

THE BROKEN VASE.

What fallen! Crushed! The graceful form
Broken, ruined! There it lies.
Alas! What though it was but small and
frail,
I loved it. We all will prize,
Will make us shrines of trifling things
That come on drifts of fortune's tide
To store among the heart's best gifts
Some thoughts of pleasure that abide.

Such wealth of beauty decked this vase.
Above its curving, leaf-like top
Each year the short-lived roses hung,
And let their leaves of crimson drop
To mark the flight of summer days;
There lilies rose like white-souled maids,
And pansies called for touch of lips
Upon their purple, velvet shades.

Throughout the great, wide-spreading earth
With all its mighty space,
Was there no spot for ruin's touch
Except the cherished little place
Where stood this slender, fragile form
Which now lies shattered? Scattered o'er
The rug's dark surface, gleaming like
Mosaics on the polished floor,

Are its fragments, all alight
With a tint of sunset hue,
Worthless as are blighted joys
Or baffled hopes, o'er cast by rue
To lie downtrodden in the dust
Of time, in ashes strewn by sorrow's hand,
While hearts, perplexed, see visions pale
And, grieving, fail to understand.

—MARY FRENCH MORTON.

ONLY ONCE.

Will the readers of The Conservative bear with the editor "for once," if a personal experience involving the breaking of the Sabbath into smithereens is submitted for their perusal? On February 9th, 1902, it being Sunday, we were detained in the ancient Spanish city of Chihuahua, while enroute to the City of Mexico. This important mart of the Mexican Republic was founded in 1539, by Diego de Ybarra. The name is pronounced Che-wow-wa, and it means "a place where things are made."

Piety in Variety.

Early in the morning the aisles of the church of San Francisco were thronged with devout worshippers. The edifice is elaborately and extravagantly ornamented. It glows in those barbaric colorings, and resplendent gildings which have been so dear to the Moorish and Spanish eyes in all ages. Its construction began in 1717, and its completion was in 1789. It has been constantly in use, and numbers thousands of communicants who believe, as their ancestors of three hundred years ago believed, having abated nothing, and added nothing to their declaration of creed. But from the Cathedral services to the high betting of the cock-pit, the devotees of the former make only a hop-skip-and-jump. And their zeal at the Cathedral is more than equalled by their enthusiasm at the cock-pit. It happened that on Sunday, February 9, 1902, the closing contests of a cocking-

main between the States of Durango and Chihuahua—which was made of forty-one fights—came off, and so our party saw the deciding battles, five in number, between very game roosters. The stake fought for by the two states was \$25,000 Mexican money. The side betting amounted to many thousands of dollars. We saw single bets of \$5,000, dozens of bets at from fifty to five hundred dollars, and the money all in sight, and all promptly paid over as battles were lost and won.

Chihuahua seemed to have the best birds or the best luck, and the main was won for that city and state. There were about one thousand spectators, and the interest, and exhilarated bettingness of the crowd, surpassed, in accentuated mania for gambling, anything ever dreamed of by the sporting gentlemen of the United States. A Durango plutocrat, the owner of a rich and very productive mine, proposed another cocking main between the two states for one million of dollars. Whether the cheapness of Mexican currency, as to its purchasing power, has any influence upon the gambling conditions of the people, it is difficult to determine. We have changed United States one dollar for two dollars and a quarter of Mexican. That is to say, for one hundred dollars of our money you receive two hundred and twenty-five dollars of Mexican.

Common peon labor is thirty cents a day in Mexican, and less than fifteen cents a day in American currency. The intelligent watch markets. They read and think and take advantage of the fluctuations of the purchasing power of silver. But the ignorant, the readingless, and the thoughtless are the poorest, most squalid and degraded of all the earth. The rich are very rich, and the poor are very, very poor. There seems no future for those who are born into this wretched, naked, starving poverty.

The Breed.

The race is bred as by brutes, and without any forethought as to the kind of children, physically or mentally, which are to come into the world. The Mexican is a mixture of Indian and Spaniard, with now and then negro and West Indian blood intermingling. And in a climate almost tropical, where nature, by spontaneity furnishes enough fruit and food for an indolent and unambitious race, and little clothing is required, such a people, as a rule, make no effort to advance or elevate themselves. It is a deteriorating, down-grade mass of men and women who constitute "the plain people" of this Republic, and it takes at least sixteen of them to equal, bodily, or in intellectual force, one well-born, well-read and well-fed American.

On Purpose.

There are relatively few men and

women in all the world who were begotten on purpose, who are not the mere resultant incident of sexuality. And in Mexico, among the peons, nearly all of the children look like accidents, which came to the parents as afflictions, as additional burdens to bear through their sombre journey of life, lamented for the coming; and whose entire prenatal existence was environed with poverty, sadness and hopelessness, can not meet and match one whose conception is in happiness and plenty, whose birth is looked to with great joy, and, with all that sacred eagerness for parenthood, which intelligence, health and a Home can alone inspire, in a better race.

People who accomplish things in this world are those who were wanted in this world, by waiting, loving and ambitious fathers and mothers. There are few such among the lower classes of Mexico. The two things left to them by the Spaniards are the Cathedral and the bull ring, or plaza. Anything which is bad the Mexicans inherited, anything that is good among them has been acquired as against the inexorable laws of evolution and heredity. J. S. M.

City of Mexico, February 15, 1902.

It having been decided that it is a fraud to sell oleomargarine, colored to imitate butter, it is now in order to forbid the selling of lard unless it be wrapped, branded and colored in a manner that will distinguish it from oleomargarine. As every pound of farmers' butter which reaches the eastern market from the west, has to be worked over and colored to make it marketable, perhaps it would be well to color it a bright green with pink trimmings, in order to distinguish it from the real creamery article, which has a monopoly of yellow as a distinguishing mark.

Of the 558,720 ARTIFICIAL acres included in FORESTATION. the proposed Nebraska forest reserves,

less than one per cent is held under private claim. The land is the very worst of the sandhill region, is nearly unfit for grazing, as it takes about forty acres of it to support a single animal through an ordinary season, of course it is absolutely unsuitable for agriculture.

Strange to say, this land has been found adapted to the culture of several varieties of pine, and may grow to be of great value commercially, and an ornament to the state, instead of a barren and desolate waste.

According to the advice of the attorney general, the president has authority to withdraw this land from settlement. Should he see fit to do so, he would have the support of all Nebraskans who would see the desert blossom as a rose.