THE MUMMIES IN THE CATACOMBS AT GUANAJUATO

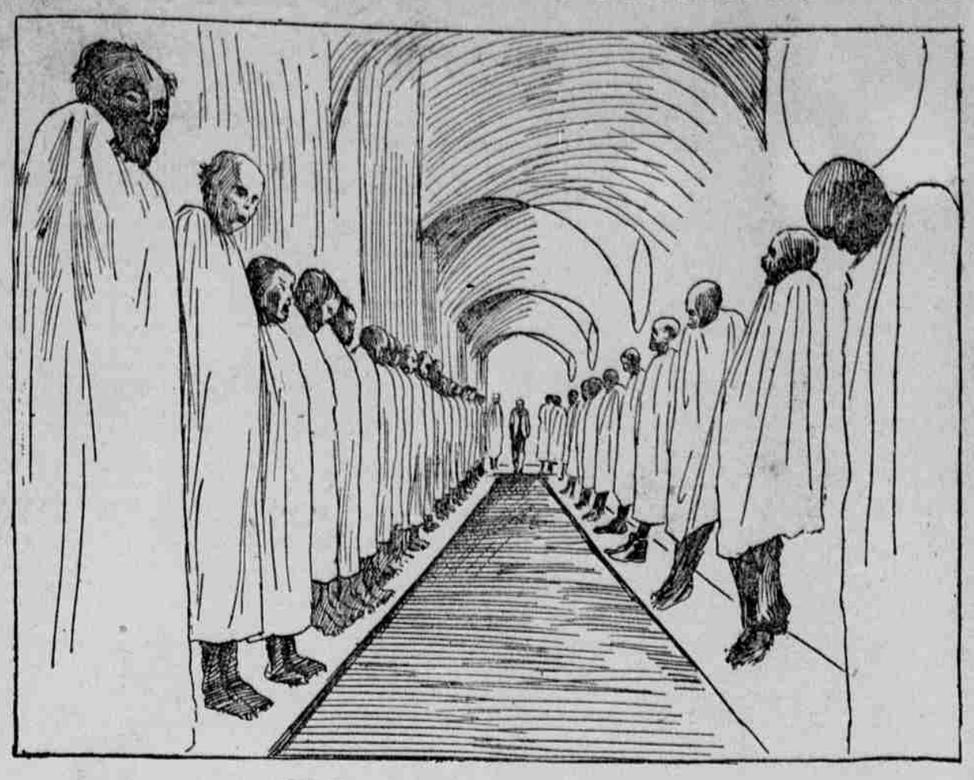
...tourists to Mexico, and especially those who are in search of the unconventional, find much to interest them in the city of Guanajuato, where is to be found one of the most complete collections of mummies in existence.

The town of Guanajuato is in the mountains sixteen miles from Silao, on the main line of the Mexican Central, which connects with the Southern Pacific at El Paso, its northern terminus being Juarez, and by way of the Mexican International, which another connection with the Sunset at Eagle Pass, through Ciudad Porfirio Diaz.

The road from Silao winds around the hills, passing adobe villages, and coming to Marfil, where there is a change of cars that go at a gallop up the barranca, passing some of the greatest silver mines of the world and the haciendas where the reduction works are located. The street, or road, along which the cars run, is crowded with people going to and from, and with burros loaded with silver ore. The peculiar houses on either side make the trip most interesting. The hills are very high and steep on both sides, and wherever there is a place big enough for a house to be cut in the rocks, a house is built, the getting up or down being a secondary consideration. The homes of the cliff dwellers dot the hills on both sides of the barranca and around the city. Within three miles of this Moorish street, there is a stop at the prettiest little plaza, planted with flowers and tropical plants. Here are the hotels and the center of the city. The end of the track is opposite a pretty little park at the head of the ravine. This is the alameda, and above it is the reservoir of the city's water supply. Water is also stored in the ravine by strong walls of stone. Here are some of the prettiest residences in Mexico, perched on the mountain side as they are; with a tower-like cliff at the back door and miniature parks at the front, with gallery and casements hung with brightest flowers.

Looking across a reservoir of clear water is a little low house of Pompeiian design with casemented windows covered with flowing vines. The gable toward the water has an old wheel window, through which the vines have climbed. On the wall stands a peacock with feathers outspread against the light background of the wall, whilst the other birds sit quietly as if posing for a picture. Some ducks sleep lazily in the water of the foreground. A bridge across the water is shaded by trees of japonica, and another tree bears bright yellow flowers. The picture is a charming one.

The Alhondiga, now a prison, but once a board of trade building, is of considerable interest from the fact that it was captured by Hidalgo during the Mexican war of independence. After his execution in Chihuahua his head was brought here and exposed on a spike. The spike is still to be seen in the old wall and a bronze statue in Hidalgo's honor has been erected in front of the building. Another structure which is of great interest to the tourist is the magnificent Teatro Juarez, built by the state at an enormous expense. It is magnificently furnished and is larger than any theater in New York city, notwithstanding which a regular theatrical entertainment has never been given on its stage since it was completed some seven years ago. Several attempts have been made to formally open it, but traveling organizations seem to fight shy of the place, perhaps on account of its inaccessibility.



Waiting for the Crack of Doom.

The Guanajuato mint is also well worth a visit. The manner of coining is the same as that of the United States mints, but the odd characters to be seen there invest it with unusual interest. One old Indian has been employed there for the past forty years. He opens the door of the furnace, dips the ladle in the molten metal and brings out exactly the required amount. It is said that he has not been absent a single day since his work began four decades ago. Two younger Indians have become, through long practice, experts in the art of detecting imperfect coins. They sit on the low stools with a pile of coins on each side, and, without even looking to see what they are doing, grasp a handful of coins and, passing them rapidly from hand to hand, detect with ease the slightest scratch or defect. These imperfect coins are thrown aside to be passed through the mill again.

The public pantheon, under which the catacombs are located, is situated on a high hill in the northwestern part of the town and is reached by the average tourist on the back of a burro. One must have a permit from the city authorities in order to pass the gates and any attempt to get by the "jefe" unless provided with a pass is sure to result in failure. The pantheon proper consists of thick walls enclosing a space of considerable extent and in which are built niches in which are deposited the coffins containing the bodies. These niches can be secured for but seven years at a time. If, at the expiration of that time, the relatives or friends of the deceased do not pay the sum required to keep the space for another term, the bodies are removed and the bones placed in the catacombs. These catacombs are some fifteen or twenty feet under ground and are reached by a narrow, winding flight of stone steps, the descent of which is not unaccompanied by dire misgivings on the part of those who do not know exactly what they are going to see.

At one end of the long hall which one enters after getting to the bottom of the well is an immense pile of human bones, which have been brought from the pantheon up above. In the opposite direction one encounters a glass door which encloses the part of the hall in which the mummies are located. They are ranged along the two sides of the hall, leaning against the walls in ghastly silence, while down at the end is one figure which seems to be watching over the others. The flesh and skin are dry and hard and black, but on the heads of some of the mummies hair is still to be found and on the faces of practically all of them the look which they probably wore when death overtook them, seems to be frozen.

On some of these horrible faces is a smile—a ghastly smile, it is true, but still a smile—while the features of some of the others are drawn and distorted as if the thing that was formerly a human being had shuddered and attempted to draw back when first it felt the chilling waters of the dark river which divided, for it, life from death.

All are draped in loose gown of some material which has originally been white, but which has now assumed a yellow, musty look as a result of the ravages of time.

Immediately at one's left as one looks down the gruesome vista is a figure, the huge frame of which proclaims it to have been a man of giant built. The third figure on the same side is that, evidently, of a woman who in life might have been the most beautiful of all the beautiful senoritas in the old town of Guanajuato in the days of long ago. Now it is but a shriveled, hard and repellant mass of bones and leather. The mouth is open, the chin dropped down, and, no matter what it might have been in the old days, it is anything but lovely now. The light grudgingly filters through the dingy glass down into the distorted face and the figure stands motionless and silent with its fellows waiting for something which no mortal mind can grasp. The silence and the musty odor is as oppressive as the sight and only those in whose make-up there is an unusual amount of morbidness would care to remain long in the catacombs under the pantheon at Guanajuato without wishing for a breadth of fresh air and a chance to see the sun again.

The feet of some of the mummies are encased in rough shoes. Of course, however, the robes and the shoes can not withstand the effect of time as do the gruesome figures themselves and as a result it is found necessary to replace the former once in a great many years. When stripped of their coverings the mummies are still more gruesome, if such a thing could be.

The catacombs from floor to dome are twenty-five feet in height, twenty feet wide and something like 1000 feet long. They and their dread contents are interesting, but the unfortunate being afflicted with nerves does not care to remain long in their gloomy musty depths.

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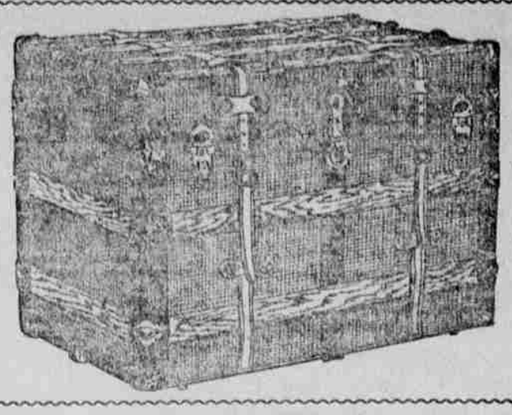

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THE IGORROTES OF LUZON.

Something About the Americans' Best Friends in the Philippines.

By Lieutenant E. P. Bujac, Thirty-third Infantry, U. S. A.

...for The Post.

Office Provost Judge, Bangried, Northern Luzon, June 20.—It may be interesting to know a little of the people in whose territory so much of the work of the Thirty-third has been done since Aguinaldo came north ahead of our column last December. Since that time he has seen "incog" passing as an Alzado (the head hunters). It was only through the Igorrote or Igorrote that Colonel Hare was informed of Aggie's being near Bolosan, the Igorrotes being the colonel's guides on his last expedition with the Thirty-third against the insurgents, and that led to the killing of Captain Pino and others, and probably the killing of Aguinaldo himself, and at least the capture by Major March (now lieutenant colonel) of all of the insurgent records, which are of great value to the army. Therefore I write of these Indians, our friends. They live between the outposts of Filipino civilization and the wild Alzado head hunters' retreats in the wooded fastnesses, the first white men that ever ventured to enter which were the Thirty-third men under Lieutenant Jackson. In this immediate, grand and beautiful portion of Northwestern Luzon the mighty mountains, over draped in misty clouds, stand as the eternal sentinels of Almighty God, and beneath their shadows flourish prosperous, fertile valleys, dotted with happy homes, filled with smiling faces and re-echoing with the laughter of the little folks, making merry during the rainy season, when the rice is kissed by the summer's sun.

Here is nature personified, and had old Ireland's poet lived amid those scenes of tranquility he would never have penned of the poem in which he says:

"Man's inhumanity to man make
Countless thousands mourn."

For the latch-string hangs on the outside of every bamboo cottage, and the traveler is invited to come "without money and without price and freely eat." These children of nature are indeed infidels, and verily they do not profess the Christian faith, but what is more beautiful than their mode of truly socialistic government. They believe in the immortality of the soul and in its transmigration. They stand for what is true, they respect all that is morally good, they delight in honoring the brave and invariably choose them as leaders. They love virtue, they revere and respect women. When one of them passes over the great divide they worship the animal into which the spirit has passed, and then burn it amid the wailing of the barrio (their village), to release the spirit. The last rites are over when they have the erection of a little stone monument, adorned with the skull of the dead animal, and upon which they place rice to feed the spirit and to be accompanying it in its long journey to the happy hunting ground. In childhood they are betrothed and grow up together, following each other daily, and their lives are so interwoven that when they reach the proper age for matrimony there is no incompatibility of temper, but they live as man and wife should, as if inspired by something that passes human knowledge to understand in these degenerate days or advanced civilization. In growing old they are as the characters in Bayne's pictures in his poem "John Anderson, My Joe John."

"We toddle down the hill together,
Yet truly, when their day and deeds are done
Down they go down to the dreamless sleep
Side by side we went over by the surviving
Spouse to the remainder of his existence, and
Then does his love falter or grow cold,
But does another win his affections,
But he lives on alone, finally joining
Her again with the loved and lost in
The happy hunting grounds, where strife
Is no more and where crystal brooks
Abound with fish and the hunter's horn
Is ever heard in the chase. Should fate
Decree the taking of the husband first,
The broken-hearted wife at once is taken
By the barrio and given a home in a
House set apart for widows. There she
Receives the kindest treatment at rough
But honest hands, that respect her and
Her condition, because she is a woman,
Unprotected, and certain death is meted
Out to any transgressor of the sacred, unwritten, but time-honored law. And these self-same infidels(?) believe in the fundamental principles of the American constitution in that "all men are born equal," yet the Christian(?) Filipino will not for a moment entertain such a belief, and refuses absolutely to acknowledge that all men have inalienable rights.

In the eyes of the average Filipino the Igorrote is a thing apart and he has no rights. Once I was dining with the padre of Dolores, and I asked him why the Christian people so looked down on the Igorrotes? His prompt reply was "they are infidels," and he was amused and surprised when I asked him if he did not consider all human beings God's children, and did not God treat all alike in sending rain and sunshine on all, and why should man on account of his being a little more fortunate place himself above God, and consider one man more than another?

"Well," he said, "these Igorrotes will not cut their hair and they will not wear clothes," but yet I say they are happy and contented. Such peace and harmony as prevails in an Igorrote settlement I have never heard of, dreamed of or seen before. These people go into the field together, plant and harvest their crops jointly, put the grain in a common granary, and each evening the women can be seen around their wooden mortars, pestles in hand, beating out rice (their principal food), enough to last the little village until the next supper time, singing, keeping time with the rise and fall of their pestles. And as one gazes off into the valleys one can see the men all coming in from work. The villages (walled barrios) are always built on a hill, always on a river and always near a fertile valley, where they terrace the mountain valley and some times fetch water for miles in ditches winding around the mountains, with bamboo viaducts over the ravines in order to get the water to a sufficient level to flow the highest rice paddy. They wear long hair, coiled upon their heads, a hat shaped like a big soup plate, with a pocket in the top for tobacco, and with a highly decorated "gee string," their costume is complete. Men and women, old and young, all smoke. The women smoke hedge cigars, or else little pipes, and it is "custumbre" (the custom), for Filipinos are the same.

Physically the Igorrotes are perfection. Their average height is five feet eight inches, and average weight 160 pounds. The women are small and very pretty and graceful.

The Igorrotes are the very best friends the Americans have on the island, the Macabebes not excepted. On May 4 I was accompanying First Lieutenant S. L. Jeffers of Arkansas on a scout in the mountains, and at Madindinoc (an Igorrote village) the enemy were in ambush awaiting us, having taken every soul out of the village, so we could get no information. But we had some Igorrote guides with us from down the valley, and they scented the insurgents, and with no arms except wooden shields, long spears and battle axes, they ran on ahead on foot, pushing us to keep up with them on horses, and at last they came running back pointing ahead, saying "Insurgentes." With their information we whipped the insurgents in their own game with forty men against their two hundred. We killed fourteen and got seven dogs, but had it not been for these friendly Indians (infidels) some of us might have been hurt.

One living in a civilized country can not imagine the impression these children of nature make on a civilized being. One must see both sides to fairly appreciate the question, "Is civilization advanced," taking true happiness and contentment as the standard.

"What the eye do not see the heart does not long for," and unfortunate indeed is he who beholds that which his heart longs for yet his purse will not afford. Of course civilization inspires action and I am for it, but the question of happiness remains and ever will.

Provost Judge.

AS TO QUACK DOCTORS.

Correspondent Suggests a Plan for Their Suppression.

To the Editor of The Post.

Meridian, Texas, September 6.—I see the physicians of Texas have suggested a bill to regulate the practice of medicine in this State, and as this county has had some recent trouble with quack doctors, medical charlatans and humbugs, a few suggestions may be in order at this time. The man who arms himself with a bogus diploma and goes to tampering with human life is a character that all good men should help suppress by the most drastic legal methods. The State can take no depositions, nor force a witness into the State to testify in any case, hence we may know a fellow has purchased a diploma in Chicago and that he is a veritable fraud. Yet the State can get no evidence and the quack walks off to brag and blow about the court sustaining his diploma as the genuine stuff. The statute says a diploma from some accredited medical college must be held and yet leaves it with no department of our State government to say what is and what is not an accredited college. Suppose we could take depositions in Chicago as to a diploma mill run there, the defense would simply object to the best physicians of said city giving their opinions as to a college being an accredited medical college, etc. Since the decision in the Oldenhoven case (56, S. W. R., page 914), the quacks have full sway in Texas. This opinion is the law and doubtless will prove a blessing in getting us a good law to regulate these evil doers and grave diggers. In view of the above my suggestion is that every physician be required to go before a medical board or leave it discretionary with the medical board after a diploma is suspected by it, as to whether the holder shall submit it to an examination; provided, all diplomas are examined by the respective boards and the result of the inspection is indorsed thereon, which indorsement shall be prima facie evidence of its sufficiency, etc. In other words, let the ban of suspicion rest on every diploma until some Texas board or department of State has put the proper indorsement thereon. This would cost each physician something, but it would weed out the fakes and lessen the number of graves.

Again it should be made a felony to use one of these bogus diplomas; for a thief to take a man's yearling is a felony and for a medical fraud to take his life ought to be a crime.

Let us make it as hot for a quack holding a bogus diploma as we have for a thief holding a bogus bill of sale.

H. S. Dillard, County Attorney.

BURNING OIL IN BRICKS.

New Plan of Keeping Warm at a Minimum of Cost.

Anatole Brebant's invention of a burning brick is singular and economical. It is composed of a mixture of metals, silicates and various other incombustible and refractory matters, which, in small space and with little weight, imprison a large amount of heat-producing matter. The brick is very porous and is used as follows: An appropriate liquid alcohol or kerosene is poured upon it, a lighted match is applied, and the result is a beautiful, hot fire. It lasts for a long time and can be extinguished readily.

After a short while the intense heat produced by the combustion of the liquid is considerably augmented by that of the metallic mass. The brick is made in two sizes. The domestic brick, for heating rooms and cooking, weighs four ounces and gives a flame of twenty by ten inches.

The million brick, for soldiers and explorers, is about double the weight of the domestic one. The brick is delivered in a tin box, in which it can be thoroughly soaked in alcohol or kerosene, and is then ready for use.

FORECASTS BY FOSTER.

A Storm Wave Predicted for This Week—Some Crop Talk.

St. Joseph, Mo., September 8.—(Copyrighted, 1900, by W. T. Foster.)—My last bulletin gave forecasts of storm wave to cross continent September 14 to 18, warm wave 13 to 17, northern frost 7 to 11.

Cool wave will cross west of Rockies about September 20, great central valleys 22, Eastern States 24.

Storm wave will reach Pacific coast about September 22, cross west of Rockies by close of 23, great central valleys 24 to 26, Eastern States 27.

Warm wave will cross west of Rockies about September 22, great central valleys 24, Eastern States 26.

Cool wave will cross west of Rockies about September 25, great central valleys 27, Eastern States 29.

About date of this bulletin a storm wave will cover the Dakotas with high temperature over the upper Mississippi valley. It will move southeast, its center probably passing near Memphis, Tenn., and through the Southern States.

About the same time a cool wave, with frosts, will cover Manitoba and will pass over Lake Superior, along the southern line of Canada and through Northern New England.

1901 CROP WEATHER.

A serious question now confronts the farmer and dealer. The surplus of corn, wheat, cotton and other cereals will not be large after the 1900 crop is gathered and garnered.

If this moderate surplus was to be bought and used by our own people there might be some question as to the public interest in large or small prices, but as it is to be sold to foreign countries high prices will be best for the general interests of our country.

This brings us to a consideration of next year's crop, without a knowledge of which we can not manage the surplus of this year's crop so as to get most out of it.

I would be pleased to hear from the farmers who have old corn to sell. The query about it is whether it will pay to sell the old corn and buy the new, supposing you could sell the one and buy the other at about the same price.

Old corn loses perhaps 10 per cent by keeping it over the second winter and new corn loses as much by shrinkage.

If farmers and country dealers should move together and sell the old corn the prices of the new would go down and they could buy the new at lower prices.

It is never advisable to sell all the surplus unless a good price is obtained and even at present fair prices for corn it is not supposed that large farmers and small dealers will sell their old corn without holding a good supply of the new over till next year's crop comes in sight.

This brings us back again to the question whether it will pay to keep old corn over the winter and on this question I want to hear from my readers.

Wheat is not bringing a good price. Less than $1 a bushel is less than fair in a country where labor, compared with other countries, is high.

Some must sell their wheat. They can not hold it because they must have the money. But there are many who do not need to sell now and they can hold their wheat till I get my calculations completed for next year's wheat crop.

It would give me great pleasure to save to the farmers 25 cents a bushel on this year's wheat crop. I am very confident that I can closely estimate the crop of 1901 and if those who hold wheat will give me a little time I will do my best for them. Meantime I would be pleased to hear from them. In the midst of council there is safety.

Cotton prices are satisfactory. The danger to planters is that the prices may go down before they get ready to sell. I know of no cause for a decline except that great speculators have immense power over prices. They usually manage to have prices low when the times comes for planters to sell. The evil can not be remedied till the planters can hold their cotton for better prices.

SCIENCE NOTES.

Very great activity is noticed in the investigations of terrestrial magnetism. No other department of scientific research has experienced so great an increase of interest in recent years. The great bed among scientists has been the star depths so far away that no practical results could be hoped for. But the earth's magnetic system is at our doors and offers great practical results to the investigator. Every interest of man is closely allied to terrestrial magnetism. The weather, health, life, vegetation, the mind and moods of men and the temper of nations are all intimately connected with the earth's magnetic currents.

A French scientist declares that great sunspots caused the recent excessive heat. Before the great sun spots were discovered these bulletins had announced the dates of the two great hot waves of July and August.

NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE.

Topics for Discussion at Forthcoming Convention.

The programme of the annual convention of the National Municipal league to be held in Milwaukee this month gives promise of a series of most interesting sessions. There is a variety of papers to be read by prominent members of the league, which will, of course, lead to general discussion and the dissemination of new thoughts and ideas that can not but prove of advantage to all those who may attend the convention.

The programme of the meeting, which will cover a period of three days, includes the following: "The Essential Elements in Good City Government," by Charles J. Bonaparte of Baltimore; "The Representation of Different City Interests in the Council," by Hon. William Dudley Foulke of Richmond, Ind.; "The Influence of Public Service Companies on City Government," by Rev. Washington Gladden, D. D., of Columbus, Ohio, who was recently elected an alderman of that city; "The Government of the City of Glasgow," by Rev. Albert Lazenby, recently of the city of Glasgow; "A Year's Municipal Development," by Clinton Rogers Woodruff of Philadelphia; "The Model Charter, a Practical Experiment of Long-tried Principles, not an Innovation;" "The Model Charter and Wisconsin Cities," by Hon. Joshua Sark, president of the Wisconsin Bar association; "Does the Model Charter Confer Dangerous Powers on the Mayor?" by Charles Richardson of Philadelphia; "The Model Charter and Small Cities," by Prof. S. E. Sparling of the University of Wisconsin, who is also an alderman of Madison; "The Growth of the Municipal Reform Idea in the West," by Dr. Amos P. Wilder of Madison, Wis. Other questions, including a discussion of the proper extent of governmental action in American municipalities, will be discussed by eminent reformers and students of municipal government.

In Hammock Time.

Within the hammock Phyllis slept
When youthful Strephon came;
With noiseless feet to her he crept
And softly called her name.

Her drooping lashes flew apart,
Her eyes, in fright, oped wide.
"Oh! my! you scared me so, my heart
Was in my mouth," she cried.

"Oh! surely not! That can not be;
You could not get at all
A jewel quite so big," said he,
"Into a place so small."

—Times and Standard.

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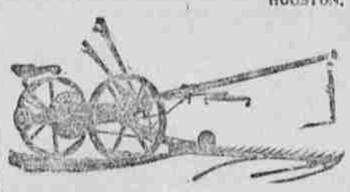

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