

of attraction or of repulsion, according as the contact is or is not *sympathetic*. Habits of selfish isolation, the culture of our "affinities," the habit of consulting our own refined tastes, comfort, and gratification, will lead us to avoid all unnecessary contact with those who occupy a lower social stratum, and will make points of necessary contact points of repulsion. But when there is voluntary and kindly approach we always discover something that is a basis for sympathy and love.

The secret charm of the gospel of Christ is that it inspires, not simply the love of complacency, but the love of benevolence. The true disciple loves not for the lovely and lovable qualities already seen and developed, but for the sake of what may be developed. And so, in the most repulsive object, love sees a field for celestial blooms. The stagnant marsh brings forth the white and fragrant water lily, and the desert becomes the garden of the Lord.

THE subjects assigned to this month are Mexico, Central America, West Indies, and Evangelization in the Cities. We refer our readers to Vol. 1, New Series, p. 224-226, where the main facts as to Mexico are set forth. Much other valuable matter is presented in the same volume. See copious index. The editors earnestly hope that every student of missions will avail himself of the bound volume for 1888, which he will find an encyclopedia of missions.

MEXICO.

In 1882 its area was computed at 743,948 square miles, and its population at about 10,500,000. It consists of 30 States, of which the largest are Chihuahua, Sonora, Coahuila, Durango; and the most populous are Jalisco, Guanajuato, Mihoacan, Oaxaca, Puebla and Mexico, all of which contain upward of 700,000. In 1882 Mexico had 23 towns containing over 8,000, the City of Mexico being much the largest, with 300,000. The

army consists, on a war-footing, of 165,000 officers and men. The navy is small, having five gunboats. Mexico's exports are minerals and metals; precious woods, especially mahogany and dye-woods; coffee and cocoa, vanilla, tobacco, cochineal, drugs, cattle, etc.

Proximity to our own country forbids us to regard Mexico with indifference. At our very doors, our nearest neighbor, her elevation and evangelization touch not only our duty but our interest. The great variety and richness of her fauna and flora; the possibility of finding almost any desired climatic conditions within a small range of territory; the beauty of her scenery, constituting a modern occidental paradise—all these considerations make Mexico a country of supreme importance to the United States.

There is sure to be contact and commerce between these two neighbors. As facilities of travel increase, this favored land will throng not only with visitors but residents from our republic. If we do not raise her moral and spiritual state, she will lower our own. Self-protection demands that we send to our Mexican neighbors the gospel in its purity.

The papacy in its worst form rules in Mexico, though in 1873 church and state were separated, and Congress precluded from passage of laws either establishing or prohibiting any religion. Marriage was made a civil contract; slavery abolished, and a severe blow struck against the monastic orders and religious establishments, and in favor of public education. In 1884 there were about 9,000 public elementary schools, with 500,000 pupils, and about 140 for higher education, with 17,200 pupils, and that year the Government grant for educational purposes was \$3,000,000 and upward.

These were rapid steps—strides in advance, in fact too rapid for the ignorance and superstition of the peo-