

MONTAZUMA'S DAUGHTER.

A correspondent sends from the City of Mexico a translation of an article in *The Mexican Daily El Tiempo*, which explains itself—

The most innocent creatures are occasionally the cause of the bitterest disputes. Such is the case with the inoffensive mummies in our National Museum. Their origin is being discussed just now away on the banks of the Thames, as may be seen from the following two letters, copies of which we owe to the kindness of their authors—

Mexican Seminary, Feb. 14, 1894.
Sr. Don Jose Agreda, Librarian of the National Museum:

Dear Sir,—A novel by Mr. Rider Haggard, with the title "Montazuma's Daughter," has been published recently in London, and in it much capital has been made of the alleged entombing of nuns alive. The author, in justification of his bold assertion, makes the following marginal note:—

"In the museum at Mexico I myself saw the dried-up body of a young woman which had been found buried in the wall of a convent. By the side of this body is that of a child. Of the kind of death which befell this unfortunate there can be no doubt, since, aside from other proofs, we can still see distinctly the traces of the rope that fastened her limbs when alive."

The above observations by Mr. Haggard have given rise to a hot controversy in the London press, in the course of which the novelist has published the following particulars:—(1) That it was in the walls of a nunnery of this city that the remains in question were found entombed; (2) that the traces of the rope, intrinsic proof of the burial alive, are on the ankles; (3) that besides the remains of the above young woman, those of another, without a child, are to be seen in the museum of Mexico, and this one, too, had been buried alive in a convent. As you will understand, Sr. Agreda, this matter of the burial of nuns alive is of great interest for the history of Mexico, and if in the museum exist the authentic proofs which are cited the matter would be definitely solved. Accordingly I hope you will kindly let me know:—

(a) If there is any printed catalogue, for public use, of the objects kept in the museum.

(b) What is known of the origin of these mummies, and, in particular, if they show traces of ropes having been fastened them.

Thanking you in anticipation of your kindness,
Manuel Sole.

National Museum, Feb. 28, 1894.
Sr. Prof. Manuel Sole:

Dear Sir,—Thanking you for the desire you express for exact particulars regarding certain mummies that are kept in one of the departments of the establishment, I beg, as Librarian, and with the authorization of the Director, to submit the following:—

In the National Museum there is no printed catalogue for the public, as the one which was made in 1882, of only the collections of natural history and archaeology, was completely exhausted, and in the whole establishment there remain only such lists as are to be met with in vol. 2 of the Museum Annals, and in these the mummies do not appear. Two or more catalogues have been made by foreigners, but without aid from any of the employees of the establishment, and without the sanction of the Director. Consequently, as they were made by persons probably unskilled and without the information relating to the objects, they deserve no confidence.

There are four mummies in the National Museum, and they are on view in the anthropological section. Two are of adults and two are of children. Of the two first, one is that of a woman. It was taken from one of

the tombs of the burial vault (pantheon) of Nuestra Señora de los Angeles, and the chaplain said it was the body of Sr. D. Luz Urbina, a person whom he had known and ministered to. It has long hair, which shows that the lady was not a nun, but a secular, since the nuns did not wear their hair long, but always had it cut very short. On the ankles there are traces of bands, but there is nothing extraordinary in this, since with some bodies they fasten the feet together and also the arms. I myself have often seen it done. It has over its head a card which runs—"Human body mummified naturally; Pantheon of Los Angeles, Mexico."

The other large mummy is that of a man. His name is not known, and it is believed he was taken from the same burial vault, or from those of Campo Florido, or from those of San Diego. The card which is suspended over him reads:

"Human body mummified naturally, Mexico."

The two children mummies have no relation whatever to the larger ones. They were taken from different tombs in the vaults and brought to the tombs at different times, and if they were placed in the same cases as the larger ones, it was because there was no other convenient place for them.

As regards the burying alive, I may say that in this country such a punishment was never employed, either by the inquisition, the regular clergy or the nuns. In the convents of both sexes were cells, so arranged as in no way to injure the health of the persons confined in them. They had light more than sufficient for reading, writing and performing the canonical service, a bed in which to sleep, a table for meals, writing, etc. On holy days permission was given to go out and attend Mass, and also, on the special saint's day of the convent, and on the others of the order, to take part with the rest in the solemn services.

In the beginning of the year 1861 great outcry was made in this city over some mummies that had been found in the Convent of Santo Domingo. Every effort was made to prove that they were victims of the monks or of the inquisition, and a foreigner named Campi bought some from the Government and took them out of the country, with a view of speculating on them in connection with these false ideas. The mummies were those of monks who had died in the convent, as their clothes, shaven crown, etc., showed, they had been so well preserved because the tombs were very dry. They were not found in the walls, but in the burial pit of the convent, where I myself had seen them several times previously.

Some five or six years ago a mummy was exhibited in the United States, which was said to be that of P. Nicolas de Segura, a victim of the inquisition of Mexico. This priest, Provost of the Jesuit College, died there on March 8, 1749, at the hands of a layman of the same community, named Villasevor, as may be gathered from the report of the judicial trial which followed, and which report I have in my possession. He had never been punished by the inquisition, never having given occasion. His body, mummified naturally, on account of the dryness of the place, has always been kept and still is in the same tomb in which it was placed since the above date. I myself in company with two other persons saw it only two or three years ago.

I trust the above will be sufficient for the good purpose you have in view. Ever at your service,

JOSE MARIA DE AGREDA
of Snachez.

Sr. P. Sole did well in consulting Sr. Agreda as to the origin of the mummies preserved in our National Museum. It would be difficult to find a more learned and authoritative anti-

quarian in ecclesiastical matters. It is true that at first sight the subject scarcely deserves the trouble of such consultation. To whom amongst us did it ever occur or who has ever said that these mummies were those of nuns buried alive? But the story has circulated widely abroad; and it was necessary to contradict it, with full and authoritative testimony. We know well who is the author of these and other falsehoods. He is a reverend living here in Mexico, whom we hope, God willing, to expose to the extreme of ridicule. This gentleman must know that truth cannot be outraged with impunity, and that in its defence we shall rally now and always, as Catholics and Mexicans.—*Globe*.

Called by the Dead.

A peculiar incident in the life of Rev. Thomas J. Barry, rector of St. Ann's Catholic church, has been brought to mind through the story published recently of the death in Washington of Father Walters, says a Philadelphia exchange. The event referred to occurred when Father Barry was rector of the Church of Our Lady of Visitation, at Lehigh avenue and Leamy street.

One stormy night after Father Barry had retired he was awakened by his housekeeper, who said she had heard the bell in the sanctuary ringing. He told her she must have been dreaming, but she stoutly denied this and bade him listen. Sure enough, they soon heard the bell ring, as if by a person in great haste. Father Barry, however, thought there were burglars in the church, and, dressing hastily, he took a light and boldly entered the building.

What was his surprise to see kneeling before the altar two small, poorly clad children, their faces wet with tears, who seemed to have been praying. When asked what they were doing there at such an unearthly hour, they replied that their father was dying in the Episcopal hospital, and that they had come for the father to administer the last sacrament.

Father Barry took the father's name and went in haste to the hospital. When he explained his errand the superintendent expressed great surprise. He said that there was a man dying in the hospital by the name Father Barry mentioned, but that no one had been sent for the priest. The priest was taken to the side of a cot on which lay a man with a wan, wasted face.

"Who are you?" demanded the man in a weak voice, as the priest approached him.

"I am a priest. Did you not send for me a few moments ago?"

"You are mistaken," the man whispered; "I did not send for you—I have no one to send—I am all alone in the world—I am dying."

"That is strange," replied the priest, "for I found two children in the church. They had rung the bell, and they told me that their father lay here dying and gave me your name."

"Is it possible?" gasped the man, springing up in bed. "Two children, did you say? What did they look like?"

Their appearance was described in a few words, and as the man listened his head dropped upon his bosom. Tears poured down his eyes, and he tried to speak. At last, with a great effort, he cried:

"They were my children—the children I buried—come back from heaven to help save my soul." With this he fell back dead.

If you desire a beautiful complexion, abso- lutely free from pimples and blotches, purify your blood by the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla. Remove the cause of these disfigurements and the skin will take care of itself. Be sure you get Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

Remember, O man, to what a dignity the Lord raised thee when He created thee—thy body to the image of His Divine Son, and thy soul to His own likeness.

Things We Owe to Catholics.

Our Cathedrals, and the knowledge how to restore these buildings to their pristine splendor when not architecture only, but sculpture and painting also, lavished their wondrous skill upon the houses of God; we may also owe to them, if we will, the devoted hosts of worshippers, who ought to be constantly seen in them, rich and poor, nobles and laborers, indiscriminately mingled together, all touchingly acknowledging a common origin and end.

The cultivation of the love of music among the people by familiarizing them with it through all the services, processions and festivals of the Church; and to them we owe a better state of feeling than that which has often allowed the musical performance of our Cathedral choir to be mutilated on the paltriest ground.

Our drama, which sprung out of the early Church mysteries, would not be amiss if we were to owe to them a somewhat loftier notion than at present prevails of the objects that theatrical representation should aim at.

The revival of learning, and in a great degree our grammar schools, and to them we may owe the multitudes of students that ought to be able to flock them, as of old, when Oxford University alone is said to have had its 30,000 scholars.

Many a noble work of charity that still here and there stud the country over, the relics merely of a scheme of benevolence, unrivaled for magnificence and completeness, and to them, again we may owe the right principles of dealing with the poor—principles which can make a bad system to some extent good, but the absence of which must leave the best system worthless; in a word, we owe, or may owe to them, a sympathy with the poor that must exhibit itself in practical efforts for them.

Lastly, we owe to them an unending debt of gratitude for their services in the cause of literature and science. For ages who but the monks and friars were the literary and scientific laborers of England?—its poets, its historians, its botanists, its physicians, its educators? Where, but in the libraries of the monasteries, were the collections of the accumulated wisdom of ages to be found each day by holding additions to the store, through the labors of the scribes of the scriptorium. And when at last printing came to revolutionize the entire world of knowledge, who but the monks themselves of Westminster and St. Alban's was it that welcomed the new and glorious thing in the most cordial spirit, providing at once for the art and its disciples a home.—*Sacred Heart Review*.

A dispatch from Bombay says that the daubing of trees is extending. Cases of this peculiar marking which caused considerable apprehension in India and in England, some people going so far as to say that it foreboded another mutiny in India, have been reported from South Behar and Allahabad. The tree marking in some places has assumed the form of a piece of bark cut out of the tree.

A MAN MADE HAPPY.—GENTLEMEN—For five years I had been a great sufferer with Dyspepsia; the pain in the pit of my stomach was almost unbearable and life only seemed a drag to me. When I would go to sleep I would have horrible dreams, and my life became very miserable, as there was no rest neither day or night. But with the use of only two bottles of Northrop & Lyman's VEGETABLE DISCOVERY this unhappy state has all been changed and I am a well man. I can assure you, my case was a bad one, and I send you this that it may be the means of convincing others of the wonderful curative qualities possessed by this medicine, that are specially adapted for the cure of Dyspepsia. A lady customer of mine had the Dyspepsia very bad; she could scarcely eat anything, and was troubled with pains similar to those I suffered with; and she cured herself with two bottles of Northrop & Lyman's VEGETABLE DISCOVERY. I wish you success with your medicine, as I am fully convinced that it will do all you claim for it. Signed, MELVILLE B. MARSH, Abercorn, P. Q. General Merchant.