

lished "a series of letters in vindication and extension of the principles regarding the nature of existence of the Right Rev. Dr. Berkeley, Lord Bishop of Cloyne." His argument is that our notions of time, motion, and magnitude are merely relative; that the idea of space in the abstract is entirely beyond the grasp of the human mind, and leads to a series of absurdities and contradictions. But without such a conception, our notions as to matter are untenable, and hence we are driven to seek for other principles to explain the nature of existence. These Mr. Doubleday believes are to be found in the system of philosophy which Bishop Berkeley founded, or rather the idea of which he indicated, although he did not live to bring it to perfection. This, the most purely idealistic system ever promulgated, entirely denies the existence of matter, and holds that there are only spirits, thinking beings whose nature consists of conception and volition; whose sensations are derived from one superior Spirit *in* whom they exist. Mr. Doubleday, after endeavouring to show that unless we adopt this view we are led into innumerable contradictions, asserts that materialism is the parent of scepticism, since a mind which finds itself involved in a hopeless struggle to reconcile inconsistencies, takes refuge in believing nothing. All this the author expresses clearly and concisely, so that even those who are not inclined to accept his views will read his work with pleasure, and are sure to glean some new ideas from it. At the same time, when opinions almost universally held are attacked, it is necessary that he who assails them should be scrupulously accurate even in matters of little importance. Therefore it is a bad fault that we find in this work chemical formulæ, given at the very outset, in which P is taken as the symbol of Platinum, and Ch as that of Chlorine. It is also astonishing to find any one who supports the "emission" theory of heat, and who does so chiefly by quibbling about the expressions used by those who have so conclusively shown that heat is a mode of motion.

"The Beginning," the other book at which we have to glance, is one of those volumes which seem a mere confusion of facts, which, though they may be interesting in themselves, lose their value from having no proper connection or arrangement. Consisting of nearly six hundred pages, this work has in it a little of everything; but to find out what it all leads to, and what is the general drift of the whole, is next to impossible. Just at the end the author devotes a separate and comparatively small space to considering the possibility of reconciling the Hebrew records relating to the Beginning with modern scientific discoveries. In this more method is found than in the body of the work, and the conclusion arrived at, that we must "exclude all other suppositions save that of regarding the creative epochs as periods of indefinite and immense duration," is one to which few will be disposed to object. Yet in this also stray facts seem to lie upon the pages as if scattered indiscriminately from a pepper-box. The plates with which the work is illustrated are certainly very good; but we fear that it is one of those expensive books that find few purchasers.

Our Sister Republic. A Gala Trip through Tropical Mexico in 1869-70. Adventure and sight-seeing in the Land of the Aztecs, with Picturesque Descriptions of the Country and People, and Reminiscences of the Empire and its Downfall. By Colonel Albert S. Evans. With Numerous Engravings. (Hartford, Conn.: Columbian Book Company. London: Trübner and Co., 1871.)

THE author of this book accompanied the Hon. W. H. Seward in an apparently semi-official tour through Mexico, lasting from September 1869 to January 1870. The volume before us, in somewhat flowery and very "smart" style, tells what the author saw and a good deal of what he heard during the progress through that American battleground, of which we hear so much and know so little

The author writes with much enthusiasm and hopefulness of the people, the products, and the progress of the country, where he was received with such exuberant hospitality; although, considering the short time he was in the country, and the conditions under which the tour was made, anything like a full and reliable account of the political, social, and commercial condition of the country was not to be looked for. We believe, however, most readers will know much more about the life-manners of the Mexicans after than before reading the work. The author has fervid Republican propensities, and we fear writes too often with red ink. He has nothing but little words for the Maximilian episode, and regards the unfortunate would-be Emperor as an unprincipled heartless adventurer. We are glad to see the author has paid considerable attention to the state of education in the country, and if we can at all rely upon his statistics, it is in a much more hopeful state than Europeans are generally inclined to believe. There appears to be plenty of funds set apart chiefly by the benevolent for educational and charitable purposes; indeed, according to Colonel Evans, the wealth and resources of Mexico are almost enormous, but, as might be expected in such a chronically revolutionary country, the management of them is wretched. The Colonel is evidently not a scientific man, and although he frequently alludes to the products of the country, it is generally either from a commercial or picturesque point of view. We commend the book as an exceedingly interesting and graphically written record of a four months' trip through Mexico, and as a work which affords a very fair notion of the present actual condition of the country and of its interesting antiquities.

Horses: their Rational Treatment and the Causes of their Deterioration and Premature Decay. In Two Parts. By Amateur. (London: Baillière, Tindall, and Co., 1871.)

IN Part I of this work the author tries to explain scientifically the errors of the present routine mismanagement (as he calls it), and how it is opposed to the natural system and health of the horse; and in the second part he considers and explains the practical management of the horse under what he calls the Rational System. The author advocates a return to the natural feeding of the horse, such as grass and similar soft food, and an abandonment of the present almost universal system of forcing with an abundance of dry food, on the ground that thus the horse would live to a much greater age, and perform a far greater amount of work. The subject certainly deserves the serious consideration of all who are interested in horses, and to all such we would recommend the perusal of this little book by one who has evidently given the subject long and serious study. In the second part both sides of the question are well stated in a correspondence between the author and Sir James Yorke Scarlett.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his Correspondents. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]

Mr. Stone and Professor Newcomb

MR. NEWCOMB has reviewed Mr. Proctor's book on the Sun in your number of May 18, and Mr. Proctor has replied in the number for June 1. In each of these articles I find my work and name mentioned in a way that is scarcely satisfactory to me. Mr. Proctor's reply is, however, of course, only intended to defend his own work, not mine. In Mr. Newcomb's review I find the following very strong passage. Mr. Newcomb says:—"We find ligaments, black drops, and distortions sometimes seen in interior contacts of the limbs of Mercury or Venus with that of the sun described as if they were regular phenomena of a transit; without any mention of the facts and experiments which indicated that these phenomena are simple products of