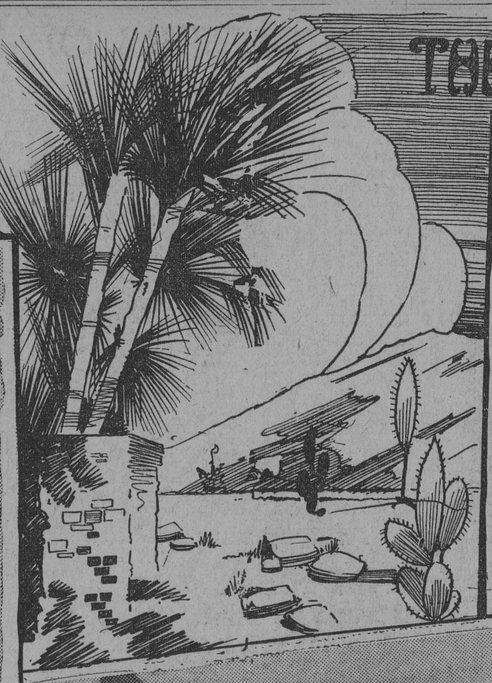
BULL FIGHTING

THE FAVORITE SPORT OF THE MEXICANS

If one may judge a people by their sports, perhaps no surprise will be occasioned over the low valuation apparantly attached to human life in Mexico when there is realized the pleasure Mexicans find in the brutal and bloody sport of bullfighting. Following is a description of scenes witnessed at a bullfight some time ago and reveals the men, women and children of Mexico taking the keenest delight in a spectacle which to Americans would be shocking and revolting.



BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

I SAW five magnificent bulls and eight horses tortured to death amid the clapping and shouting of 15,000 Mexican spectators. The bull fight was held in the Plaza de Toros, within a rifle shot of Chapultepec, and within an equal distance of the mighty cathedral of Mexico City, the largest house of worship on the North American Continent. This bull ring is the biggest of its kind, and with its seats rising in concentric circles from the arena in which the fighting goes on it reminds one of the amphitheaters of old Rome. Altogether it covers acres, and its seating capacity is just about one-fourth that of the Coliseum and 7,000 greater than that of the largest bull circus of Spain. The bull ring is built of American steel and it cost $700,000. It is the best patronized of all the places of amusement of the Mexican capital, and today its box receipts must have been at least $25,000. I am told that the holiday fights often net $30,000, and that the city levies a tax of 15 per cent. upon all that comes in.

Fifteen Thousand Wild Mexicans.

At the fight there were at least 15,000 spectators. The amphitheater was filled from the ring to the roof, and that with a more enthusiastic audience than you will find at a championship American baseball game. The people went wild and almost every man, woman and child acted the part of a "fan."

I took good note of the audience. It consisted of people of all ages and sexes. I saw boys of six and girls of ten beautifully dressed who shrieked their applause as the horns of the bull gored deep into the horses. I saw delicate young ladies in new gowns from Paris who broke their white kid gloves in clapping, and gaily dressed dudes who fairly burst their spat-covered patent leather shoes as they stamped in response to the death stroke of the matador. There were also thousands of the common masses of Mexico, ranging from the Indian in his sandals and blanket to the well-dressed member of the chamber of deputies and from wrinkled old women in black shawls to juicy young maids in mantillas, all forming, as it were, a great human flower garden rising from the arena to the top seats near the skies.

In addition to the spectators were the city officials, on hand to direct the fighting and give the signals to start. There was a brass band which burst forth in triumphal marches from time to time as the fighting went on, and there was a company of soldiers with rifles and bayonets ready to shoot at a signal if any sign of revolution or disorder broke out.

I sat in the shade and my place on the steps cost me $4. The fights always take place in the afternoon, when the sun is declining, so that one-half of the seats are in the shade and the other in the full glare of the tropical sun. the shady seats are reserved and the sunny ones correspond to the bleachers of our baseball stands. Some of the box seats are equal in price to those of our grand opera.

A Horrible Spectacle.

Further on I give you some notes of the bull fighting as I whispered them into the ear of my stenographer as the scenes went on in the arena below me. The show was a horrible one, but I give it as an evidence of one phase of the character of this Mexican people. It was as disgusting as any of the massacres which occurred in the public shows during the days of Caligula and Nero on the banks of the Tiber, and, nevertheless, the young girls waved their handkerchiefs and clapped just as the Roman girls turned down their thumbs and thus consigned their heroes to the teeth of the lions.

Some of the worst features were the torturing of the bull into killing the horses. The picadors, or gaily dressed men upon horseback, rode in with great lances which they thrust at the bull, and now and then drove into his shoulders. They rode scrawny street car steeds, and these were actually ripped to shreds by the horns of the bull. At times the horses would be wounded almost to death. They had been gored again and again, but they would be spurred and whipped to their feet and made to continue until they were finally killed.

These poor horses were blindfolded as to one eye with a band of red flannel, the other eye being kept turned away from the bull, so that it could not see the enraged beast which came with head down on the run and thrust in its horns to the roots. At one time the bull gored a picador, thrusting a horn into a soft but unmentionable part of his body, and it was only by throwing a red blanket over the animal's eyes that the man could be dragged out.

Pictures From the Bull Ring.

But take a seat beside me in the bull ring, and let us once for all see this amusement which is the favorite of all among the Mexican people. I have described the amphitheater. We are sitting close to the officials, between the ranks of the armed soldiers, and about a half dozen rows above the arena. The band is over there at the right. It has just burst forth in a triumphal march. The bullfighters are coming. Some are on foot and some are on horseback. The alguicilas, or police officers of the ring, are on capering stallions, and the plumes of their hats wave as they prance around the arena. Those horses are different from the ones the picadors will ride during the fighting. Behind come the matadors, or bullfighters proper, three walking abreast. They are gorgeous in gold lace, gold braid and silk tights. They have cloaks over their shoulders, and make one think of the knights of the stage. They are the stars, and the audience clap their hands in salute.

And then come the banderilleros, with their barbed arrows, and finally the picadors in their broad-brimmed hats, short velvet jackets and breeches of light yellow leather. They have gay scarfs about their waists, frilled shirt fronts and gold waistcoats.

This procession is ended by the ring servants, sometimes called the wise monkeys, who attend to the horses and clean up the ring after the fight, and after them are the mule teams, gayly caparisoned, which, three abreast, drag the dead bulls and dead horses away at the end of each act.

"SOMETIMES FIRE-CRACKERS ARE ATTACHED TO THE BARBS."

Enter the Bull.

This procession goes round while the band plays, and as the music stops the bull fighters and torturers have taken their places. Then the drum beats and a trumpet sounds. Every eye is turned toward that door in the walls of the ring. See, it has opened, and the bull rushes through! As he does so a man leans over and drives into his shoulders, up to the hilt, a dagger from which flutter bright-colored ribbons.

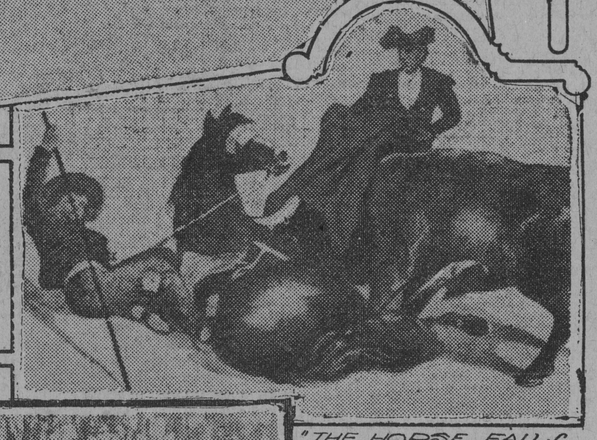
The bull snorts with rage. He paws the sand of the arena, and then, seeing the matador waving a red blanket, he goes on the rush, with head down, to wipe them from the face of the earth. The matador leaps off to the one side and the head of the bull is lost in the blanket. The beast now catches sight of another man with a purple shawl and rushes for him. He runs this way and that, his tormentors leaping out of the way, or, if crowded too closely, jumping over the walls into the space which runs between the ring and the seats. Now the bull stops a moment and one of the picadors rides gaily toward him, pointing his lance. The bull rush es at the horse and drives his horns into its side. The horse falls; its bowels gush out and the picador narrowly escapes by crawling over the fence.

Now the bull sees a second horse on the opposite side of the ring and rushes for it. It carries the animal to the ground and then goes for the picador. See, the great black beast is goring him! He has torn a piece from his thigh and the man only escapes by the matador throwing his blanket over the eyes of the bull, and some of the other bullfighters drag the wounded man to the wall.

As this is done the band plays again. There is a blast at every new rush of the bull, and the music keeps time to the fight. After a time the bull tires. He is desperate at his failures to kill his tormentors. He is now further enraged by the banderilleros, of whom there are three. Each is armed with two sticks of ash about a yard long and tipped at the end with steel barbs. These barbs are much like harpoons or fish hooks, each being attached to a long shaft, decorated with bright-colored paper.

"THE COMES A TEAM OF THREE WHITE MULES IN GAY TRAPPINGS TO DRAG OUT THE BULL."

"THE BULL-FIGHT WAS HELD IN THE PLAZA DE TOROS"



"THE HORSE FALLS AND THE PICADOR NARROWLY ESCAPES."

Exquisite Torture.

The banderilleros stand in front of the bull and taunt him with their harpoons. As he rushes at them they jump this way and that, and, watching their chance, thrust the barbs deep into his shoulders, only the shaft sticking out. These shafts bob this way and that as the animal runs, and as they do so the blood flows down his shoulders and makes great red blotches which extend to his feet.

Each man does his work, and at the end there are finally six of these terrible shafts torturing the bull at every motion he makes. Sometimes, to make him more angry and increase the pain, firecrackers or explosives of one kind or other are affixed to the barbs, so that they burst and burn inside the flesh and a mist of smoke and blood rises.

But let us stop now and look at the crowd. The walls of humanity which rise up from the arena are alive with enthusiasm and shouting. Thousands of handkerchiefs are waved, and the clapping and stamping and cheering go on. As the barbed shafts are thrown the band plays, and as the enraged and tortured animal again rushes after his prey the shouting increases. This goes on for ten minutes, and then the bull seems to tire.

GIVING THE DEATH THRUST. "THIS IS THE CRITICAL TIME OF THE FIGHT."

Giving the Death Thrust.

It is now time for the final thrust, and the audience howls for the matador. This is the star actor, who is to drive his sword into the bull and give the death thrust.

This is the critical time of the fight, and the audience almost pants with excitement. The matador teases the bull and tries to get him in just the position where he can drive his sword between the shoulders, right to the heart. He plays with him, getting him to rush this way and that, and finally he points the sword at the level of his shoulder and aims by running his eye along the blade at the point he wishes to strike in the bull's neck. He tries this again and again. He is evidently afraid, and the audience jeers at him as he tries to stab the bull and fails.

He now takes a new sword, and this time he succeeds in driving it into the hilt. Nevertheless, the bull charges again. He has a yard of steel through his body, but he makes one final effort to charge his tormentors, only to stagger and fall. As he does so the band bursts forth once more and the audience cheers.

Then in comes a team of three white mules in gay trappings. They are harnessed to the horns of the dead bull and they drag him out on the run while the band plays and the audience cheers.

This, in brief, is the sport which I saw repeated again and again in six long acts in one afternoon. Each act resulted in the killing of a magnificent bull and two horses, after torture of the most brutal nature. Nevertheless, the men who did the killing were heroes in the eyes of the audience, and the more brutal their actions the greater the cheering.

Spain's Favorite Sport.

Bullfighting is the favorite sport of the Spaniards and the Spanish-Americans. You will find bull rings in nearly all of the Mexican cities. There is a big one at Lima, Peru, and others at the various South American capitals. In Spain, Madrid has a building which will seat 13,000, Valencia has one which seats over 16,000, while one at Murcia has seats for 17,500.

The bull fight came here from Spain. It was common there about 800 years ago, having been brought in by the Moors. The first bull fighters were aristocrats, and it is said that 10 knights lost their lives at a Spanish bull fighting festival just about 20 years after Columbus first came to this part of the world. As time went on the sport increased in popularity, and that notwithstanding that Pope Pius V. threatened to excommunicate all princes who permitted bull fighters within their dominions. As time went on, the sport passed from the hands of the aristocrats into those of professionals, and modern bull fighting is now everywhere done by professionals. The best fighters still come from Spain, and the city of Seville has bred the most noted. I have a statement before me that says that 90 per cent. of all the Spanish bull fighters come from Seville and which cites Pedro Romero as the greatest of all. He was in the ring for more than 30 years, and died at the age of 85, having slain over 5,000 bulls. I am told that the average yearly kill of a crack matador is 100 bulls or more.

Where the Bulls Come From.

The best of these fighting bulls are bred for the purpose. They are as carefully matched as the animals on our American stock farms, and there are certain breeds which command the highest of prices. The best come from Spain, and a good one will bring $500 American money. In addition to this is the cost of transportation, so that a Spanish bull costs $600 or more by the time it reaches Mexico City. It then has to be rested for several months before it can be brought into the ring, and at the same time every effort made to keep it vicious and easily angered. As to the Mexican-bred bulls, there are certain haciendas which make a specialty of producing them, but the Spanish-bred bulls are the fiercest and best.

Next to bullfighting the favorite amusement of the Mexicans is cockfighting. It is the most common sport upon feast days and saint days, and at the towns where special festivals are held cocks are shipped in by the thousands. The best breeds of birds are well known and good fighters will sell for $12 or $15 apiece, while a cock with a record will easily bring $25. Some of the best cocks come from crosses of the United States game birds with Japanese hens.

Training Game Roosters.

These fighting cocks are cared for like race horses. They are exercised and trained for the fray. They are kept clean and are given special kinds of feed which are supposed to increase the fighting spirit.

Before they enter a fight they are stripped for the battle. Each cock has had its feathers plucked from its back, neck and legs, so that it looks pitiably cold. Its neck and head are bare and its red ears shine out of the baldness. The feathers are picked out one by one from time to time, so as not to injure the cock, and after this the flesh of the chicken is toughened by massaging it, the flesh and skin being pinched and squeezed until it is all muscle and gristle. The taking out of the feathers is necessary, because when fighting the cocks catch hold of each other's feathers with their bills and, thus holding them, spur them to death.

Fighting With Steel Gaffs.

The most of the fighting here is done with gaffs, or spurs made of steel. These are knife blades three or four inches long, strapped to the ankle with a piece of soft leather. These knives are as sharp as razors, and a single blow often causes death. In the fight the cocks are made to peck at each other, and when they are sufficiently angry they are set down and go at it. Before doing this the backers fill their mouths with brandy and blow it out in a spray over the heads, wings and tails of the fowls. This burns and stimulates them. In fighting the cocks fence for position like prize fighters, sparring and parrying. After a time they begin to jump at each other, each endeavoring to stab the other with his steel spurs. They are urged on by their backers, and are kept fighting, round after round, until one or the other is dead.

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Dogs Bring High Prices In Alaska

MISS EMMA LEONIDAS KELLY, the first white woman to go down the Yukon, has qualified by many strenuous experiences in Alaska to be considered an authority on the dog teams of that country. The native animals are the malamute, the huskie and the Siwash.

The first comes from the coast of Bering Sea and is a cross between the Russian terrier and the Siwash. He is small, weighing 60 to 75 pounds and has shaggy hair which makes him look twice his real size. Under this is a coat of short warm fur that protects him in the most severe weather.

The huskie comes from the McKenzie River, is a large gray dog weighing from 125 to 160 pounds and is covered with short, stubby fur, with an undercoat of thick fur. They can stand more hardships and go without food longer than any other dog in the North.

The Siwish dogs, which are in the majority, are a cross between a wolf and a dog, and usually gray or white in color, but occasionally black. Their weight is from 50 to 90 pounds. They rarely sleep under shelter, preferring to curl up in the snow even with the mercury 60 degrees below zero.

In this respect the native animals are better fitted for their work than the immigrant dogs, says Miss Kelly in Country life in America. In severe weather the latter wear little moccasins made of heavy moose skin, while nature has provided the native dogs with heavy fur covering the whole foot, even between the toes.

The sleds in general use are 7 feet long, 17 inches wide and 7 inches high, and an immense load of freight can be packed and lashed on them. The sled is guided in the trail by a pole, known as the G pole.

The dogs are hitched about six feet ahead of the sled, and the driver walks back of them, holding on to the G pole to keep the heavily loaded sled straight in the narrow trail, so that it will not tip over on the rough, sidling places.

In case the sled is not heavily loaded the dogs are hooked up close to the sled and the driver rides a greater part of the time—that is, if the weather is not too cold, in which case he prefers running to keep warm.

On the creek beds there is often from one to five inches of water, and it is always a difficult matter to make the dogs go through this. They dislike getting their feet wet, but they must keep the trail and pull through it.

Immediately after getting out of the water it begins to form in little ice balls between their toes, and the whole team of dogs will lie down on the trail in their harness and go to picking and cleaning their feet, which are rarely ever sore or froezn unless they have been in water several hours.

From the last snow in the spring until the first in the fall the dogs have but little to do. At the trading posts—Dawson, Circle City, Fairbanks, Eagle, Minook—and a number of other camps where they have fair streets or roads the dogs are used to draw light freight about in little two-wheeled carts, and they are used in the mines and on the trails for packing. The pack-saddles are made of heavy canvas and the average dog will pack 30 or 40 pounds.

Some dogs will lie down in the mud or water with their packs on, while others seem to feel the responsibility of protecting their packs and are exceedingly careful in picking their way through thick brush or over fallen trees that obstruct the trail, leaping over pools of mud and picking their footing with great care on the small rocks in fording the streams. They rarely bark.

The dogs are fed once a day when working; the best feed is the Yukon dried salmon, but failing this bacon has proved the best substitute. It is cut in small pieces and boiled in a quantity of water an hour or more, and then flour, cornmeal, rice or rolled oats is added and cooked well in the greasy water until the whole becomes a thin, smooth mush. Each dog has his own pan and it is filled with the food and carefully guarded by its owner until cool and then eagerly devoured.

The native dogs will steal anything they can eat; in the absence of something more tempting they dote on ropes, harness, old rubber boots, moccasins and snowshoes or anything of the like nature which they can chew on. The Siwash dogs have the same characteristics as the Indians of the country; they are the most ungrateful creatures in the world and their nature is absolutely void of attachment or sentiment. The Siwash, both Indian and dog, care for one only as long as he feeds them.

A good team of three, four or five dogs with a light load will average 40 miles a day. The same team when heavily loaded cannot make over two and a half or three miles an hour. However, there is a vast difference in the gait of dogs; some are very speedy and have great endurance, while others are fast at the start, but soon play out and become extremely slow.

There are a number of foreign dogs in the country—St. Bernard, Newfoundland and a heterogeneous multitude of others. As they are far more intelligent than the native dog, they are apt and amenable to discipline, and, as a rule, are faithful in the harness, while the ungrateful native dog will shirk at every possible opportunity, and occasionally a good lashing is necessary to keep his memory alive to the fact of obedience; encouraging words do not have the force with the native that they do with the dogs of civilization. But it is impossible for the immigrant dogs to endure the hardships of this rigorous climate for any length of time.

My noble dog Baldie was one of the finest specimens of canine flesh I have ever known.

This powerful dog took me from my cabin in the mines into Circle City—the 65 miles in one day; of course, the trail was in excellent condition, and there was nothing on the sled with me but my robes. I ran occasionally to get warm, and walked up the inclines, but rode nearly all the way. Of course, he couldn't cover this distance daily, but he could make it once or twice a week, and 40 to 45 miles on a good trail was an easy average for him.

He was much too fast for a team and would always be ahead pulling the other dogs along. He was considered the fastest dog in that part of Alaska. He had a very peculiar gait—not the trot of most dogs, but a pace or rack. He weighed 165 pounds, and was all bone and muscle. On the summer trail he could carry 50 pounds in his pack saddle. I paid $700 for him, but all the gold of Alaska could not have purchased him from me.

The price of Alaskan dogs is governed by the number of stampedes during a winter, which creates a great demand for dog teams with which to reach new gold fields at an early date. At such times teams of three or four dogs have brought as high as $1,800 or $2,000, where their usual price would be about $700 or $800.

End of Pennsylvania Lumber Town.

[Warren Cor. Philadelphia Inquirer.]

Loleta, a prosperous town with a post-office, stores an dover a hundred dwellings, will soon be wiped off the map and the once busy village will be but a memory.

This is a fate that befalls all lumber towns, but Loleta, situated in the very heart of an immense tract of timber, lasted for years and put on quite an air of solidity. Loleta is one of the very few lumber towns left in this state and next Wednesday the last of the logs at the mill here will be sawed. The last log will be cut up with much ceremony and many of the residents of Loleta are planning to secure bits of boards of this log and have souvenirs made for themselves. The big mill and the hundred or so people who have lived at Loleta for years will now be moved to Bear Creek, near Ridgeway, where a big tract of virgin timber is being thrown open.

We Must Send Them Out To Play

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

NOW much there is need of doing must not be done in haste,
But slowly and with patience, as a jungle is changed to a town.
But listen, my Brothers, listen; it is not always so.
When a murderer's hand is lifted to kill, there is no time to waste;
And the way to change his purpose is first to knock him down
And teach him the law of kindness after you give him the blow.

The acorn you plant in the morning will not give shade at noon;
And the thornless cactus must be bred by year on year of toil.
Bust listen, my Brothers, listen; it is not ever the way.
For the roots of the poison ivy plant you cannot pull too soon;
If you would better your garden, and make the most of your soil,
Hurry and dig up the evil things, and cast them out today.

The ancient sin of the nations no law can ever efface;
We must wait for the mothers of men to grow and give clean souls to their sons.
But listen, my Brothers, listen; when a child cries out in pain
We must rise from the banquet board and go, though the host is saying grace;
We must rise and find the Herod of Greed who is killing our little ones;
Nor even go back to the banquet until the monster is slain.

The strong man waits for justice with lifted soul and eyes,
As a sturdy oak will face the storm and does not break or bow,
But listen, my Brothers, listen; the child is a child for a day;
If a merciless foot treads down each shoot, how can the forest rise?
We are robbing the race when we rob a child; we must rescue the children NOW;
We must rescue the little slaves of Greed and send them out to play.

Courtship As Practiced In Spain

SPAIN might be termed the land of deliberation, for nothing—especially in the case of courtship and marriage—is done in haste. Indeed, in the country towns of Andalusia a sudden marriage creates great surprise, for, as a Spanish writer says, "there is nothing in which procrastination is carried so far in Andalusia as in the matter of engagements," says a writer in the London Standard.

The Andalusian peasant considers well the step he is about to take, and this consideration is a very pleasant way of killing time, and time is of but little value in the south of Spain. It is quite a common thing for a man to be engaged ten years. There is also a monetary consideration to be taken into account, the marriage fee in Spain being a high one—namely, $7 or $8.

Before coming into the house of his fiancee a man has to ask permission of the father to be his daughter's lover. If he gives it a party is given to celebrate the engagement, at which they drink aguardiente, etc., and eat cakes. Girls are never allowed to walk out with their lovers. No kissing is permitted between them. When a girl is asked why she says: "We do not belong to our lovers; if we quarreled he could not say that my lips had ever been his."

This comes partly from pride and partly from a wish not to be depreciated in the matrimonial market, as lovers in Spain often prove fickle. A girl I know had been engaged five years when her lover jilted her. Six months later she became engaged again. You see she had only chatted with her former lover, so her matrimonial chances were quite as good as before she was engaged at all.

Courtship is so public in Spain that there cannot be any difficulty in getting evidence for a breach of promise. A peasant who is sued for breach of promise and who has resided in the same province as his fiancee has to pay so much for every year that he has been engaged to her. Nearly all of the peasants are illiterate and have to get friends to write their love letters for them.

Although they do not kiss each other, they put x's and o's in their letters, the latter signifying embraces! When a girl first writes to her lover she only addresses him as, "My appreciated John;" she does not think it at all correct to put "My dear John," unless they have been engaged a very long time.

In these days engaged couples belonging to the upper classes see a good deal of each other. They meet at mass in the morning, chat together during the hour of siesta, see each other in the afternoon during the promenade, go to the same party in the evening, and after supper see each other and "chat together at the window; and there are nights when they remain once more chatting together, their faces pressed to the bars, until the rosy-fingered dawn appears in the east."

It is related that a lover getting married after an engagement of eight years soon afterward fell into low spirits from not knowing what to do with his time!

In olden days, however, according to Hernando Cortez, Spanish girls were kept almost as secluded and guarded as carefully as the ladies in the harem of a Turk. Therefore, when a young man fell in love, instead of ringing the doorbell and sending in his card, he often made a rope ladder and surveyed the residence of the young lady with a view to ascertaining the best mode of getting upon her balcony or into her window.

A peasant girl's fiance always buys the furniture, but the girl's family often takes care of it, which is some guarantee that the marriage will take place. The girls often spend more than two years making their house linen and trousseaux.

Spanish men of the lower class do not make good husbands; perhaps this is why girls appear to care more for their mothers than their husbands. The devotion of daughters to their mothers is very great. Indeed, to be a Spanish mother is to be much adored. I know a girl who was greatly exasperated with her lover because when he wrote to her he was always quoting his mother. The girl satirically said: "It was always 'Mi madre, mi madre!'"

The houses of the Spanish poor are nearly always built round large patios in which there is a well that has to serve for as many as 20 families. Some of these patios are very pleasant, being decorated with plants and shaded in summer by large vines. The houses are very small, consisting of one little room and a tiny kitchen. So as there is not much housework to be done, nor much housekeeping, it is no wonder peasant girls are anxious to exchange domestic service for matrimony, and become rather aggravated with their lovers' deliberation.

If a girl is engaged to a man who emigrates so as to make a home for her before going out to join him she is married by proxy. The girls, however, do not like the now very prevalent custom of emigrating, for owing to it they often lose their lovers. The English proverb that "absence makes the heart grow fonder" does not always prove true as regards the Spaniard. He will, indeed, ask his fiancee to write to him, but she will often refuse to do so if she believes his temperament a fickle one, preferring the chance of a new lover in her own neighborhood to an uncertain one at a distance.

Function of the Ironist.

[From the Atlantic Monthly.]

The ironist is a person who counts in the world. He has all sorts of unexpected effects on both the people he goes with and himself. His is an insistent personality; he is as troublesome as a missionary. And he is a missionary; for, his own purpose being a comprehension of his fellows' souls, he makes them conscious of their own souls. He is a hard man; he will take nothing on reputation; he will guarantee for himself the qualities of things. He will not accept the vouchers of the world that a man is wise, or clever, or sincere, behind the impenetrable veil of his face. He must probe until he elicits the evidence of personality, until he gets at the peculiar quality which distinguishes that individual soul. For the ironist is, after all, a connoisseur in personality, and if his conversation partakes too often of the character of cross-examination, it is only as a lover of the beautiful, a possessor of taste, that he inquires. He does not want to see people squirm, but he does want to see whether they are alive or not. If he pricks too hard, it is not from malice, but merely from error in his estimation of the toughness of their skins. What people are inside is the most interesting question in the world to the ironist. And, in finding out, he stirs them up. Many a petty, doubting spirit does he challenge and bully into a sort of self-respect. And many a bag-of-wind does he puncture.

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