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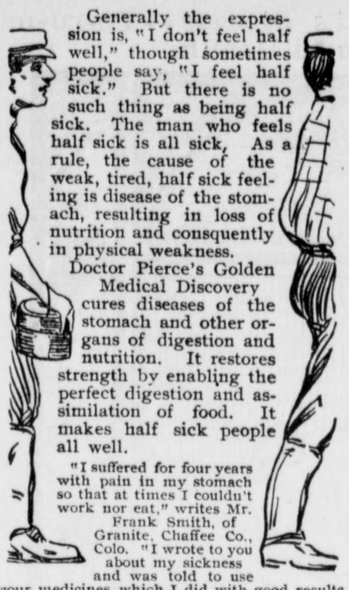

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OLD CITY OF MEXICO

CURIOUS LEGENDS THAT FLOURISH IN THE ANCIENT TOWN.

Its Picturesque Streets, With Their Quaint Customs and Traditions and Singular Names—The Story of the Street of the Raven.

Every old city has its legends, its stories, its peculiar customs and its characteristic quarters. Of all the cities in the new world, Mexico has clustered within it more of legend, history, tradition and quaint customs and people than any other. Almost every street has its story, and these stories cover all the gamut of the picturesque, the horrible, the sentimental and the pathetic.

In its early history the City of Mexico was divided into wards, or quarters, each one of which was the special home of some trade or profession. There was the street or quarter of the shoemakers, the streets of the silversmiths, of the bakers, of the saddle makers, of the butchers, of the watchmakers, of the silk merchants, of the wine sellers and so on. There was even the street of the coffin makers. Many of these old names still exist, though the caste-like character of the streets has somewhat changed. One of the most fashionable streets of the city is Plateros, the street of the silversmiths. Even today there are more jewelry shops on this street than any other kind of business, and here still are to be found the most fashionable jewelry and art curio stores of the city.

The street of the coffin makers still exists and is now very appropriately known as the Street of Death. It is a narrow lane, running the length of only one block.

Cinco de Mayo (5th of May) street was named in commemoration of the decisive advantage gained by Mexican troops over the French, which took place upon that date. This naming of streets, parks and public places after dates is common in Spanish countries.

One end of Cinco de Mayo street enters the Zocalo, the principal square of the city. The Zocalo has seen many historic happenings. There in olden times was the great temple of the Aztecs, which was, with its accompanying base or pyramid, larger than St. Peter's at Rome, the largest church building in the world. There, too, was the palace of Montezuma, in fact, two palaces, both noted, one the old, in which were quartered Cortez and his officers, a building whose vast size excited the admiration of even the Spaniards themselves, used as they were to the vast structures of the Moors of their day, which still existed in Spain in all their splendor.

On the Zocalo, too, is the Cathedral of Mexico, the third largest church building in the world, which occupied 100 years in building. On this public square the common people believed for a long time that the ghost of the unfortunate Aztec emperor, Montezuma, wandered at night lamenting the loss of empire and the destruction of his people. Even today the humbler folk believe that a tunnel connects the cathedral with the castle of Chapultepec, the presidential residence, three and a half miles away, at the end of the Paseo de la Reforma, one of the finest and noblest public drives in the world.

One of the historic streets of Mexico is Mariscala. This faces the north side of the Alameda, the largest and most fashionable park of the city. It was along this street that the army of Cortez, the great conqueror of Mexico, passed on the "dismal night" when he was driven from the city by the Aztecs. On this street, too, occurred some of the most desperate fighting on that terrible night. There the Spaniards were able to do nothing against the tiger-like ferocity and fanaticism of the Aztecs.

On the opposite side of the Alameda is Avenida Juarez, named after the great Mexican reformer, who had freed the country from the grinding rule of the church. This is a wide, well paved street and on account of its width and its central location is the scene of all the public processions, especially those of a civic character. This street is a continuation of the great public drive, the Paseo de la Reforma.

Many of the streets have very curious names. For instance, there are the Street of the Lost Child, the Street of Peace, the Street of the Arts, that of the Wood Owls, the Deer, Sorrow, the Sad Indian, the Holy Ghost, of Christ, of Jesus, of the Sanctified Virgin, of the Purified Virgin, of Death and the Lane of the Rat. All of these have stories connected with them. Many of the streets have names that sound impious to northern ears. But there is no more thought of impiety in naming them than there is in calling a boy Jesus. The Street of the Holy Ghost was originally the Street of the Church of the Holy Ghost. So on with the other streets bearing sacred names. This curious, incongruous use of sacred names is to be frequently noted in Mexico.

The streets of Mexico commemorate the names of many famous rulers. They also record the names of desperate characters. There is the Street of Don Juan Manuel, who committed murder in defense of his own honor, which he believed his wife had trifled with. Report says that the house where he lived was haunted and for very many years it remained empty because no one dared to live in it.

There is also the Street of the Raven, where it is said there lived an old man who had sold his soul to the devil. Here he lived with a raven which the common people believed was the devil in disguise. One day the old man and the bird disappeared in the course of a terrible thunderstorm, leaving behind them only a few feathers and a suspicious smell of brimstone. So the street was called after the raven because the people did not wish to take the name of the devil in vain.—Modern Mexico.

VIRTUE OF WATER.

Good Thing to Use In Keeping the Stomach Clean.

The habits of people in general do not seem so bad when one considers the average individual's limitations as to knowledge and thought. The fact is that most people don't know, don't think and hence don't care. Let them read more science, think more sensibly and act more seriously, then their habits will be more satisfactory.

The alimentary receptacle, the stomach or vat in which foods and liquids are received and mixed, is habitually converted by many persons into a chemical retort for all sorts of drugs and remedies with the view of reaching and relieving the ills of the various organs of the body, from dandruff to corns. The writer believes that he can give no more and better reasons for his confidence in the therapeutic value of remedies than most other physicians, but he wishes to emphasize here the transcendent element of common sense in their administration. Before and above all things, however, what is wanted is a clean gastro intestinal canal, and his claim is that water properly used is the best agent to effect that cleansing. On a par with this canal in importance are the eliminative tissues and organs of the system—the kidneys, mucous membrane and skin. What therapeutic agent properly used is better than water? After all the assimilative and eliminative organs and tissues have been thoroughly rinsed with pure, soft water then, if it be still necessary to administer a chemical agent, one may be selected that will, with these organs and tissues in better condition, work wonders. If you are so foolish as to allow yourself to become foul from head to foot, cleanse yourself with water before resorting to chemical aids.—Health.

FANCIES OF STUDENTS.

The Young Medico Who Thought He Was Doomed to Paralysis.

"For the first year or two a man studies medicine," said a young physician, "he has every disease he learns about. In my day we had a man among us who felt sure he was going to be paralyzed. He was healthy as the next man, but that seemed to him to make his disease more insidious. He used to sit with his legs crossed and hit his knee to see if his reflexes were all right. Every time he failed to hit the right spot he would look down at his motionless foot and say:

"'Boys, this is awful.'

"He used to stand up, put his heels together and shut his eyes to see if he'd stagger. And he always declared he did, and then he'd look green around the gills and sigh till even the fellow who knew he had heart disease got tired of it. Paralysis and nothing but paralysis was on the man's mind, and he reckoned on being stricken at any time. When he was in his room he wore a pair of slippers—the kind you can walk into without stooping—and it was his habit to leave things just wherever he happened to step out of them. One night when he had gone to bed somewhat the worse for the evening's merriment two of us who roomed next door stepped in and tacked his slippers to the floor. About 8 o'clock next morning we were startled by a blood curdling yell from him. We rushed in. There he stood, just as he had stepped out of bed, his feet in his slippers. He pointed to them with a trembling finger and then turned toward us a face of utter despair.

"'Boys,' said he thickly, 'boys, look at my feet. I can't move them. I can't walk a step. Oh, Lord, it has come at last!'"—London Tit-Bits.

An Irish Answer.

The London Chronicle tells a story of an incident in a Donegal village showing the friendly Irish habit of giving a pleasing answer in preference to the bald truth. "I want some peppermint lozenges," said the Saxon visitor, coming straight to the point. "Sure ye do," smiled the Irish shopman, keeping off it. "How much are they?" pursued the Saxon as the man did not move. "And isn't it two ounces a penny they are?" answered the Irishman, still without moving. "Well, have you got any?" persisted his customer impatiently. "Sure, not any at all!" said the Irishman, coming reluctantly to the point, with his sweetest smile of all.

Care of the Cat.

Don't feed meat to cats when they are kittens; it gives them fits. Don't give them cold milk; just lukewarm is the right temperature. Don't give them chunks of raw meat; cook it a little and cut it up rather small. Don't forget to have a dish of fresh, clean water convenient for them; cats suffer often for cool drinks. Don't, if you buy meat for them, "iver and alwis" buy liver, as they get tired of it, and it is not the healthiest diet in the world. Don't forget that a bit of fresh fish is welcome. —Good Housekeeping.

The Injuries Enumerated.

Casey—Shure, they do be tellin' me that Big Moike Monohan wor knocked down be an autymobile yisterday. Wor there any bones broke, I dunno?

Conley—Troth an' there wor. The owner av the divil wagon got his nose broke, the chawfer got his jaw broke, an' Big Moike broke the sicond knuckle av his roight fisht.—Puck.

Sarcastic.

"Would you marry a Chinaman?" he asked.

"Oh, dear," the girl, who is sarcastic, replied, "this is so sudden! But I always supposed you merely looked like one."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Light itself is a great corrective. A thousand wrongs and abuses that are grown in darkness disappear like owls and bats before the light of day.

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Fall and Winter Schedule.

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Steamer B. S. FORD.

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Leave Centreville Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 8 A. M., stopping at the landings on the Corsica river, Queenstown, Jackson Creek and Rock Hall.

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Leave Baltimore 3 P. M. Leave Rock Hall 5.15 P. M.

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