

than a town. The orchards were beautiful, presenting one mass of peach-blossoms. I saw, also, in one or two places the date-palm: it is a most stately tree; and I should think a group of them in their native Asiatic or African deserts must be superb. We passed likewise San Felipe, a pretty straggling town like Quillota. The valley in this part expands into one of those great bays or plains, reaching to the foot of the Cordillera, which have been mentioned as forming so curious a part of the scenery of Chile. In the evening we reached the mines of Jajuel, situated in a ravine at the flank of the great chain. I stayed here five days. My host, the superintendent of the mine, was a shrewd but rather ignorant Cornish miner. He had married a Spanish woman, and did not mean to return home; but his admiration for the mines of Cornwall remained unbounded. Among many other questions, he asked me, "Now that George Rex is dead, how many more of the family of Rexes are yet alive?" This Rex certainly must be a relation of the great author Finis, who wrote all books!

These mines are of copper, and the ore is all shipped to Swansea to be smelted. Hence the mines have an aspect singularly quiet, as compared to those in England: here no smoke, furnaces, or great steam-engines, disturb the solitude of the surrounding mountains.

The Chilean government, or rather the old Spanish law, encourages by every method the searching for mines. The discoverer may work a mine on any ground by paying five shillings; and before paying this he may try, even in the garden of another man, for twenty days.

It is now well known that the Chilean method of mining is the cheapest. My host says that the two principal improvements introduced by foreigners have been, first, reducing by previous roasting the copper pyrites—which, being the common ore in Cornwall, the English miners were astounded on their arrival to find thrown away as useless: secondly, stamping and washing the scoriæ from the old furnaces—by which process particles of metal are recovered