

us health or happiness, but it may, in the hands of those who know how to use it aright, be made a power, for good. Literary fame or political prominence have in themselves no intrinsic value, but those who have reached these high plains stand on the vantage ground of power, which, when properly directed, tends to raise the intellectual and material status of the commonwealth, and advance the interest of the community at large. Commercial success, or success in farming, mining, or manufacturing, has its reflex influence upon the people among whom we dwell; and socially, morally, and materially, affects their well-being. Peabody's accumulated wealth has been a blessing to thousands of poor Londoners, as well as to many of his fellow-countrymen in the United States. John Milton's literary success has been a blessing to mankind for many generations. Grover Cleveland's political triumph has given to the neighboring Republic a President who knows how to use his power for the good of his fellow-citizens, be they Republican or Democrat; be they black, white, or red; and so it is with the thousands of honest men, who have by their intelligence, forethought, skill, and industry, raised themselves above the level of want, and in so doing, have aided in the elevation of their fellow-creatures. To the man who has an honest, fixed, and steady purpose, life with all its hardships, its trials, and its disappointments, possesses a charm which is seldom dispelled until the finger of care writes decrepitude upon his brow. The man without an honest ambition is little better than the savage who is satisfied to feed upon herbs and wild meats, and to clothe himself in the skins of beasts. Nova Scotians abroad struggle manfully after success; but Nova Scotians at home are too apt to think, that what is, ought to be, without ever making an endeavor to improve their condition, mentally or materially. This lethargy is not worthy the people that inhabit a Province which is destined one day to be the Britain of America.

THE REPUBLIC OF MEXICO.

Although a great deal has been written about Mexico, it is a strange fact that very little is known beyond its borders of its political and social life. We know that it is a Republic; that the federal constitution is a model one; that there is all the machinery of a Republican Government; two elected houses and a President popularly chosen for a term of six years, who is not eligible again until a term has intervened. Judging from these facts, we are apt to assume that the popular voice rules in Mexico as it does in the United States. But Charles Dudley Warner, in *Harper's Magazine*, shows that this is far from being the case. The city of Mexico is not only the capital, it is the centre of all the political life of the Republic. The President is in fact elected by an agreement among a knot of leaders, and the office is a matter of arrangement bargained for usually a long time in advance. Governors of the twenty-seven Mexican States, and even the Mayors of cities and minor officials, are practically appointed by this little junta at the capital. The elections are mere forms, the people seeming to be perfectly contented to allow a few leaders to rule the country so long as they, personally, remain unmolested. Their indolent natures induce them to avoid the worry and annoyance of political strife, and astute leaders, who do not bear too heavily on the guiding rein, manage public affairs to suit themselves. When President Diaz' first term expired, Gonzales came in by arrangement; when the latter retired, it was to a Governorship. Diaz has a predominance of Indian blood, Gonzales of Spanish.

Diaz invited capital into the country, and promoted railways by liberal subsidies. The railways are built, the subsidies have not been paid. Brigands of mixed Spanish race, who had possessions and took to the highways only on occasions, or when the country was politically disturbed, infested the land. Vigorous efforts were made to suppress them by the Government. Gonzales had the reputation of being the head of these quasi brigands. When he came into power, he suppressed them in the most original way. He gave them all good fat offices, making them governors, mayors and high district officials. The remedy worked like a charm. As officials, the brigands found that they could still plunder, and with little risk of detection. There is nothing like a Government office to take the energy and life out of men, and Gonzales, by his wise policy, soon had the turbulent horde reduced to perfect submission. These Mexican leaders are astute diplomats, "as wary and as supple and subtle as the Turks. Whoever makes a treaty with them is likely to be confused by the result. Whoever invests money in Mexico, either in public works, or in private enterprise, does so at his risk. Any basis of confidence is wanting in business. The Mexicans do not trust each other. They always seem surprised when a foreigner does as he said he would do. The moral condition is something like Egypt. The atmosphere of Egypt is one of universal lying." As if all this were not bad enough, the judiciary are far from spotless, and official corruption is universal. And yet travel is now safe, public order is maintained, and there is marked progress in education. Still, whatever the Government is, there is no public opinion, no general comprehension of political action, no really representative Government, or representative election. Mexico remains, in effect, a personal Government with no political public, a Republic only in name.

THE PUBLIC AND ART EXHIBITIONS.

The project of the committee of the Art School to bring together a large collection of works of art for public exhibition during the Jubilee celebration, is a most commendable one from more than a money-raising point of view. It is by studying the productions of fine art that the public tastes are elevated, the æsthetic side of man's nature cultivated, and his capacity for the highest earthly enjoyments increased. Mahaffy, the greatest authority on life among the ancient Greeks, assures us that the refinement of the masses at Athens in the palmiest days of Grecian art was many times

greater than that of the English public of to-day. How much the paintings and statuary in the Propylæa and the Parthenon, the marvellous architecture of all the public buildings, the musical contests in the Odeia, and the presentation of the masterpieces of Athenian dramatic art in the Theatre of Bacchus contributed to this condition of general culture, there can be only one opinion. And who can deny that, under the Roman Emperors, the corruption in high places brought on by other influences had a powerful offset in the generosity and public spirit of the many men who devoted their wealth to catering to the innocent enjoyment of their fellow-citizens.

Sir George Trevelyan, in the course of his address at the exhibition in progress in St. Jude's Schools, Whitechapel, says:—"If virtue is the crown of life, art is its brightest and rarest jewel—art, whether on the tongue of the orator, the pen of the poet, the gesture of the actor, the bow of the violinist, or the canvas of the painter. . . . It is right to do in our power to spread a familiarity with art through all classes and in all places, in order that as many of our countrymen as possible may appreciate what, during the last thirty years, some great Englishmen have done for art." In these days, this dissemination of art is being accomplished (1) by the writings of art critics, from Lessing to Ruskin, but chiefly (2) by galleries and art exhibitions. The latter have become a permanent factor in European life and education.

The benefits of art exhibitions are not all on the side of the public. True, the latter acquire, with little expenditure of time or money, an insight into the nature of the beautiful and a knowledge of its principles. The caretaker of an art gallery soon becomes so well versed in the language of art and in the various excellencies or defects of art productions that he can pass an intelligent and valuable judgment upon a picture, though he cannot himself paint a stroke. So, in a less degree, is it with those who are in the habit of visiting and inspecting art collections. But if the art is valuable to the public, so is the judgment of the public valuable to art. The Dutch painter who represented Abraham as about to despatch Isaac with a horse-pistol, would soon discover his mistake if his picture were placed in an art gallery. The great French painter, David, had on exhibition in the Louvre a magnificent picture of a horse, which artists admired very much. A coachman put to the painter the startling question: "Who ever saw a horse foaming at the mouth when there was no bit in it;" that night the foam disappeared. And apart from the correction of such obvious mistakes as these, the public have a strong appreciation of the genuine. To no higher tribunal could an appeal be made. Ruskin says that all great artists of whatever kind, have worked for and in the age in which they lived. You cannot take Demosthenes from the Bema at Athens or Cicero from the Forum at Rome; withdraw Dante from the setting of thirteenth century Italy, or Shakespeare from Elizabethan England, or Hugo from the age and country of revolutions. This being true, it is to the interest of the artist as well as the public, that their relations should be of the most intimate character.

The effort which is being made by the committee of the Art School to provide this æsthetic treat for the citizens of Halifax deserves general support. The difficulties in the way are great, and can only be overcome by the co-operation of all who are in a position to further the scheme.

ASSYRIOLOGY AND EGYPTOLOGY.

Slowly, but as it seems, surely, these two branches of archaeological research are revealing to us reliable landmarks in that realm of the long past which has its supreme interest for us in its elucidation of the Bible records. The following, though not relating to an antiquity of the highest import, has yet its own interest. This, however, is far exceeded by the revelations embodied in Professor Sayce's "Hibbert Lectures," recently delivered in England, which we shall shortly have occasion to notice.—

"A series of very interesting excavations, conducted by Mr. Naville, on account of the Egypt Exploration Fund, has been in progress at Tell-el-Yahoodeyeh ('the Mound of the Jews,') a spot not far from the apex of the Delta, about 22 miles north-east of Cairo. Though well known by name, Tell-el-Yahoodeyeh is little visited. More than 40 years ago it was conjecturally identified by the late Sir Gardner Wilkinson with the city of Onias, founded by the Jewish hereditary high priest Onias, who fled from Syria at the time of the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes (167-3 B. C.) and took refuge in Egypt, where he was hospitably received by Ptolemy Philometor. Here, being ambitious to fulfil the words of Isaiah, who prophesied that there should be 'an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt' (Isaiah xix, 19, &c.,) he asked permission to occupy the site of a deserted city and temple in the Heliopolitan Nome, there 'to build a temple to Almighty God, after the pattern of that in Jerusalem.' The letter in which Onias preferred this petition, and the gracious reply of King Ptolemy and Queen Cleopatra, his mother, are given by Josephus, after the manner of Livy, with somewhat suspicious circumstantiality. It is interesting, however, to note that the epistle of Onias describes this ruined temple as having been originally dedicated to Bast, whom Josephus, in Greek fashion, identifies with Artemis, and that he states how it contained abundance of building material, and was over-run with 'sacred animals.' We may therefore conclude that it was in the undisturbed possession of a colony of cats, these being the animals consecrated to the cat-headed goddess of the adjacent Bubastite Nome. Onias accordingly came thither with a large following of Jewish refugees, and built his temple, which is elaborately described by Josephus. That it long continued to be a place of considerable importance is evident from the fact that Ptolemy, the geographer, writing 100 years later, mentions it as the metropolis of the Heliopolitan Nome. There is good evidence that this temple of Bast had not yet fallen to ruin in the tenth century, B. C." These excavations have fully confirmed Sir G. Wilkinson's conjectures.