

in your lives which makes the chapter set apart for the narrative of your deeds the most luminous in the history of America.

THE COROADOS INDIANS.

The Reverend Joseph Solari, writing to his superior-general from the Salesian Station in the Teresa Custina Colony, Mateo Grosso, Brazil, says this of the Coroados Indians:

They are afraid of the least thing. A mere scratch or a slight headache is enough to set them running to us for medicine. In this way, without being doctors, we have a very large practice, larger perhaps than that of some of the celebrated physicians in Europe.

The customs prevailing among these Indians are anything but conducive to the preservation of their health. They have nothing to cover themselves with either in summer or in winter. The consequence is that during the damp and bitterly cold nights of the latter season, especially, they contract some chest diseases that generally result in their death. An indispensable part of their toilet is to anoint themselves with a kind of fat obtained from the crocodile, in order to defend themselves from the bites of the mosquitoes and other tantalizing little insects. They also paint themselves with urucu and other vegetable substances to keep off the scorching rays of the sun. This, of course, is hurtful to them, since thereby, the pores of the skin are stopped up, and perspiration prevented. Their food consists for the most part of raw meat, and that, too, of any animal; this disgusting repast causes eruptions of the skin, and engenders a great many diseases among them. Whenever they are suffering from an indisposition after eating, or whenever they are in a state of fever, or hot and weary after running, they plunge themselves into the water, and remain there a long time.

A frightful mortality is the result of this negligence and ignorance.

To give you some idea of the religious belief of these Indians is not at all an easy matter, for the Baires maintain the strictest silence, and the others do not know exactly what they do believe. But we have been able to gather that they believe in two gennii—Marelba, the good genius, and Boupe, the bad one. Their prayers are always addressed to Boupe, so that he may not injure them. For this very same reason every article of food is exorcised. The Baires fulminate their excommunications against all wicked people who dare to eat what has not been exorcised by them. It is to their interest to do this, for when the words of exorcism have been duly pronounced, they test the flavor of the eatables and set aside the tit-bits for their own particular and private consumption. If an unbelieving sinner should eat anything that has not passed through the hands of the Baire, he is sure to be overtaken by some misfortune; it may be a thorn that enters his foot, or a bite from a venomous reptile, but whatever it is, even if it occurs after many years, it is most certainly the result of eating that unexorcised tit-bit.

The Coroados have a very singular physique, being stout and tall; in fact, they are nearly six feet high. The industry of the men is confined to the chase and fishing, to making bows and arrows, catching parrots, (with whose feathers they adorn themselves) and passing the greater part of the day in *doice far niente*. The women, on the other hand, attend to the children, prepare the meals, and make the mats which do service as beds.

There is a false modesty, which is vanity; a false glory, which is levity; a false grandeur, which is meanness; a false virtue, which is hypocrisy, and a false wisdom, which is prudery.