

TRIBES OF SOUTH AMERICA.

THE RECORD-UNION CORRESPONDENT STILL IN BOLIVIA.

A Singular People, Descended from the Incas, Who Still Retain Some of Their Ancient Rites, Etc.

[Special Correspondence of the Record-Union] XXIII. LA PAZ, Bolivia, 1890.

The study of Indian character, as shown in the Aymaras and Quichuas of Bolivia, is exceedingly interesting. Though far outnumbering the whites, the Government finds no trouble in keeping them under absolute control, whatever revolts and disturbances may arise among the Cholos and other citizens. Grave, silent and sad, when not intoxicated, and never noisy in their most hilarious moments; always at work, gentle, servile and peaceable, they are willing hewers of wood and drawers of water, not one iota above the mules and llamas they drive; indeed, the latter, as a rule, are better fed and more kindly treated, because of more commercial value.

Not only is this true of the peons on the great estates, but those who are free to come and go, work or starve, as they will, are slaves no less, and to more cruel masters, poverty and ignorance. As there is an educational proviso in the suffrage law of Bolivia, and as no means are provided for educating Indians, habitually forever barred from having any voice in the affairs of the land of their fathers. The ruling class, descendants of the Spanish conquerors, assert, but without truth or reason, that an Indian is incapable of education, and unfitted by nature for any higher plane in life than that he now occupies, as a mere beast of burden. The works of the Incas that still remain, magnificent temples, terraced mountains and splendid roads, effectually refute this statement, and even in these days, after three centuries, and a half of slavery, there are occasional shining examples of Indians who have struggled out of their environment, into the highest positions. The common herd, however, since the spirit of their ancestors was thoroughly broken by Pizarro and his gang, will make no protest against whatever may be put upon them; and the temptation to keep them in servitude is too great to be resisted by the lazy conquistadores, who may thus enjoy the fruits of unpaid labor. In the hands of the original owners of the soil, in the lump, as it were, and rendered them obedient to the laws of church and State, the philanthropy of the white race goes no farther.

When the Spaniards came to this continent, about three hundred and fifty years ago, they found nearly all the vast territory that is now occupied by Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile inhabited by three great tribes, the Aymaras, Quichuas and Huancas, united under the form of government. The Aymaras were the ruling race, and from their number came the Incas, or Emperors. They occupied the highlands of Peru and Bolivia and were more advanced in civilization than any of the others. The Quichuas lived along the coast; the Huancas were scattered among the mountain valleys, and the Quichuas came from the north. Quilichu was their ancient capital. Gradually the Aymaras conquered the other tribes, and their system of colonization seems to have been wiser than any that have superseded it.

According to tradition the Aymaras had existed since the beginning of the world, but were taken into barbarism, and were perpetually at war with one another, when the Sun, their tutelary divinity, sent his own children to earth to redeem and instruct them. Two son-deities came, Manco Capac and Mama-bell, his sister, who was also his wife. The island in Lake Titicaca, where they were believed to have made their first appearance, has ever since been regarded as holy, and to this day shows the remains of their most sacred temples. From this point Manco Capac traveled northward, carrying a golden staff. At a certain place the staff sank into the ground, a sign from the sun-god that there he should tarry and found a city; which was called Cuzco, and afterwards became the imperial city of the Incas. The same idea of a savior of divine parentage runs through many forms of religion. As an historical character, Manco Capac does not greatly differ from Jesus of Nazareth, Osiris of Egypt, the Scandinavian Odin, the Hindu Buddha, He was the first of a long line of kings, who gradually subdued the surrounding tribes and established sun worship, in place of what might have been the more ancient idea of a savior of divine parentage. The idea of a savior of divine parentage runs through many forms of religion. As an historical character, Manco Capac does not greatly differ from Jesus of Nazareth, Osiris of Egypt, the Scandinavian Odin, the Hindu Buddha, He was the first of a long line of kings, who gradually subdued the surrounding tribes and established sun worship, in place of what might have been the more ancient idea of a savior of divine parentage.

When their armies had conquered a province, they took the idea of the savior tribe, together with the chiefs and their families, to Cuzco, where they were treated with every mark of kindness and respect; and when the chiefs had been thoroughly instructed concerning the power of the Incas and the spirit of his regime, they were sent back to their former homes and were often restored to their official positions as representatives of the Government at Cuzco. Taxes were reduced in the conquered provinces, the poor carried on, the children, instructed in the language of the empire, and though greatest respect was shown for the more ancient forms of worship, the people were carefully taught the religion of the Incas.

To make sure that there would be no future rebellion among the conquered nation, a colony of several thousand Aymaras was sent to live among them and among many of the subjugated people were brought to the towns whence the colonists came, and then having given them all the advantages, including large tracts of land exempt from taxation, and were made to feel in every way that the transfer had been for their benefit. Thus it happens that so many Quichuas are found down here among the Aymaras and vice versa. Though living side by side for centuries, these two great nations have preserved their original distinctions, never uniting in marriage and seldom associating, and such a thing as the admixture of either race with European blood was never known. In Puno, where nine-tenths of the people are Indians, the Aymaras hold their daily market in the great square fronting the cathedral, while the Quichuas occupy another plaza for the same purpose. The former tribe, which is more numerous, inhabits the southern section of the city and the latter the northern portion. In the street where the two divisions come together, a stream runs through the center, spanned by numerous queer little arched bridges; and though the people living on the opposite sides are generally friendly with one another, they never cross the dividing line and hold no social intercourse. Says Knorr: "Only in their resistance to the Spanish conquest did they make common cause and have fought side by side in every revolt against the oppressor. Both are grave, dignified, silent and sad, and as we look at them they seem to be missing over the misfortunes of the last three centuries."

Though much alike in personal appearance, except that the Aymara men are taller and more powerful than the Quichuas, and their women are if possible taller, one can distinguish them by the two races at a glance, wherever met. "The cut of their girth," says Knorr, "the Quichua men wear very short trousers, barely reaching to the knee, ponchos, or

blankets, striped with brilliant colors, their heads thrust through a slit in the middle, and hats, if any, a great deal too small for their heads. Each woman of the tribe is always seen with a bundle at her back, made by a blanket folded in peculiar fashion, which she can carry only on her baby, but all the household goods. She is always bareheaded, her frowsy black hair braided with white strings, the latter braided together at the ends.

The male Aymaras wear very wide trousers of black woollen sail, long way up the leg, either at the back or the outer side, and underneath full drawers of coarse white cotton, which flop about his ankles as he walks. On his feet are rawhide sandals; on the oldest, the latter made of black velvet, one-shaped, with ear-laps, and a long point which dangles gracefully over his nose or bows about gayly when the wearer is on his usual dog-trot. Their women universally wear dresses of different colors, quite short and beautifully shirred from the waist down over the hips. The bodice, made separate from the skirt, is a sort of Tyrolean jacket of the same coarse blue flannel, woven by themselves, very short, low-necked and barely coming over the bosom, showing all around the white chemise beneath. They are commonly barefooted, and the ponchos of both men and women are black, a pathetic sign of mourning, it is said, worn by every member of the tribe, through all generations ever since their beloved Atahualpa, the last of the Incas, was basely murdered by Pizarro. The women's shawls are fastened at the breast with a huge pin of brass or silver, shaped like a spoon. Their hats are the oddest, the latter made of black velvet or blue flannel put on curtain-fashion over a wide platform of pasteboard extending out from the head all around like an umbrella.

There is considerable difference in the dress of the tribes of different parts of the tribe who dwell in different pueblos. For example, while many of them, both men and women, wear their long hair carefully braided in many small strands which hang straight down the back, others merely tie their locks together and make a bun at the neck without braiding; others cut the back hair but cultivate a heavy shock which falls over the eyes like a "bang," and others let it grow as nature will, without the aid of comb or scissors. There is an infinite variety of hats, too, of all most peculiar shape.

Though all these Indians are intensely Roman Catholic in religion, many of their customs and superstitions show traces of the ancient faith of their fathers. To cite a few: In the days of the Incas, whenever a poor Indian had climbed a hill, at the top of it he laid down his load, bowed low toward the east, invoked the name of Pachacamac, one of their principal deities, who was supposed to be the judge of the human race, and then he would utter the word *Apachita*, the abbreviation of a sentence signifying "I give thanks unto him, who has enabled me to endure thus far," at the same time presenting to Pachacamac an offering consisting of a hare pulled from the eye-fish, some chewed coca, a small stone or handful of earth.

To-day the traveler observes on all the roads near the summit of the cordilleras many mounds of stones or earth, the result of these offerings; and every modern Indian leaves there a similar tribute, though perhaps its significance may have changed, or the deity to whom it is addressed may bear another name.

They also have a superstition that in order to carry the same route in safety it is necessary to smear any prominent rock which has sheltered them with *shobos*, the tallow of the llama, and to throw against it ends of chewed coca. If they have no tallow they mutter an extra prayer or two, hoping that the mysterious power will excuse their poverty; but no Indian is so poor that he cannot spare a little coca. Both Quichuas and Aymaras observe this custom, and the latter set up endways pieces of slate or small stones in the crevices of the rocks on the road to prevent the exit of evil spirits.

In crossing any ridge they cast a stone upon the heap that is always to be found there, and murmur a few words, whose significance no white man understands. The ancient *shobos* and *shobos* are generally topped by a huge cross, and may be found at the summit of every hill all over the land. Not an Indian, drunk or sober, will pass one without uncovering his head and saying a prayer while making his offering; but the degree of his reverence has been disclosed, even to inquisitive priests at the confessional. There are other customs still more ancient, whose purport and history nobody knows. They are set exactly on the apex of the hills—square mounds each about six feet high and hollow inside—built of stones, well set and plastered over. Many of them have been taken down by curious people in the hope of finding buried treasure inside, funeral relics, or other traces of their original use, but nothing has ever been discovered.

Besides the gods of heaven, the ancient South Americans seem to have had a great many terrestrial deities, all of whom received sacrifices, and some were worshipped in temples. A remnant of the old faith may be found among the Indians of today, who at harvest time offer to the earth ("Mama-Pacha") an oblation of chicha and ground corn, imploring her to give them an abundant yield. After field has been planted, a cairn or altar of stones is erected in the middle, on top of which is secured a sheaf of wheat or shock of corn.

The sea, also ("Mama-Cochu"), comes in for a share of worship, and is piously invoked by those Indians who dwell near it. They believe, not without reason, that many of those diseases which are rife between the coast and the sierras come from the ocean on the wings of mist and vapor, and they implore Mama-Cochu to send them health instead.

On the banks of rivers a ceremony is still performed much like that called *mayu-willa* in the Inca worship. None of the aboriginal Incas can be traced to any place across a stream, large or small, until they have first taken a little water into the hollow of the hand and invoked the god of the river to permit them to pass in safety. Then, having drunk the water, they throw a little corn or coca into the stream. It must be remembered that there are few bridges in the country, and during a portion of every year the rivers that are now easily forded become dangerous torrents.

From time out of mind these tribes of the southern continent have regarded coca with extreme reverence, worshipping the shrub itself, and using its leaves in their religious ceremonies. The Inca priests chewed it during divine service, and it was believed that unless those worthies were well supplied with coca the favor of the gods could not be propitiated. During the 350 years that have intervened, Christianity has not been able to eradicate this deeply-rooted idolatry. To this day it is the general belief that any business undertaken without the benediction of coca leaves cannot prosper. The Indian workmen in all the mines still draw coca from the hard veins of metal, to soften the ore and lighten their labors. In every ancient grave a supply of coca leaves is found with the mummy, and the Indians of to-day put the same into the hands of their dead in order to secure for them a more favorable reception in the unknown world. Whenever a wandering Peruvian happens to fall in with a mummy, a not uncommon occurrence since the whole country is one vast cemetery, he reverently presents it with a few coca leaves, believing that the spirit which dwells about the shriveled body will report his generosity to the Lord of the Better Country.

The belief in household gods remained in full force until the conquest, and every poor hut had its lares and penates. More than 200 years after the supposed conversion of the Indians and the destruction of their idols, the Archbishop of

Lima found it necessary to indite a pastoral letter to his priests in which he recommended them to put the following questions, through the confessional, to all the Indians, and to insist upon truthful answers thereto:

"What is the name of the principal huaca (idol) which you pray in this place?"

"To what huaca do you pray for protection to the crops?"

"What hills, rocks, springs, lakes and rivers do you worship?"

"What huaca do you supplicate before going to work that the Spaniards may not ill-treat you?"

"What dead bodies of *chichus* (twins) or *chichas* (babies born feet first) do you retain in your houses, and where are they concealed?"

"It must also be inquired with tact and prudence how many children they have hidden away so that the priests may not find and baptize them."

FANNIE E. WARD.

OMENS AND PORTENTS.

Superstitious Beliefs That Hold Their Grip on the People.

"Do you hear that howling?" asks the guide in Parí, "Turkish Travels." "It is a foreboding of sudden death if a dog makes that sort of a noise under your window."

"Yes; in America it is apt to forebode the sudden death of the dog," replies the "tourist."

It is, nevertheless, a curious fact that the belief in omens retains its hold even on nations that have outgrown all other superstitions. I know an intelligent American lady who "looks out for trouble" whenever a gust of wind makes her house door rattle in a peculiar way. More than one fearless Western miner renounces the hope of the day's luck if a rabbit crosses his path in the morning.

In ultra-rationalistic France many gamblers will withdraw their bet from the number of a card that has happened to fall on the floor, or look for a change of luck if they drop a piece of money. A literary friend of mine gets nervous whenever he hears the buzz of a *muck-bly calypso*, "blue-bottle."

"Macaulay," he said, "might class me with those abject minds that are superstitious without being religious; but I can not help it. I do not even pretend to explain the coincidence, but I have noticed too often to slight the omen. Whenever I hear a specimen of those miserable insect-boom around my room, or catch sight of them in the open air, I can make my market on it that something or other is going to make that a black-list day. On days when I am especially anxious, I sometimes try to avoid, as it were, putting myself in the way of the omen, but I rarely find it of much use. I may keep indoors and close every window, but presently somebody calls to see me. 'Come quick, please,' calls out my little boy; 'our fence is down and I believe there's a cow in our orchard.' The collapse of a few fence rails seems to have been caused by last night's rain; for I can find no cow, but just before leaving the orchard I catch sight of a big blue-bottle buzzing about a heap of stale apples. 'No mortal can avoid his fate,' says Euripides, and I resign myself to the inevitable. The critical event of that day is going to turn against me."

"The danger of our latest war must be agreeably free from distressing events," I ventured to remark.

"Why, no," he laughs; "I wish they were; but that's not the way the thing works. Cold weather simply leaves me without my usual supply of rain. When it comes, but it comes unannounced—no special improvement of programme, since forewarned is often forearmed. You may suspect warm weather of affecting my brain; but in most respects I am rather anti-superstitious. I learned to laugh at such stories before I was ten years of age, and shall die without the slightest dread of ulterior calamities."

It is, indeed, remarkable how completely superstitions can be localized, to borrow a term from the *Journal des Savants*. Sailors who have homed with Turks and Buddhists will kick a cabin boy for whistling on the windward side of a dangerous reef, and Alpine guides who crack jokes about the wild huntsman and the mountain witch will lose a good job rather than start their excursion on Friday.

"One day is as good as another, if you are out all week," said a coroner's witness after the catastrophe of the Brenner Pass, "only you must not begin on the wrong day. It don't pay to no more than that, and offers are offered. After forty years' experience, I would sooner agree to start on Thursday, just before midnight and in the teeth of a storm, rather than in sunshine on Friday morning."

Not all adherents to that article of faith are equally outspoken, but the statistics of the French and Belgian railways prove that on Friday the sale of tickets falls 35 per cent. below the daily average.

The ancient record of "auspicious" and "inauspicious" days of the year, and disliked to commence an important enterprise on the anniversary of a disastrous event. "Lucky" days, on the other hand, were considered a great omen of success, an idea which the great Napoleon had firmly impressed on his veterans. December was his favorite month, and the 24 of each month his lucky day, as the 18th encouraged the troops of Santa Ana, till that notion was exploded by the battle of Cerro Gordo.

"Many citizens of St. Petersburg blame the czar for not heeding the misgivings of his wife," said a Warsaw paper, in reporting the coronation of Alexander III. "The dynasties; 'no wonder,' they whisper, 'that he came to grief by venturing out on such a twice-unlucky day as the 13th of March.'"

The "thirteen" superstition has never been clearly explained, though Esquirol plausibly traces it to the number of guests at the Lord's Supper; but the dread of March (expressed in various proverbs of Old England and Continental Europe) is almost justified by the increased mortality at a time when the disease microbes of our stuffy winter quarters ripen their germs, and the storms of the vernal equinox sweep the coast with wrecks.

For a long series of centuries the Grecian councils of war were swayed by the belief that military campaigns, as well as other enterprises involving distant journeys, should begin at or soon after the time of the moon—the notion which prevailed the Spartan auxiliaries for showing the great victory of Milidates. The same belief still prevails in Southeastern Europe and Turkish Asia, and is probably due to the circumstances that during the two weeks following the first appearance of the crescent of war were swayed by the earlier part of the night, and thus exempt hunters and travelers from the necessity of terminating a lucky day's work at sunset.

Customer—"I suppose you folks will use artificial ice this summer?" Confectioner—"No, I'll dunno. Shouldn't wonder if we sell, though. We used artificial cream all last summer and it worked all right—Philadelphia Inquirer."

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Come to think of it, how can you expect the poor to be contented, when the rich never are?—Texas Siftings.

TO THE DEATH.

DESPERATE CONFLICT BETWEEN SNAKES IN CINCINNATI.

A Rattlesnake and Copperhead Begin the Fight and Both are Killed by an Arizona Lizard's Breath.

There was an unusual scene at the Zoo, says the Cincinnati Inquirer of August 7th. It was a fight, a desperate conflict, between a fierce and vicious rattlesnake and a venomous, and perhaps more poisonous, copperhead.

It wound up with a contest with the Gila monster, who vanquished by his poisonous breath both contestants.

As is well known, all snakes during the winter season go into a state of hibernation. In other words, a skin forms over them which excludes all air, and from which in early spring, or just before the mating season, they crawl, or in country parlance, "shed their skin." Separate cages are not usually provided for the members of the snake tribe, as it is found they generally agree well together unless provoked by the pangs of hunger or irritated during the mating season, hence a copperhead and rattlesnake who all winter had lain undisturbed in opposite corners of the large glass cage of the reptile quarters were left together.

The rattlesnake shed its coat, an elegant satin white sheath, and was found dead in the cage a few weeks ago, and since then has eaten voraciously several white rats that have been put into the cage. The copperhead came quietly out of its scales Friday evening, and after his long fast moved about with considerable agility, and at last limbered the leafless tree branch that ornaments the cage, and in whose crotch a box constrictor spends most of his time sleeping off his gorges and eating organs. Some time since a venomous lizard, known as the Gila monster, and found only in the vicinity of the Gila river, Arizona, a sleepy, motionless, plethoric reptilian of the lizard tribe, who lies in the sand motionless for the most of the time, had been placed in this cage, so the fence sand and a more attractive box could be made for it.

When the keeper, at 10 o'clock, took a pink-eyed, sleek white rat and put it into the cage for the rattlesnake's dinner, he was astonished to see the copperhead glide swiftly down from its hiding place and seize the rat, and in a few moments the rattlesnake was up and darted its tongue over the rat, striking the copperhead in the neck. The rat, frightened at the music of the rattlers, or possibly touched by the rattler in going over, fled to a corner of the cage. The copperhead at once appeared to realize the situation, and winding round in a circuit, first to the right and then to the left, the rattler had time to make another spring and gave the rattler a sharp thrust in the side. The rattler felt the pain, for it was a genuine reduction sale for the next thirty days that has never been offered before on the Pacific coast. SUITS to order for \$25.00 that are worth \$50, and other goods in proportion. See windows.

Now it would retreat a few inches from them, and opening its mouth showed its sides to an enormous size and belch out its breath upon top of them. Then again getting on top of them, it would run out its fangs and bite, and lay or rasp their sides. The effect was soon to be perceived. The bodies of the snakes jerk spasmodically, as a child jumps in convulsions or a dog jumps who has been poisoned with strychnine. The rattler was on top of the fangs and bounded up and down, though still in each other's embrace, and after several convulsive jerks lay for a second or two perfectly motionless, their eyes closed.

As the rattler continued his swelling and blowing his poisonous breath upon the snakes, at every whiff of which their sinuous lengths coiled up and then straightened out spasmodically. At last they became disentangled and the copperhead lay stretched out, its body lacinated with bleeding pointed wounds no larger than pinheads, but swollen to the size of walnuts and having a dark yellowish, watery appearance. The copperhead breathed as if in death's agony and finally lay quiet and moved no more.

Not so the rattlesnake. With that peculiarity which marks the entire tribe of rattlesnakes, this fellow appeared to realize that its end was near, and raising its head, he uttered a long, low, plaintive wailing, blow after blow, quick and fast, into its own body. Its yellow belly became black and dark in spots, and at last the Gila approached to within a couple of inches of its head, and swelling twice its size opened its jaws and poured forth a blast of poisonous breath.

Slowly, like the dropping of a curtain, the eyelids of the rattler closed, its long, sinny form, blood-draggled in the sand, lay motionless. It gave one mused at the death of its body and then lay dead. The Gila wagged its tail and crawled slowly after the white rat, but the latter nimbly hopped to an opposite corner, and seemed to have no trouble in keeping out of the lizard's way. The Gila in fact, was allowed to have private quarters of its own, and it is not probable that any animal at the garden, neither the tomato-hog mandrill, nor the snoring box constrictor, nor the large jawed alligator, will wish to occupy a house where the rattlesnake and copperhead are housed together. Special attention is called to our new process corn meal and flour. Exchange sold on the original price of Europe.

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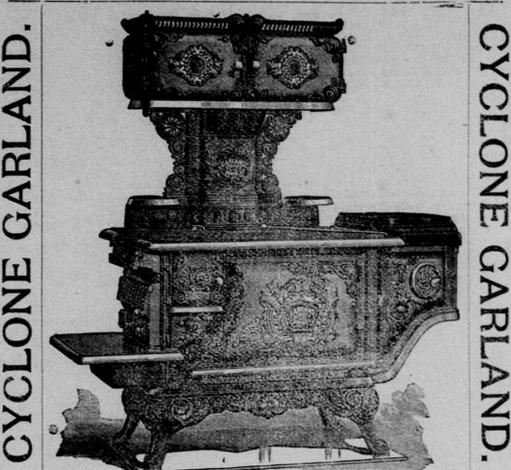
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