

We accompanied a detachment of the young ladies to church. It was a plain stone structure, like all those of the country, with a wooden roof, rudely ornamented with painted panel-work, and supported by tall, slender, wooden columns, the altar ornamented with tawdry gilding and tinsel, and the choir at the other end in a gallery not unlike the sentry-boxes at Blackwell's Island. It was crowded with kneeling worshippers; and as the Padre, in a slightly crapulous voice, intoned the service, the responses rose with a solemn murmur. The feeble light of a few lamps fell most picturesquely upon the white-veiled and white-robed figures of the women kneeling, and crouching on the floor back of them was a circle of men, also all in white. The effect was most striking. Sometimes the music of the choir, generally harsh and squeaking, gave place to the wild and strange melody of the droning chants of the country.

THE FUNCION.

Penonomé, from its situation near the mountains, is recognized as head-quarters by the Indians of the interior, who, though retaining their own independent life, and inhabiting their own *pueblos*, come down once or twice a year, on the great festive occasions of the Church, to confess and pay their nominal taxes. Their *alcaldes* are appointed by the government, and the priests retain some power over their superstitions; but besides this they seem to have little connection with their Spanish neighbors, except in the barter of their productions for goods. Manchester has penetrated even here, and all the native cotton fabrics are reproduced so faithfully by English operatives, and are so much cheaper, that the domestic manufactures have nearly ceased. The shawls (*rebosos*) of the women, of a peculiar and not ungraceful pattern, are used for veils, as well as mantillas. These