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LITERATURE.

CENTRAL AMERICA.

Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan.
By John L. Stephens, Author of "Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Land," &c. &c. Illustrated by numerous engravings. In 2 vols.

Mr. Stephens is favourably known to the English reading public, for some lively, rattling, off-hand *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Asia Minor, Russia, &c.*, which have attained the unprofitable honour of two or three rival reprints from the American edition. Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan, the regions which Stephens explored, form the greatest part of that irregularly-shaped neck of land which unites the Americas, terminating on the North in Mexico, and on the South just excluding the Isthmus of Darien. Those who have not a modern map at hand, will form an idea of their position by hearing that they lie on the mainland opposite to the West Indies. Chiapas nominally belongs to Mexico; so did Yucatan, but had just set up for itself when Mr. Stephens got there. The political position of Guatemala or Central America may be inferred from the fact that our author was an accredited agent of the United States, and travelled with his credentials and a diplomatic dress-coat all through the country in search of a government, without being able to find one.

Yucatan is an alluvial flat, without rivers or springs; and the water of the rainy season is preserved in large tanks, which has caused a curious kind of feudalism: the Indians being too improvident to take heed for the narrow, render suit and service to the great Spanish proprietors, on condition of being supplied with water, and are *ad scripti aquæ* instead of *glabæ*. Guatemala and Chiapas have much more varied features.

Although the Andes have not in these countries the gigantic character they possess in South America, they rise to a height sufficient in the high table-lands to form a temperate climate—a perpetual spring within the Tropics. In the loftier ranges numerous active volcanoes are found; mineral wealth is said to exist in them, and of course there is a British Company engaged in exploring them; the loftiest mountain-peaks are sterile, but most other parts of the soil are fertile in vegetation of every kind; the plains and vallies team with the luxuriance of the Tropics; the table-lands produce the vegetables, fruits, and grain of a temperate climate; and in short, between the highest and lowest points of vegetation, almost every plant can be grown which depends upon climate only. The great natural advantage of Guatemala, however, is, the all but ready-made connexion of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The great lake of Nicaragua, having an average depth of fifteen fathoms, is within sixteen miles of the Pacific; the only known outlet of this inland sea is the river San Juan, navigable for craft drawing four feet water, to the Atlantic Ocean, in despite of rapids, and capable of being improved for the passage of ships. At present no commerce is carried on upon this remarkable line of navigation; it might almost be said that nothing floats upon it; it is easy to see that this water-line will be the seat of an extensive transit-trade: whether it will ever answer the full expectations of sanguine men, and supersede the Cape Horn, is very questionable, as regards coarse and bulky commodities.

This magnificent country, capable of supplying the whole world with tropical produce if the existing marts were struck with barrenness, is thinly peopled, miserably poor in all except the productions grown upon the spot, and torn by intestine divisions, which have nearly destroyed or banished the more respectable families, and rendered government impossible. We have rarely seen the nature of their wars; indeed, except in the vicinity of the large towns, where a rock foundation gives a *via ready* made, there is no such thing as a road; and on the main track of the country the traveller may ride for two or three days without meeting a village, sometimes without even a settler; and the villages are in general merely a collection of hovels, and substantial buildings there are in the country from the first period of the Spanish conquest.

From the first period of the Spanish conquest, this land Mr. Stephens was sent on a special consular mission, by Mr. Van Buren, in October, 1839, to liberty to travel on his own account, when he had succeeded or failed for the public. Apparently, Stephens had been studying the descriptions and acquisitions of the country formerly included in Mexico; for he engaged Mr. Catherwood, an artist, to accompany him on his journey. The two friends proceeded direct to the British settlement of Honduras, whence, like Mr. Montezuma, his predecessor of the name, before the diplomatist steamed to Izabel, the port of Guatemala, the capital. On his journey, he heard that there were a couple of governments in the country; and it was no easy matter to decide. Arrived at the city of Guatemala, Mr. Stephens found the Government driven to the point which he had been accredited to, but some expected would return with its army. The people who were the most, of course, claimed to be the true Government; but Mr. Stephens had doubts about the fact; the British Consul-General was equally sceptical, with plain speech, for he wrote to know if the government was a military dictatorship over it. Mr. Stephens therefore determined to examine the other Government, at St. Salvador: here a new difficulty arose; for the ways were beset by a gentleman with a flag of his own, who fleded all parties that fell in his way, without regard to politics. Luckily, however, the captain of a French vessel, which had just arrived at St. Salvador, had made the land journey and hunted for his life, having only escaped by riding several miles in one day through a mountainous country, of travelling in Central America, M. De Nouvelle took off a native courier to order up his ship, merely to pass him back again; and offered Mr. Stephens a passage. After many adventures, he at last found a Vice-

President; but the Government he was in search of depended upon a victory which eventually happened to be a defeat. However, the upshot was, Mr. Stephens rode the whole length of Central America, turning aside to examine any natural curiosity or ruined work of art; surveyed the line of canal that had been planned to connect Lake Nicaragua with the Pacific, cutting his way through the wood; was present at the last contest, which seems likely to establish anarchy in the state of Guatemala, he and his party being the sole occupants of a town in which the "affair" was fought out, except the clergy, and people whose age or infirmity prevented their running away. Arrived again at Guatemala, the victorious Government were too much afraid of their military protector even to ask Mr. Stephens for his credentials; and he departed, taking his return through the Northern part of Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan, in order to visit the ruined aboriginal cities of Palenque and Usumal. The following are some extracts from the work:—

SIGHT OF THE TWO OCEANS.

Beyond this we came into an open region, where nothing but cedar and thorns grew; and here I saw whortleberries for the first time in Central America. In that wild region there was a charm in seeing any thing that was familiar to me at home, and I should perhaps have become sentimental, but they were hard and tasteless. As we rose we entered a region of clouds; very soon they became so thick that we could see nothing; the figures of our own party were barely distinguishable, and we lost all hope of any view from the top of the volcano. Grass still grew, and we ascended till we reached a belt of barren sand and lava; and here, to our great joy, we emerged from the region of clouds, and saw the top of the volcano, without a vapour upon it, seeming to mingle with the clear blue sky; and at that early hour the sun was not high enough to lay upon its top.

Mr. Lawrence, who had exerted himself in walking, lay down to rest, and the doctor and I walked on. The crater was about two miles in circumference, rent and broken by time or some great convulsion: the fragments stood high, bare, and grand as mountains, and within were three or four smaller craters. We ascended on the South side by a ridge running east and west till we reached a high point, at which there was an immense gap in the crater impossible to cross. The lofty point on which we stood was perfectly clear, the atmosphere was of transparent purity; and looking beyond the region of desolation below us, at a distance of perhaps two thousand feet, the whole country was covered with clouds, and the sea at the foot of the volcano was invisible. By degrees the more distant clouds were lifted, and over the immense bed we saw at the same moment the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This was the grand spectacle we had hoped, but scarcely expected to behold. My companions had ascended the volcano several times, but on account of the clouds had only seen the two seas once before. The pits at which they were visible were the Gulf of Nicoya and the harbour of San Juan, not directly opposite, but nearly at right angles to each other, so we saw them without turning the body in a right line over the tops of the mountains neither was more than twenty miles distant, and from the great height at which I stood they seemed almost at our feet. It is the only point in the world which commands a view of the two seas; and I ranked myself with those most interesting occasions when from the top of Mount Sinai I looked upon the Desert of Arabia, and from Antur I saw the Dead Sea.

THE CARRIAGE OF THE COUNTRY.

We had brought the *silla* as merely as a measure of precaution, without much expectation of being obliged to use it; but at a steep pitch, which made my *id* almost burst to think of climbing, I resorted to it for the first time. It was a large, clumsy arm-chair, put together with wooden and bark strings. The Indian who was to carry me, like the others, was only formed. A bark strap was tied to the back of the chair, and sitting down, he placed his back against the back of the chair, adjusted the length of the strings, and smoothed back across his forehead with a little cushion to relieve the *prige*. An Indian on each side lifted it up; and the carrier rose, his feet, stood still a moment, and set threw me up once or twice to rest on his shoulders, and set off with one man on each side. It was great relief; but I could not feel every movement, even to the waving of his chest. The ascent was one of the steepest on the way. In a few minutes he stopped and sent forth a sound with Indian carriers, between a whistle and a blow, always paid to my ears, but which I never felt so disagreeable before. My face was turned backward; I could not see where he was going, but observed that the Indian on the left fell back. Not to enter the labour of carrying me, I sat as still as possible; but in a minute, looking over my shoulder, saw that we were approaching the edge of a precipice more than a thousand feet deep. I became very anxious to dismount; but I could not speak intelligibly, and the Indians could or would not understand signs. My carrier moved along carefully with his left foot feeling that the stone on which he put it down was steady secure before he brought up the other, and by degrees, after singular careful movement, brought both feet up within half a yard of the edge of the precipice, stopped, and gave a fearful wail and blow. I rose and fell with every breath, felt his body falling under me, and his knees seemed giving way. The piece was awful, and the slightest irregular movement on my part might bring us both down together. I would have given a release in full for the rest of the journey to be off his back; he started again, and with the same care ascended several, so close to the edge that even on the back of a mule it would have been very uncomfortable. My fear lest he should slip or stumble was excessive. To my extreme relief that turned away; but I had hardly congratulated myself upon escape, before he descended a few steps. This was much less than ascending; if he fell, nothing could keep me from giving his head; but I remained till he put me down of his own accord. The poor fellow was wet with perspiration, and trembled in every limb. Another stood ready to take me up, but I had enough. Pawling they stood ready for a short time. It was enough to see an Indian toiling under one's own body, hear him breathing, see the sweat rolling down him, and feel the *id* of the position, made this a mode of travelling which no but constitutional laziness and insensibility could endure. We, or rather climbing, stopping very often to rest, and when it was at all practicable, we reached a thatched shed where we wished to stop for the night; but there was no water.

Although many of the sketches of war and its effects have an intrinsic interest, the interest of the historical passages of Mr. Stephens's work arises from the peculiar character of this revolt—an ignorant Indian domineering over the country, and even the slight regard to forms under which *ator* generally veils his power; not, it would appear, any willing disregard of White usages, but simply not knowing better, for Mr. Stephens thinks the means well, and would act rightly if he knew how *ar*, for so he is named, was originally a drum-boyer the aristocratic party; but retiring in disgust at a revolution placed the Liberals uppermost, he turned pig-driver. The measures of the dominant party respect to the church, coupled with the devastations of cholera, induced the Indians to rise *en masse*; with Carrera at the head of those of his district they ordered several of the authorities, and cut to pieces a *paent* to treat with them. Defeated by the Government troops, themselves were scattered, their villages burnt and among other excesses, the last outrage was perpetrated on Car-

ra's wife. Vowing vengeance, he commenced a buccaneering or partisan warfare at the head of a few followers, who gradually increased in number; and, under the advice of a profligate priest, he issued proclamations, demanding, among other things, a return to old usages and customs. In the mean time, dissensions broke out among the party in power. One faction rose against their quondam friends; the aristocratic party, or such of them as were left, either remaining quiescent or joining the rebels. Carrera was applied to by the weaker; and thus was laid the foundation of his rapid advance, through the internal dissensions of the Spaniards, and their want of spirit and power of combining together to resist, when resistance was almost sure of success. The strange mixture of native energy, passion, and intelligence in Carrera's character, with the native simplicity and ignorance of an uneducated Indian, strongly contrasting with his position—as well as the strange events in his career, and the steps by which he attained his power—must be read in Mr. Stephens's volumes. But we will take one passage—his first entry into Guatemala, when the insurgent inhabitants of Antigua, despairing of success, had called upon Carrera to join them.

CARRERA'S ENTRANCE INTO GUATEMALA.

On Wednesday, Carrera joined the rebels. He had sent his emissaries to the villages, rousing the Indians, and promising them the plunder of Guatemala; and on Thursday, with a tumultuous mass of half-naked savages, men, women, and children, estimated at ten or twelve thousand, presented himself at the gate of the city. The [rebel] Antiguans themselves were struck with consternation, and the citizens of Guatemala were thrown into a state bordering on distraction.

Efforts at negotiation failed. In the mean time, Carrera's hordes were advancing. The commandant of the Antiguans asked him if he had his masses divided into squares or companies; he answered, "No entiendo nada de eso. Tedeo es uno." ("I don't understand any thing of that. It is all the same.") Among his leaders were Moreau and other known outlaws, criminals, robbers, and murderers. He himself was on horseback, with a green bush in his hat, and hung round with pieces of dirty cotton cloth covered with pictures of the saints. A gentleman who saw them from the roof of his house, and who was familiar with all the scenes of terror which had taken place in that unhappy city, told me that he never felt such consternation and horror as when he saw the entry of this immense mass of barbarians; choking up the streets, all with green bushes in their hats, seeming at a distance like a moving forest; armed with rusty muskets, old pistols, fowling-pieces, some with locks and some without; sticks formed into the shape of muskets, with tin-plate locks; clubs, machetes, and knives tied to the ends of long poles; and swelling the multitude were two or three thousand women, with sacks and alforgas for carrying away the plunder. Many, who had never left their villages before, looked wild at the sight of the houses and churches, and the magnificence of the city. They entered the plaza, vociferating "Viva la religion, y muerte a los extranjeros!" Carrera himself, amazed at the immense ball he had set in motion, was so embarrassed that he could not guide his horse. He afterwards said that he was frightened at the difficulty of controlling this huge and disorderly mass. The traitor Burundia, the leader of the Opposition, the Cataline of this rebellion, rode by his side on his entry into the plaza.

At sun-down the whole multitude set up the *Salve*, or *Hymn to the Virgin*. The swell of human voices filled the air, and made the hearts of the inhabitants quake with fear. Carrera entered the Cathedral; the Indians, in mute astonishment at its splendour after the uncouth images of their village shrines, broke into the house of General Prem, and seized a uniform coat, richly embroidered with gold; into which Carrera slipped his arms, still wearing his straw-hat with its green bush. A watch was brought him, but he did not know the use of it. Probably, since the invasion of Rome by Alaric and the Goths, no civilized city was ever visited by such an inundation of barbarians.

And Carrera alone had power to control the wild elements around him. As soon as possible, some of the authorities sought him out, and in the most abject terms begged him to state on what conditions he would evacuate the city. He demanded the deposition of Galvez, the chief of the state, all the money, and all the arms the Government could command. The priests were the only people who had any influence with him; and words cannot convey any idea of the awful state of suspense which the city suffered, dreading every moment to hear the signal given for general pillage and massacre. The inhabitants shut themselves up in their houses; which, being built of stone, with iron balconies to the windows, and doors several inches thick, resisted the assaults of straggling parties; but atrocities more than enough were committed, as it seemed, preliminary to a general sacking. The Vice-President of the Republic was murdered; the house of Flores, a Deputy, sacked, his mother knocked down by a villain with the butt of a musket, and one of his daughters shot in the arm with two balls.

The house of Messrs. Klee, Skinner and Co., the principal foreign merchants in Guatemala, which was reported to contain ammunition and arms, was several times attacked with great ferocity; having strong balconied windows, and the doors being secured by bars of merchandise piled up within, it resisted the assaults of an undisciplined mob, armed only with clubs, muskets, knives, and machetes. The priests ran through the streets bearing the crucifix in the name of the Virgin and saints, restraining lawless Indians, stilling the wildness of passion, and saving the terrified inhabitants.

Pending the negotiation, Carrera, dressed in Prem's uniform, endeavoured to restrain his tumultuous followers; but several times he said that he could not himself resist the temptation to sack Klee's house, and those of the other Ingleses. There was a strange dash of fanaticism in the character of this lawless chief. The battle-cry of his hordes was "Viva la religion!" The palace of the Archbishop had been suffered to be used as a theatre by the Liberals; Carrera demanded the keys, and putting them in his pocket, declared that, to prevent any further pollution, it should not be opened again until the banished Archbishop returned to occupy it.

At length the terms upon which he consented to withdraw were agreed upon.—viz. eleven thousand dollars in silver, ten thousand to be distributed among his followers and one thousand for his own share, a thousand muskets, and a commission as Lieutenant-Colonel for himself. The amount of money was small as the price of relief from such imminent danger, but it was an immense sum in the eyes of Carrera and his followers, few of whom were worth more than the rags on their backs, and the stolen arms were in their hands; and it was not easily raised; the treasury was bankrupt, and the money was not very cheerfully contributed by the citizens. The madness of consenting to put in the hands of Carrera a thousand muskets was only equalled by the absurdity of making him a Lieutenant-Colonel.

On the afternoon of the third day the money was paid, the muskets delivered, and Carrera was invested with the command of the province of Mita, a district near Guatemala. The joy of the inhabitants at the prospect of his immediate departure was without bounds; but at the last moment an awful rumour spread, that the wild bands had evinced an uncontrollable eagerness before leaving, to sack the city. A random discharge of muskets in the plaza confirmed the rumour, and the effect was dreadful. An hour of terrible suspense followed; but at five o'clock they filed off in straggling crowds from the plaza. At the Plaza de Toros they halted, and firing their muskets in the air, created another panic. A rumour was revived that Carrera had demanded four thousand dollars more, and that unless he received it he would return and take it by force. Carrera himself did actually return, and demanded a field piece, which was given him; and at length, leaving behind him a document requiring the redress of certain grievances, to the unspeakable joy of all the inhabitants he left the city.

We have no wish to undervalue the grounds the citizens had for their panic, or to defend the atrocities of the Indians, from the seizure of General Prem's uniform-coat up to the sacking of the house of Senor Flores. At the same time, looking at the doings of civilized soldiers when they take towns—Badajoz and St. Sebastian, for example—and bearing in mind the personal injuries which their Indian leader had suffered, we doubt whether Carrera with his "hordes" might not be safer visitants of a city than Wellington and his heroes, or any other Marshal of them all.

EDUCATION—LETTER TO A YOUNG TEACHER.

(From *Dunn's Normal School Manual*.)

THE PLEASANTNESS OF TEACHING.

"Most persons," says Sir Walter Scott, "must have witnessed with delight, the joyous burst which attends the dismissing of a village school on a fine summer evening. The buoyant spirit of childhood, repressed with so much difficulty during the tedious hours of discipline, may then be seen to explode, as it were, in shout, and song, and frolic, as the little urchins join in groups on their play-ground, and arrange their matches of sport for the evening. But there is one person who partakes of the relief afforded by the moment of dismissal, whose feelings are not so obvious to the eye of the spectator, or so apt to receive his sympathy. I mean the teacher himself, who, stunned with the hum, and suffocated with the closeness of his schoolroom, has spent the whole day (himself against a host) in controlling petulance, exciting indifference to action, striving to enlighten stupidity, and labouring to soften obstinacy; and whose very powers of intellect have been confounded by hearing the same dull lesson repeated a hundred times by rote, and only varied by the various blunders of the reciters. If to these mental distresses are added a delicate frame of body, and a mind ambitious of some higher distinction than that of being the tyrant of childhood, the reader may have some slight conception of the relief which a solitary walk in the cool of a fine summer evening affords to the head which has ached, and the nerves which have been shattered, for so many hours, in plying the irksome task of public instruction."

What a picture! The "tyrant of childhood" making his escape from the dullness and noise, the heat and suffocation, the tears and punishment of his wretched empire! Who, with such a prospect before him, would be a school-master? If this touching and graphic description, so true to nature, must be realized by the teacher, what strange mockery to speak of the *pleasantness of teaching!* Happily for our purpose, however, it need not be realized; the tyranny and tears, the dullness and the distraction, may all be dispensed with; and enjoyments of the highest and purest kind, mutually shared by the teacher and the taught, be made to occupy their places. It is thus with some, and therefore it may be thus with you, and with all. The fact is, there are conditions of happiness in a school, as well as in every other situation in life; and if these conditions be not observed, neither peace nor comfort can be found within its precincts. Permit me to enumerate some of them.

The first is, ABILITY TO GOVERN BY MORAL MEANS. In a school it is of course necessary to *resolve to rule*; but this is not *all* that is necessary. Children are, to a much greater extent than is generally supposed, reasonable and intelligent beings; they are just as much influenced by *notices* as adults; and they must be governed very much in the same way. Now, if a teacher, disregarding this obvious truth, insists upon ruling simply by the exercise of blind and brute force, he must expect to reap the reward of his folly in the uneasiness, vexation, and perplexity which such a course will inevitably bring upon him. Nor is this all. By so doing, he at once chokes up the spring of some of the highest enjoyments of which the human mind is susceptible. All men love power, especially *moral power*. The exercise of this kind of power, or what we call *influence*, is universally grateful; the intensity, the exquisiteness of the enjoyment depending upon the number of minds which can be influenced; the perfection or dominant character of the influence itself; and the difficulties which have been surmounted,—the skill that has been exercised,—the amount of *mind* which has been brought to bear, in its attainment. "It is this," says Mr. Abbot, "which gives interest to the plans and operations of human governments. They can do little by actual force. Nearly all the power that is held even by the most despotic executive, must be based on an adroit management of the principles of human nature, so as to lead men voluntarily to co-operate with the ruler in his plans." Now this particular kind of gratification, the able teacher enjoys in the highest perfection. His school is the field of his enterprise; in proportion to his skill and ingenuity in managing human nature, is the extent of his success; and in that success he finds an immediate and rich reward. To lead, simply by the power of his own mind, a hundred other minds in willing captivity; to turn the very waywardness and restlessness of childhood to the accomplishment of his own matured plans and purposes; and to do all this, without crushing the buoyancy of one spirit, or checking the flow of natural gladness in any one heart, is a triumph and a joy, abundantly compensating the toil and care by which it has been effected. These few remarks will sufficiently explain what I understand by the ability to govern by moral means. The whole subject of government will come under notice in my next letter.

The second condition of happiness in a school is BENEVOLENCE. That was a beautiful saying of Dr. Dwight, "*He that makes a little child happier for half an hour is a co-worker with God.*" It precisely expresses the spirit which pervades the bosom of a happy teacher. I have sometimes observed the working of this heavenly principle under circumstances of great outward discouragement. One wonders that a man should remain where there was so little to cheer him. The reason is obvious. He loves his work just because he