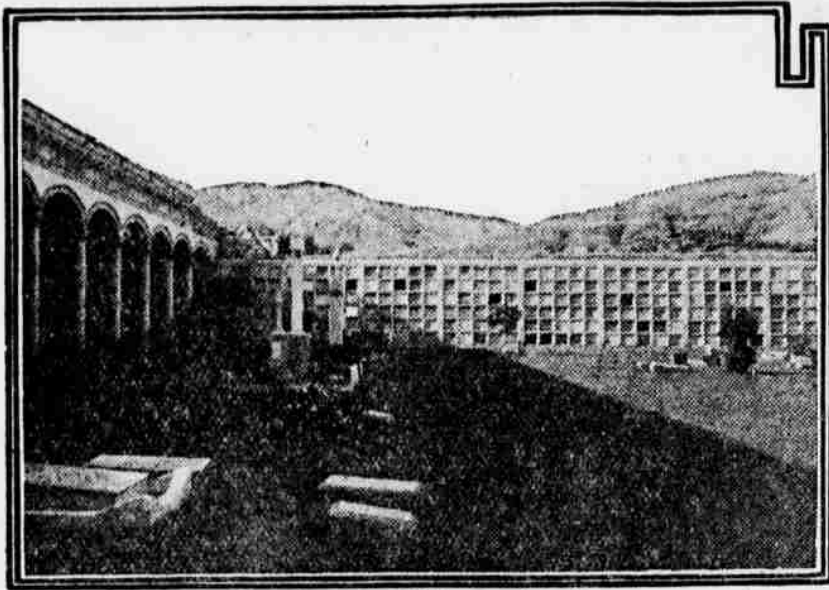


MEXICAN BURIAL CUSTOMS



Panteon at Querajato

BURIAL methods in Mexico have been subjected to a number of changes during the history of the country and, to this day, differ radically from the customs observed in English-speaking countries.

Practically all of the aborigines of the country were converted to Catholicism during the early years of the conquest. Previous to 1825, all dead were buried in the churches, for to be buried in consecrated ground was a universal desire. The floors and walls of the churches necessarily soon became honeycombed with excavations and niches in which the dead had been placed.

A charge, varying from a few dollars to thousands, according to the situation in the church, was collected for the right of burial. Proximity to the altar was most desired and the writings left by the priests tell of fabulous sums paid for certain sections in the more famous churches. The poorer classes were buried in the more distant parts of the churches, generally in a catacomb, which provided several hundred niches on each side of a long passageway or tunnel. Certain catacombs were set aside for paupers, but for the most part graves were rented for a certain period of time or for perpetuity. It was a general practice to pay for a term of five or ten years, and on the expiration of this time, when no further rental was forthcoming, the bones were moved to the charity catacomb, where they were left with the hundreds of unidentified. The grave was then re-sold.

This custom was practiced for 200 years, and only those familiar with the great number of churches existing in Mexico can imagine how the dead were buried in the limited ground inclosed within the walls of the churches. It can be said truthfully that every church in Mexico marks the burial place of thousands.

Absolute necessity caused the closing of all graves with cement, but through carelessness this was not always done properly, and early in the last century many of the epidemics which were then scouring the country were traced directly to the custom of burial in the churches. The matter was called to the attention of the authorities by the physicians of the time, and ultimately orders were issued throughout the republic prohibiting further burials in the churches. For many years the order could be enforced only partially, owing to political difficulties within the country and the refusal of the priests to comply with the order, as well as the general desire among the residents to follow the old custom of being buried in hallowed ground. According to their ideas this hallowed ground could exist only within the space inclosed by the walls of the church.

Trial by Jury.

Whence comes the system of trial by jury? In the opinion of Bourguignon, a French jurist, "its origin loses itself in the night of time." Blackstone speaks of it as "a trial that hath been used time out of mind." Reeves thinks it was introduced into England by the Normans, who themselves obtained it from northern Europe. It is certain that the Scandinavians had an established jury system more than a thousand years ago. The Normans on their arrival in England found prevailing there the ordeal of hot irons, which enforced the carrying of a pound of heated metal by the accused for a great distance, and the ordeal of hot water, in which by way of variation a stone had to be withdrawn from a pitcher of boiling water. No attempt at reform in this direction was made by William the Conqueror.

Fresh Water From the Ocean.

One of the hottest regions of the earth is along the Persian gulf, where little or no rain falls. At Barnhin the arid shore has no fresh water, yet a comparatively numerous population

Between 1830 and 1835 many portions of Mexico were visited by disastrous epidemics of smallpox and cholera, which caused the authorities throughout the country to enforce the orders in regard to the discontinuance of all burials in churches and to provide municipal burial grounds in which to inter all bodies. These municipal cemeteries were divided into four parts, in three of which the graves were rented and in the fourth part burials could be made without charge. The three parts carried individual scales of prices, but the shortest term of rental was for a space of seven years. Graves could be rented at a certain rate per each seven years, or a perpetual right would be sold at any time. Consequently the wealthier people were all buried in one division, where practically all the rights were taken for perpetuity, while in the cheaper divisions many of the rights would expire at the end of the first seven years. When the time expired and no payment was made to cover the subsequent rental, the bones were exhumed and placed on the bone pile, which was periodically burned. This plan is still continued in a few of the interior places, but since 1860 most of the larger municipalities have discontinued the practice of burning the bones.

The arrangement of the cemetery of today in Mexico follows the same plan of division, always providing one section in which no charge is made for burial. As the greater part of the population is very poor this free division forms the largest part of the burial grounds. These different divisions are separated by high walls, as is the entire cemetery separated from the surrounding grounds. The entrance is arranged in the first or highest-priced division from which gateways lead to the poorer divisions. The first division is generally made into a place of great beauty, for in addition to the decorations on the individual graves, the municipal authorities expend much time and money on the upkeep of the entire division.

The prices charged for lots vary with the town or city. In the larger cities there are often many divisions made of the first-class lots according to the desirability of their location. In this way the very wealthy may gain an exclusiveness which is often not possible in the smaller places. In some instances in Mexico City lots have sold for as high as \$20,000, yet the average first-class lot can be rented for a period of seven years for \$16, or a perpetual right can be obtained for \$150. In the second and third division, this price is greatly reduced.

Practically all of the graves taken in the first division are for perpetuity, while in the second and third, the reverse is the case. When the seven years have expired on the rented graves and no renewal has been

made, all monuments and marks are removed and the grave leveled with the ground. A record of the grave is kept, however, and when fifteen years has passed from the date of the former burial it is again rented. It is found that, by that time, all vestige of the former body has been destroyed.

In many places niches are made in the walls surrounding the cemeteries into which the bones are placed after the expiration of the seven years. By law all bodies must be interred for at least this length of time, after which the bones may be removed from the ground and placed in the niches, if the relatives so desire. Oftentimes one niche is used for an entire family. The bones are carefully removed from the grave and, after being placed in a small box or urn, they are deposited in the niche. The opening is then closed in such a way as to render the space airtight. The usual lettering is placed on the exterior, giving the name of those whose remains are within, together with the date of their birth and death, much the same as the inscriptions on tombstones.

The average rental for a niche is \$25, which pays for the perpetual use, no rentals being made on any other basis. This method is used more generally by people of the middle class who are not able to buy a perpetual right in the first division of the burying ground, but who generally rent a grave in the second or third division and at the expiration of the seven years move the remains to the niches.

In the city of Oaxaca, in the southern part of the republic, niches were built for the first time more than sixty years ago. Shortly after they had been built an epidemic of cholera made great ravages on the population. People died so rapidly that it was impossible to prepare a sufficient number of graves to bury them. In order to stamp out the pestilence by completely disposing of the remains, the bodies were placed in the niches and the opening closed and thoroughly cemented. The wall containing these niches stands today, being the western wall of the first division in the Oaxaca cemetery. Last year it was discovered that one side of this wall was sinking and a great crack had appeared, passing through some of the niches where the cholera victims had been placed. Many people were frightened lest another cholera epidemic should ensue. The authorities hastily closed the opening and consulted eminent authorities as to the possible danger that might result.

So many years had passed since the appearance of the cholera, and with the continual sunshine peculiar to Oaxaca, the wall containing the niches had been bathed in sun nearly every day for the entire period. It was the opinion of the medical authorities consulted that no better place could have been found for the cholera victims, as the germ of this disease lives only so long as moisture is available, but once thoroughly dried no danger can come from it. The sextons at the cemetery had unknowingly made the best possible disposition of the bodies and this perhaps did much toward checking the spread of the dread disease.

Appropriate.

"Youngpop is going to have his baby christened Bill."
"How strange."
"Oh, I don't know. The youngster came on the first of the month."—Puck.

Keeping Him in Ignorance.

Radical Guest—By the way, duchess, if we abolish the lords this session, won't the duke be awfully upset?
Duchess—Oh, I expect he would; but I shan't let him know, you know!—Punch.

Mute Proof.

"You need a new door mat. Your old mat is about worn out."
"A well-worn mat is the lawyer's best advertisement," responded the attorney. "Shows that a few clients are coming his way."

Anybody "Stung"?

Marion, O., sends along a peculiar story, but because of its previous good conduct, perhaps, it will pass. A sealed can of tobacco was shipped to one of Marion's big citizens, who, upon opening it, while loosening up the tobacco, found a live and thriving honey bee snugly nestling in its leaves. Fully alive to its release, however, the bee was quick to fly away into the bright sunshine, and now Marion's man of standing is wondering whether the bee was hatched in the can or was by accident imprisoned when the tobacco was packed.—New Orleans Picayune.

Red in Human Hair.

Human hair is given its red color because it has more than the usual proportion of sulphur in its composition.

The Logio Feminine.

"My dear, what would you say if I asked you if you thought me perfectly sane?"
"That you were crazy to ask me such a thing."

CORNER FOR THE JUNIORS

ANIMALS ARE EASILY MADE

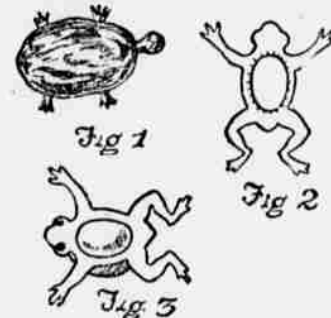
Imitations of Pretty Little Pets May Be Put Together Out of Raisins and Few Cloves.

(By MYRTLE T. IRONS.)

I know that many of my playfellows have all sorts of pretty pets—cats, dogs, birds, and many others of which they are very fond, so I am sure they will be interested in hearing how to make imitation animals out of quite simple materials.

Let us take the turtle, for instance. Get a big prune or raisin and flatten it down with your fingers. Now stick four cloves (which must also be begged from mother's pantry) in it for the legs, and another one for the head—and, hey presto! you will have a most realistic looking turtle which may be pulled along by a thread. (Fig. 1.)

A frog also is simple to make, but must be put together in a somewhat different manner. First of all cut his



Imitation Pets.

shape out of paper which has been colored a greenish grey, and paste this onto an egg shell. (Figs. 2 and 3.) The slightest breath of air will make him wriggle in a most lifelike manner.

A Lie Is Forever.

The far-reaching possibilities and consequences of a lie, are beautifully illustrated in the following story:
A little girl whom we know came in her night clothes very early to her mother one morning, saying: "Which is worse, to tell a lie or steal?"
The mother, taken by surprise, replied that both were so bad she couldn't tell which was the worse.
"Well," said the little one, "I've been thinking a good deal about it, and I've concluded it's worse to lie than to steal. If you steal a thing, you can take it back, unless you've eaten it; and if you've eaten it, you can pay for it. But—and there was a look of awe in the little face—"a lie is forever."

The Cucumber in the Bottle.

"When I was a little boy," remarked an old gentleman, "somebody gave me a cucumber in a bottle. The neck of the bottle was small, and the cucumber so large that it wasn't possible for it to pass through it, and I was greatly puzzled to know how it got there. But one in the garden one day I came upon a bottle slipped over a little green fellow that was still on the vine, and then I understood it all. The cucumber had grown in the bottle. I often see men with habits that I wonder any strong, sensible man could form; and then I think that likely they grew into them when they were young, and cannot slip out of them now; they are the cucumber. Look out for the bottle, my boys."

Tinderbox Still Used.

Matches have not yet displaced the tinderbox in certain rural district of Spain and Italy.

BOBBY'S POCKET.

Our Bobby is a little boy of six years old or so;
And every kind of rubbish in his pocket he will stow.

One day he thought he'd empty it (so he again could stock it);
And here's an alphabet of what was found in Bobby's pocket.

A was a rosy Apple, with some bites out here and there;
B was a bouncing rubber Ball that bounded in the air.

C was a crispy, crusty Cake, with citron on the top;
D was a dancing Donkey that could jump around and hop.

E was a little robin's Egg, all speckled blue and brown;
F was a fluffy Feather that was white and soft as down.

G was a lively Grasshopper, whose legs and wings were green;
H was a grimy Handkerchief that once perhaps was clean.

I was a plaster Image that had lost its plaster head;
J was a jolly Jumping Jack all painted blue and red.

K was a keen and shining Knife, 'twould cut the toughest bark;
L was a little wooden Lion, strayed out of Noah's Ark.

M was a Marble, large and round, with colors bright and clear;
N was a bent and rusty Nail, of little use, I fear.

O was a tiny Oil Can, which was always upside down;
P was a Penny Bob had saved to spend some day in town.

Q was a quilted ear tab, which had lost its velvet mat;
R was a Ring with glassy gems of wondrous size and weight.

S was a String, a piece of Soap, a Stone, a Sponge, a Stick;
T was a lump of Taffy, exceeding soft and thick.

U, an umbrella handle of silver-mounted horn;
V was a comic Valentine, a little creased and worn.

W was some sticky Wax, lovely to pinch and mould;
X was an old Xpress, worn out in every fold.

Y was a lot of Yellow Yarn, all bunched up like a mop;
Z was a jagged piece of Zinc, found in a plumber's shop.

All these are Bob's possessions; he loves each single thing;
And owning all these treasures he's as happy as a King!
—Carolyn Wells, in Little Folks.

MAGIC SQUARE IS CURIOUS

Columns, Perpendicular, Horizontal or Diagonal, All Add Up 369—Another Peculiarity.

Here is a curious magic square, the columns of which—horizontal, perpendicular and diagonal—all add up 369.

43	84	26	18	1	74	86	28	50
52	44	36	19	11	8	75	68	60
62	54	37	20	21	13	5	78	70
72	55	47	39	31	23	15	7	80
78	65	67	40	41	33	25	17	9
2	75	67	59	51	43	35	27	10
12	4	77	60	61	53	45	37	20
22	14	6	79	71	63	55	47	38
82	24	16	8	81	64	56	48	40

Curious Magic Square.

but which has the further peculiarity that all of the odd numbers are placed within the inscribed diagonal squares.

The Girl Beat.

At a county fair held in Massachusetts, a prize of \$25 was offered to the victor in a pony race. Nine boys and one girl entered for the event, and the girl came out so far ahead that some of the boys rode off the grounds in disgust. Perhaps we may see the day when a girl will beat a boy throwing stones at a mark or outrunning him in a foot race.

THE TROUT-FLYER.

THE TROUT-FLYER IS NOT A BIRD IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING YOU'VE HEARD. HE NEVER BITES A FISH - OH NO! THAT METHOD IS TOO COARSE AND SLOW. BUT WHEN THE FISH BITES HIM THEN HE HOOKS IT SCI-EN-TIF-IC-AL-LY HE IS A MEAN DECEITFUL THING - THAT'S WHY THEY KEEP HIM ON A STRING.

