This is the Todos Santos, *the* fiesta of the Mexican Calendar; shall we go to the cemeteries and see the decoration of the graves?

Mr. Bernal.—Yes, there is nothing I should like better, this lovely day; isn't the weather perfect? How different from our London fogs in this month! Where shall we go first?

Mr. S.—Suppose we go to Dolores, the Mexican cemetery.

Mr. B.—Very well; as you like. We had better walk to the Zócalo; the trains will be very crowded. Before we get into the train, let us go across to the Flower Market; here it is: did you ever see anything like it in your life?

Mr. S.—I can honestly say, no; and I have travelled about the world a great deal, in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, California, The Hawaiian Islands, &c.; and I can assure you I never saw so much taste displayed in the arrangement of flowers as I see here.

Mr. B.—I am glad you like them. Let us get into that train. Now we are off. Look at the wreaths those peons are carrying to decorate the graves! We are just nearing Belem; I see they are enlarging the building.

Mr. S.—Yes, that is a bad sign, isn't it?

Mr. B.—I should think so. How the city is growing in this direction!

Mr. S.—You may well say that; it is really wonderful. The houses, too, are built on the most modern plans, with plenty of light and ventilation, and all conven-

iences in the way of cooking, washing, bathing, drainage, &c. You will notice, that there are scarcely two alike as far as the architecture is concerned. Then, too, the streets are well paved, and some are planted with trees.

Mr. B.—Are the rents high?

Mr. S.—Yes, I must say, they are; but, you know, if you want a good article, you must pay for it: and one had better pay the landlord than the doctor. Well, here we are at the cemetery. I was here last year, and had my pocket picked in the crowd; so I did not bring my watch to-day. I ought to have told you of that before we started. Days like this are harvest days for the professional ratero. What time is it?

Mr. B.—Well, well, well! would you believe it? my watch is gone! See how cleverly they have detached it from the ring! Now, when did they take that? I know; I felt a man push against me just as we got out of the car in front of the cemetery gates.

Mr. S.—That is singular, because this was the very place where I lost mine. I had three children with me; and, of course, my attention was directed to them, and so I was off my guard. Fortunately, my watch was not a valuable one. Was yours?

Mr. B.—No, a matter of ten dollars, gold.

Mr. S.—Well, you know they say, "It's no use crying over spilt milk." Just look at those pelados; they make this a regular picnic.

Mr. B.—Shall we go into the cemetery?

Mr. S.—Yes; some of the graves are very pretty, are they not?

Mr. B.—Yes, but, on the whole, I do not like the look

of the place, it does not seem to be well kept; things appear to be very wild and uncared for.

Mr. S.—I agree with you. Let us go; I have something much prettier to show you. On our way back we will go to the French cemetery; I am sure you will like that. Here we are; let us get out here, and take this car that is just turning the corner. Here we pass the bull ring; have you been to a bull-fight yet?

Mr. B.—No, indeed, and do not want to go. I detest the very name of the thing.

Mr. S.—Well, everyone to his taste, you know. But, here is the cemetery; what do you think of it?

Mr. B.—Ah! this is what a cemetery ought to be; it is very pretty.

Mr. S.—Look at those magnificent tombs; they must have cost "a mint of money," as we say.

Mr. B.—Yes, look inside; they are like little chapels with altars and burning candles. Let us go into the large chapel; here it is, at the end of the path. Isn't it chaste? And how tastefully it is draped with those black hangings! Everything is beautifully clean and well cared for. I wish we could stay and hear the service. But we must hurry on; I am going to show you something prettier still. Look at those lovely wreaths on that grave! You see, this cemetery is not nearly so large as Dolores; that is the extent of it each way. But here we are at the gates again, and the car is waiting for us. On our way back, I want to take you to the new German School. I know the director, and I want to show you the buildings, &c. Here it is; get out. Good morning, Mr. Hoeck; I have taken the liberty of bringing my friend to see your new premises; I hope I am not intruding.

Mr. H.—Certainly not, sir; I shall only be too pleased

to show you over the place. We are very proud of the school, I assure you, and are always glad to see visitors.

Mr. S.—You certainly have something to be proud of, judging from what one sees outside.

Mr. H.—Yes, but you will like the inside better.

Mr. B.—What beautiful wide corridors you have!

Mr. H.—Yes, and you will notice that the rooms are well lighted, and well ventilated.

Mr. S.—That is certainly a striking feature in the building, and a most important one. Dark rooms in a school, or, in fact, in any house, are an abomination; and the city is full of them.

Mr. H.—I want to call your attention, gentlemen, to the seats of these desks; they can be adapted either for sitting or standing; they turn on a pivot as may be required.

Mr. B.—That is certainly a clever idea.

Mr. H.—This is a room for the convenience of the teachers and, you will see, we are forming a museum. We have a few birds and other things, and hope to add largely to our stock in a short time. This is my office; and further on are my private apartments, very nicely fitted up and furnished. You see we have a splendid play-ground. At the further end of it, we intend to make a pretty garden in the course of a few months.

Mr. B.—Have you a good supply of water?

Mr. H.—It could not be better; we have our own artesian well, with electric apparatus for pumping the water to large tanks on the roof of the building. Our lavatory arrangements, too, are excellent. Then, too, we have electric light all over the building.

Mr. B.—Well, Mr. Hoeck, I must congratulate you on your excellent school, and hope you may live many

years to carry on your good work. I wish you a very good day.

Mr. H.—Good day, gentlemen.

Mr. B.—Now, what do you think of all you have seen? Do you not think these Germans are a very progressive people?

Mr. S.—Yes, especially in educational matters. They have certainly set an object lesson to the Mexicans.

Mr. B.—Now we will go to the Spanish cemetery. We shall have to walk a little distance to get the Tacuba car; but it is a pleasant walk this beautiful morning. We go along the famous Bucareli Street. You know Bucareli was one of the best—if not the best—of the viceroys. Here we are at the end of the street. Over there is the noted Pantheon, near the church of San Fernando. I suppose you have seen the tomb of Juárez there; also of Miramón and others.

Mr. S.—Yes, I have.

Mr. B.—Here comes our car; get in. We are now passing the church of San Cosme; it is said that General Scott planted cannon on the tower of that church during the war between Mexico and the United States in 1846. On our right there, is the Jesuit school, with something like four hundred boys; and further on we pass the School of Agriculture. This road is historic ground; it is the famous road along which Cortés made his flight on the first of July, 1520, the "Noche Triste." Further on, on our left we shall see the old tree under which he sat and wept as his poor jaded troops passed before him. The story is beautifully told by Prescott. But, here we are at Tacuba, which you see is *en fête*, as they say in French. We change cars here for the cemetery. Here it is; what do you think of it?

Mr. S.—Well, this certainly is the best of the three; “Thou hast kept the good wine until now.”

Mr. B.—Look at the railings painted with the Spanish colours; the effect is very pretty. Look, too, at those archways in the Moorish style, and the black drapery: the whole thing is beautiful in the extreme. Then, see everywhere the red and the yellow crysanthemums, the national colours.

Mr. S.—This is a sight never to be forgotten.

Mr. B.—Let us walk along the broad pathway towards the chapel. Notice those magnificent tombs, right and left of us.

Mr. S.—I think they are finer than those in the French cemetery.

Mr. B.—Indeed, they are. Some of them are open, to allow the friends to go down and decorate the graves. Let us look in at this one. There are no less than thirteen bodies buried here, and, you see, there are receptacles for about six more. That is a large family. Here we are at the chapel. Here is a stone to the memory of the late archbishop of Mexico, who is buried here.

Mr. S.—What a beautiful chapel! and how appropriately draped for the occasion; very much like that of the French cemetery. There is an organ gallery on the left there.

Mr. B.—Shall we take a stroll round the grounds, and see the other graves?

Mr. S.—Yes, if you like.

Mr. B.—Well, I could linger here for an hour, if we had time. What is going on over there? Let us walk across and see.

Mr. S.—Here is a family in deep mourning, and a

photographer taking a photograph of their grave. How sad! Shall we go home?

Mr. B.—Yes.

### Exercise.

1. What is the Todos Santos? 2. Where do the gentlemen propose to go? 3. Why do they go there? 4. What remark does one of them make with reference to the November weather? 5. Where do they go first? 6. How do you get to Dolores? 7. Where do they take the train? 8. What do they visit before they take the train? 9. What does one of the gentlemen say with reference to the flowers in Mexico? 10. To what does he call attention just as the train is leaving? 11. What remark does Mr. B. make with regard to Belem? 12. And what remark as to the growth of the city? 13. What is specially noticeable about these new houses? 14. How do they compare in this respect with the older houses of Mexico? 15. What is the great objection to many of the old houses in this city? (So many rooms have doors only — no windows; consequently, the ventilation is bad, and the rooms are very dark.) 16. How might this have been avoided in the building of the houses? (By leaving a space between one house and another). 17. What is very striking about the architecture of the houses that are in course of construction? 18. What do they say about the streets? 19. And about the rents? 20. What little incident does the gentleman mention when they arrive at Dolores Cemetery? 21. What does Mr. B. unfortunately discover? 22. Relate the story of the two stolen watches. 23. How do the pelados keep this fiesta at the

Dolores Cemetery? 24. What remarks do the visitors make about this cemetery? 25. Which cemetery do they visit next? 26. How does this compare with the former? 27. What do they say on the way about the bull-fight? 28. What do they admire in the French Cemetery? 29. What do they say about the large chapel? 30. Which cemetery is the larger? 31. What building do they visit on their way back? 32. How does the director receive them? 33. What are some of the good points they notice in the German School? 34. What is there peculiar about the desks? 35. What good feature is there in the water-supply? 36. What remarks do they make about the Germans from an educational point of view? 37. Where do they go after they leave the school? 38. How do they get there? 39. What do you know of Bucareli? 40. And of the Pantheon of San Fernando? 41. What remark is made as they pass the Church of San Cosme? 42. Have you read that fact in your History of Mexico? 43. What buildings do they pass on the way to Tacuba? 44. Why is the road said to be "historic ground?" 45. Who describes very beautifully the flight of Cortés on the Noche Triste? 46. Have you read his description? 47. What do the visitors notice as they pass through Tacuba on the way to the Spanish Cemetery? 48. What do they say of this cemetery when they arrive there? 49. Tell me some of the things they notice particularly. 50. Do you know the allusion, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now?" 51. Which do they think the finer, this cemetery, or the French one? 52. Do you agree with them? 53. Tell me some of the principal objects of interest in this cemetery. 54. What do they particularly notice in one of the tombs? 55. What do they see in the Chapel? 56. What do they see that makes them feel sad?

## AT THE THEATRE.

Mr. Cabrera. — Shall we go to the theatre to-night?

Mr. Fenn. — Yes, I shall be delighted to go with you; I have been working very hard lately, and want a little recreation.

Mr. C. — Where shall we go?

Mr. F. — There is a very good opera company at the Arbu; I should like to hear them.

Mr. C. — Very well; what is played to-night?

Mr. F. — Faust.

Mr. C. — Nothing could be better; we will go.

Mr. F. — Where shall I meet you?

Mr. C. — Outside the theatre.

Mr. F. — What time does the opera begin?

Mr. C. — At half-past eight.

Mr. F. — That will allow me time to finish a little work in the office, and write a letter that must go off by to-night's mail. Will you get the tickets? The four dollar seats are very good, I am told.

Mr. C. — Very well; till 8.30, good-bye.

Mr. C. — Here you are, then; did you get your letter off?

Mr. F. — Yes, and did another little piece of business besides.

Mr. C. — Well, let us take our seats. How do you like this theatre?

Mr. F. — Very much. They seem to have made the most of the room in constructing the place. The seats are

piled right up to the ceiling. Five tiers, counting the lower one.

Mr. C. — Yes, indeed. This theatre belongs to the Government now; doesn't it?

Mr. F. — Yes, they bought it last year. Public functions are sometimes held here; distributions of prizes, &c. The stage is rather small; don't you thing so?

Mr. C. — Yes. You remember the large stage at Drury Lane, and also at Covent Garden, in London, don't you?

Mr. F. — Yes, indeed; and that remark of yours carries me back twenty-five years, when Patti was in her prime, and Titjens, Nilsson, and Trebelli Bettini, Santley, Foli, Nicolini and a host of others. Those were the palmy days of Italian Opera. On a "Patti night," I have seen a crowd of people outside Covent Garden Theatre for at least two hours before the doors opened, waiting to get a front seat in the gallery. These were people who could not afford to pay the high prices charged for the reserved seats. Imagine! an orchestra of something like eighty performers, all professionals, under the *baton* of that martinet conductor, Sir Michael Costa. I knew the oboe player in his orchestra, and he told me that Sir Michael was a most exacting man. But, what was the result? The most perfect playing the world has ever heard. He carried this spirit into his Crystal Palace Orchestra at the Handel Festivals: and all the world knows what they were. But the overture is just about to begin. What a fine conductor that is! he is like the motive power in a large piece of machinery; notice how he gives each instrument its cue; how he carries all the performers with him; and how he brings out the "light and shade" in their playing. He is all enthusiasm. He seems to know every note of the opera, and where everyone's part comes in.

Mr. C. — Yes, his name is Polacco; he is an Italian, and a man highly cultured in music. He speaks French and Spanish fluently. He is delighted with his Mexican orchestra, and intends coming here again next year.

Mr. F. — Now, isn't that a glorious overture? How well balanced the orchestra is! You do not hear too much of any one instrument. How beautiful the French horns sound. I think the quality of those as compared with other brass instruments, is deliciously sweet. Then too, do you notice the effect of the oboes? those charming little things. This is a fine orchestra, and is a credit to Mexico. You know it is composed mainly of the students of the Conservatory of Music. I say "VIVA MEXICO!" with CAPITAL LETTERS.

Mr. C. — Now, the curtain rises. That is a good Faust; he has a lovely voice. Mephistopheles, too, is good. I have heard a better Margarita; but hers is a very difficult part. I think the trebles in the chorus are a little weak. But, oh! the lovely music of this opera! I could shut my eyes, forget the actors and the acting, and listen to the orchestra alone.

Mr. F. — Here we are in the Kermesse scene. It is very pretty; but they want a larger stage, to do it justice. This Garden Scene is very beautiful; the Jewel Song, I suppose, is Margarita's master-piece. But, the quartet with Margarita, Mephistopheles, Faust and Marta, to me, is the charm of the scene. Now comes the Church scene. How do you like it?

Mr. C. — It is well done. Now for the Soldier's Chorus. Isn't that fine? Who does not know it!

Mr. F. — The fifth act is dreadfully tragical. I am sorry the opera is finished. I should like to sit and hear



it all over again. A composer who can produce such a work as that must have a kind of "inspiration"

Mr. C.—Yes, indeed. Shakespeare may well say that the man that has no music in him is not to be trusted. What a pitiable object such a man is!

Mr. F.—I am painfully sensitive to the effects of good music. I cannot restrain myself. Which do you think is the "king of operas?"

Mr. C.—Well, that is a difficult question to answer; there are so many "kings."

Mr. F.—I think Don Giovanni, or Don Juan, as we should call it here. You notice, it is very rarely played. It must be very difficult to find actors and actresses capable of undertaking the parts. I have seen Patti, Titiens and Nilsson in it; but that is years ago. Do you like light opera?

Mr. C.—Yes, for a change; Gilbert and Sullivan's especially. Well, good night.

Mr. F.—Good night.

#### Exercise.

1. What theatre is mentioned in the dialogue?
2. Where is the Arbeau?
3. Have you ever been there?
4. Why is Mr. F. very glad to go to the theatre?
5. What opera are the gentlemen going to hear?
6. Do you know anything of this opera?
7. Where do they decide to meet?
8. What has Mr. F. to do before they meet again?
9. At what time do they meet?
10. What remarks do they make about the theatre when they take their seats?
11. To whom does the theatre belong?
12. What is it some-

- times used for?
13. What does one of them say about the stage?
  14. What does this remark suggest to the other gentleman?
  15. Tell me the names of some of the great opera singers of the last century?
  16. Which one of these is still living?
  17. How old is she?
  18. What fact does one of these gentlemen state about the "Patti nights" in London?
  19. What does he say respecting the orchestra of those times?
  20. Who was the conductor?
  21. What kind of a conductor was he?
  22. What do they say about the conductor of this opera?
  23. To what do they compare him?
  24. Do you think that a good comparison?
  25. What are the good points they notice in this man's conducting?
  26. What do you mean by "light and shade" and by a "well-balanced" orchestra?
  27. What instruments particularly please these two lovers of good music?
  28. Do you know anything of either of these instruments?
  29. Who form this orchestra?
  30. How do the visitors like the leading characters?
  31. What do they say about the chorus?
  32. And about the music of the opera generally?
  33. What is a Kermesse scene?
  34. What particular quartet pleases them?
  35. What chorus in this opera is very well known?
  36. What is the nature of the fifth act?
  37. What remarks do the gentlemen make to each other at the close of the opera?
  38. What opera is said to be the "king of operas?"
  39. What great singers took the leading parts in this opera some years ago?
  40. What is *light* opera?
  41. Do you know the names of any *light* operas?