

LETTER FROM CHILI

MR. EDITOR:—It is difficult to give one a correct idea of Chili who has not seen the country itself. It (the country) consists of a series of plains or table lands running from north to south, each plateau becoming more elevated as you approach the Cordilleras, and divided by ranges of hills running parallel with the coast, also increasing in height. The hills and mountains are cut up into large and deep ravines, called "quebradas," which again have their sides cut by similar quebradas, and so on *ad infinitum*. The southern part of Chili is tolerably well supplied with large trees, which as you go north gradually diminish into shrubs, and near the northern boundary all vegetation disappears, and you find nothing but rocks and sand. Wherever there is water, there is more or less vegetation, but the proportion of streams is one to a million of "quebradas."

The productions are wheat, barley, a little corn, apples of very poor quality, hardly fit for swine, pears, peaches, plums, cherries, and oranges; besides which there are good grapes, melons, strawberries and figs, which in some parts of the country are delicious. The farming is done in the most primitive manner imaginable. The plow is the old fashioned crooked stick, and the oxen are always yoked by the horns instead of the neck. When the wheat has been cut down and gathered to the threshing place, it is put into a circular yard, enclosed by a high fence, and from ten to fifty horses (according to the size of the "corral") are turned in and driven about with yells and "carambas," until straw, chaff, and grain are of about equal fineness. The grain is separated from the chaff by throwing it into the air, and letting the wind do the work of cleaning. Fruits, and all natural productions are left to grow uncared for and untouched by the owner's hands or implements, and the grain would be left in like manner, if it could be sold without threshing.

Of the politics of the country I know but little, and care to know less; and as to the people, there must be some good about them, inasmuch as God made them, but I have found very little of it as yet. All the improvements that have been made, have been owing to the influences of commerce, and the more enterprising spirit of English and American residents.

The chief wealth of the country consists in its mines of gold, silver, copper, and coal. Gold is about equally distributed, silver is found principally in the northern parts of the country, copper in the central portions, and coal at the south. Silver mines are

discovered as much by chance as by regular mining operations, while the copper mines require a large capital in order to carry them on successfully.

There are but two kinds of business here which promise successful returns, viz, mining and commerce. The former is proverbially uncertain, while the latter requires capital and an intimate acquaintance with the habits, customs, and prejudices of the inhabitants.

If you have any friends who think of coming this way, tell them to stay at home, unless they are anxious to see the "elephant" and "feel his tusks."

Yours, truly, M. A. J.

LOTA, Chili.

HOW TO CATCH GOPHERS.

MR. EDITOR:—Where gophers are at work and the hills recent, say made the previous night, open the hill and expose the burrow about a foot in length wide enough to let in a common steel rat trap; clean out the dirt nicely, and excavate a space at the bottom of the burrow deep enough to receive the trap, already finely set, so that the jaws and treadle will be slightly below the plane of the bottom of the burrow; cover the trap very lightly with finely pulverized earth, so that the top of the earth over the trap and the bottom of the burrow be on the same plane; cover the hole with a board, broad and long enough to prevent any other dirt from falling on the trap; haul fine dirt all around the edge of the board to exclude all light. Teach the boys how to do it right, and give them a dime for each gopher caught. I speak from experience, and this is the best way I know of. Other ways are, open the hole by the side of the hill, when the gopher will shortly bring dirt to stop it up—shoot him. When the earth is full of water, they occupy chambers in their mounds—dig them out. Sink a jar glazed inside one foot deep in the bottom of the burrow, in lieu of a steel trap; cover its mouth with cabbage leaf or its equivalent, and finish as directed for steel trap. They will fall in, and can not get out without help. Dose apples or potatoes, &c., with strychnine, lay them in their burrows, and exclude the light. THOS. SIVETER.

SALEM, Iowa.

MOUNT HOON, in Oregon, has now been ascertained, by actual measurement, to be full eighteen thousand three hundred and sixty-one feet high. This is the highest peak on the American continent, and one of the highest in the world. From this peak, mountain tops five hundred miles distant may be distinctly seen. The mountain is volcanic, smoke being seen to issue from its summit.