

CHILDREN AND CHICKENS IN MEXICO.

I must tell you that the boys and girls in Mexico love chickens just as the boys and girls in this country do, and make great pets of them. But the chickens there do not have so good a time as the chickens here, for there is no nice yard in which to run. (I am writing about the chickens in Mexican cities).

What would you think of chicken-coops on top of the houses? Well, that is where ever so many of the chickens are raised. As the tops of the houses are flat, this can easily be done. And the poor things get so little to eat, they look lean and starved, and their feathers stand all sorts of ways, and are not smooth and glossy as are the feathers of our chickens. But the children love them dearly. They will let them come into the rooms and play all about. Sometimes they even sleep with them, tightly hugged against their breasts. One little boy loved his chicken so well he couldn't bear to be parted from it. So he took it to school hidden under his blanket. In the midst of the recitation the chicken scrambled out, flew to the top of the teacher's desk, and, flapping its wings, crowed lustily. All the children laughed, of course, but the teacher looked very grave. She told Manuel that school was not the place for chickens, so he never ventured to carry Blanquo any more.

One of the saddest things about chickens in Mexico is that they are used to gamble with. They have cock-pits where they are trained to fight. These chickens are well kept. Sometimes you will see a pair of them tied to the door of a building, or to the leg of a table within the building, and, if you are familiar with Mexico and the ways of the people, you will know that their owners are somewhere near getting ready for the fight.

Some of the Catholic priests in Mexico own these game chickens, and it is no unusual thing for them to have a fight with these, on Sunday afternoon, for the benefit of the Church, they declare. This seems terrible, but it is true. The writer of this heard, from the mission house, the sounds of a bull fight, one Sunday, conducted by

the priests. So you see even worse than chicken-fighting is done by them.

"Pollos" (pronounced polyos), is the name for chickens in Mexico. A hen they call "galina," and her eggs are called "hervos." In some places they call eggs "little whities." The Mexican-Indian word for it is "blanquillos."

JOSEPH.

Meanwhile the Ishmaelites had sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, and captain of the guards. We remember that Joseph was only seventeen when his brothers sold him, but though he was so young and inexperienced, he soon showed his great ability and rose higher and higher in his master's favour until Potiphar put all his business into his hands. Joseph is a splendid example of the quiet, modest, scholarly boy who reads, thinks, and works; whom everyone can trust, and who goes on, day after day, year in and year out, doing his duty in the fear and love of God, until suddenly he is recognized as a man of great importance, before whom even the rich and great are forced to bow.

You all know the story of how Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream about the fat and lean kine, which meant that there would first be seven years of plenty, and then seven years of famine in Egypt, and how Pharaoh made him chief administrator in his kingdom.

Then came Joseph's chance to revenge himself upon the brothers who had treated him so cruelly. They came down to Egypt to buy bread, not knowing that the boy they had hated and wanted to kill was, next to the king, the greatest man in the country. How many people, even in this Christian age, would have taken advantage of their position and "paid back" their enemies? We could hardly have blamed Joseph if he had sent them home again without corn. But instead he returned good for evil, and heaped coals of fire on their heads. Just as Isaac set the first example of perfect filial obedience, and Jacob of sincere penitence and determination to reform, so Joseph set us the first example of true charity, the forgiveness of injuries. At a time when every-

one believed in revenge, and hated their enemies, Joseph freely forgave his brothers—fell on their necks and kissed them, gave them corn, and sent them home to bring his father to him. Is it any wonder that he is spoken of as a type of Christ? His truth, his gentleness, his power, and his beautiful spirit of charity were certainly like Him who gave us the commandment that we should "love our enemies."

A BOY'S RELIGION.

It was the late Henry Drummond who once said to a great company of boys: "Boys, if you are going to be Christians be Christians as boys and not as your grandmothers. A grandmother has to be a Christian as a grandmother, and that is the right and the beautiful thing for her; but if you cannot read your Bible by the hour as your grandmother can, or delight in meetings as she can, don't think that you are necessarily a bad boy. When you are your grandmother's age you will have your grandmother's religion."

—Sincerity and honesty carry one through many difficulties which all the arts he can invent would never help him through.



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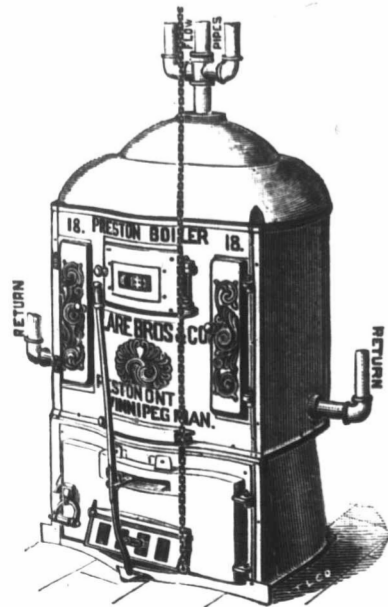
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