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CHARTER OAK WAGONS,  
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BUGGIES AND WAGONS,  
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**GREAT SPEAR HEAD CONTEST.**

**CHIEF**

**SPEAR HEAD**

**AND**

**SAVE THE TAGS.**

One Hundred and Seventy-Three Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars,  
**\$173,250.00**

In valuable Presents to be Given Away in Return for  
**SPEAR HEAD TAGS.**

1,155 STEM WINDING ELGIN GOLD WATCHES.....	\$34,650 00
5,775 FINE IMPORTED FRENCH OPERA GLASSES, MOROCCO BODY, BLACK ENAMEL TRIMMINGS, GUARANTEED ACHROMATIC.....	28,875 00
23,100 IMPORTED GERMAN BUCKHORN HANDLE, FOUR BLADED POCKET KNIVES.....	23,100 00
115,500 ROLLED GOLD WATCH CHARM ROTARY TELESCOPE TOOTH PICKS.....	57,750 00
115,500 LARGE PICTURES (14x22 inches) IN ELEVEN COLORS, for framing, no advertising on them.....	28,875 00
<b>261,030 PRIZES, AMOUNTING TO.....</b>	<b>\$173,250 00</b>

The above articles will be distributed, by counties, among parties who chew SPEAR HEAD Plug Tobacco, and return to us the **TIN TAGS** taken therefrom.

We will distribute 226 of these prizes in this county as follows:

To THE PARTY sending us the greatest number of SPEAR HEAD TAGS from this county we will give..... 1 GOLD WATCH.

To the FIVE PARTIES sending us the next greatest number of SPEAR HEAD TAGS, we will give to each, 1 OPERA GLASS..... 5 OPERA GLASSES.

To the TWENTY PARTIES sending us the next greatest number of SPEAR HEAD TAGS, we will give to each 1 POCKET KNIFE..... 20 POCKET KNIVES.

To the ONE HUNDRED PARTIES sending us the next greatest number of SPEAR HEAD TAGS, we will give to each 1 ROLLED GOLD WATCH CHARM TOOTH PICK..... 100 TOOTH PICKS.

To the ONE HUNDRED PARTIES sending us the next greatest number of SPEAR HEAD TAGS, we will give to each 1 LARGE PICTURE IN ELEVEN COLORS..... 100 PICTURES.

Total Number of Prizes for this County, 226.

CAUTION.—No Tags will be received before January 1st, 1904, nor after February 1st, 1904. Each package containing tags must be marked plainly with Name of Sender, Town, County, State, and Number of Tags in each package. All charges on packages must be prepaid.

READ.—SPEAR HEAD possesses more qualities of intrinsic value than any other plug tobacco produced. It is the sweetest, the toughest, the richest. SPEAR HEAD is absolutely, positively and disinterestedly different in flavor from any other plug tobacco. A trial will convince the most skeptical of this fact. It is the largest seller of any similar shape and style on earth, which proves that it has caught the popular taste and pleases the people. Try it, and participate in the contest for prizes. See that a **TIN TAG** is on every 10 cent piece of SPEAR HEAD you buy. Send in the tags, no matter how small the quantity.

Very sincerely,  
THE F. J. SORG COMPANY, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO.

A list of the people obtaining these prizes in this county will be published in this paper immediately after February 1st, 1904.

DON'T SEND ANY TAGS BEFORE JANUARY 1, 1904.

**THE APOLOGY.**

Hide not if here you haply find  
The rough romance of country loves;  
I sing the love of the brook and wind  
The green below, the blue above.

Here shall you read of spreading grass,  
The velvet of the sparrow's neck;  
Sometimes shall glance the glowing trees,  
And Laura's snow without a speck.

The crab that sets the mouth awry,  
The chestnut with its domes of pink,  
The splendid palace of the sky,  
The pool where drowsy cattle drink.

The stack where Colin hides to catch  
The milkmaid with her beaded load;  
The singing lark, a poet's match,  
That travels up the great blue road;

The cherry whence the blackbird bold  
Steals ruby mouthfuls at his ease,  
The glory of laboring gold,  
The valiant piping of the breeze—

All, all are here. The rustic Muse  
Shall sing the pansy and the thrush.  
Ah, hide not if she sometimes choose  
The country love, the country blush!

—N. R. Gale.

**THE BLACK PEARL.**

The harbor of Acapulco is an ideal one for shelter, and after the steamer is once at anchor it is a source of mystery to the passengers who have not been on deck how she ever entered the quiet little bay. The high, blue mountains in the background, the tall palms and tropical green down to the water's edge, along the shore the tiled and thatched houses—among the oldest on the coast—and on the rising ground to the right the ancient fort and military prison—all these make a sight that fills a lover of the picturesque with enthusiasm.

The waters about the steamer are thick with the boats and dugouts of the bumboat women and dirty native boys peddling fruit, shells, pearls and a world of indescribables, all keeping up a constant din of jabbering jargon, that, with the hundreds of half naked natives passing from the ship to the lighters discharging cargo, makes an exciting scene, in sharp contrast to the peaceful outlook on the shore beyond.

From the ship the city seems but a collection of small adobe, scattered here and there along the hillsides, with an occasional long, low white building in view. But no sooner has the traveler passed the gates of the custom house than a little city of 12,000 inhabitants lies before him under the shelter of the hill, with thriving stores thronged with dark eyed señoritas and men in white linen or bespangled velvet, many of the latter with the flaming serape hanging over the shoulder.

Edmund Warren represented an American house. He had taken the place of the traveler who for years had made the annual visit to the Mexican seaports. He had never seen Acapulco before, nor had Henry Sanford, who accompanied him on this trip. They had only just landed and become settled in the miserable excuse for a hotel in time to enjoy a delicious comida, when they felt an impulse to join the throngs which filled the clean paved streets as evening came and night soon followed the footsteps of the sultry day.

Passing down the street leading by the stores, the market and the plaza, just back of the custom house, a small space under sheltering palms opened to view, where night after night the lower classes assembled to watch the fandango. The crowd of dark skinned men and women, all dressed in the garb of the locality, stood out in the dim light of the long torches planted here and there among the throng, like ghosts of departed señoritas and caballeros. All were watching the couples dancing the monotonous clog quadrille on the low platform to the music of drum, tambourine and guitar. With hands on hips and heads thrown back, the dancers faced each other on the boards arms' length apart, and the constant stamping of little feet and the changing from side to side was kept up until all were exhausted and others took their places.

The Americans had mingled with the throng about the dancers, watching alternately the platform and the groups of girls about. Soon soft eyes had discovered the strangers, and coquettish glances went out from beneath long lashes. Warren was never happy unless in love and in love with every pretty face that came across his path. His heart beat faster as he caught the glances shot at himself and Henry, and he nearly pinched the latter's arm off as a smile came from a dark eyed beauty on the edge of the throng.

"Gad, Henry! Such eyes! Did you ever see their like?" he exclaimed. "I must see where she lives. Are you with me?" and he rubbed his hands in anticipation of an adventure. Henry was quite as ready for a lark as his companion.

Ten o'clock. The dancing was over, and the crowd scattered through the dark streets.

"You had better look out for that tall Mexican with your beauty, Ned. He may stick a knife into us," cautioned Henry.

"Nonsense. Come on," was the other's rejoinder.

They did not notice the native police, not uniformed, but armed, following some distance behind as the Americans dogged the footsteps of the first conquest of the amorous Warren, nor did they know their custom of "running in" the foreigner on any pretext whatever for the revenue of the paltry fine. Muriella Narvaez knew full well that her new admirers were close behind, and so did her tall lover. He bade her good night as Warren and Sanford passed, and went back toward the plaza. If the Americans could have heard his consultation with Old China, the bumboat woman and character of Acapulco, they might even now be back in their native city.

The young men retraced their steps and found the olive skinned beauty still in the door. They saluted. The bow was returned.

"Adelante, señors," a pretty voice said, and they accepted with alacrity the invitation to enter. Candles burned dimly in a corner filled with bottles—mescal aguardiente and aquila. Several other girls, quite as pretty as the captor of Warren's transitory affections, were

seated about, some on stools and some on a low couch in the corner. Two had guitars.

"Here's luck, Henry," whispered Warren, and they were soon quite at home in the little white adobe, though to Henry there seemed something uncanny about the place. To the Americans, used to the luxurious fittings of a metropolitan home, the bare walls and dirt floors, covered with palm patates, were a new experience.

While laughter and song came from the little house, and the Americans were whispering love nothings in the ears of newly found amoureaux, in another house not far from the water more serious words were passing between Old China and the tall lover of Muriella. The old dealer in green coconuts and occult mysteries was listening with ill-concealed pleasure to the man who was begging a favor at her hands. No love scrape about the shores of that pretty bay ever escaped her notice, and nothing pleased the stout old bumboat woman so much as to be sought out by the amoureaux of the upper classes to listen to such information from her lips as is sought from the "second sight" mediums of our own country.

"So you want to buy the Black Pearl? To buy it! You fool!" shrieked Old China when the Mexican had finished his story. "What do you know about it?"

"I know what was said when the commandants was found dead, and that the police were afraid to search for it. Five hundred pesos for its use tonight—that is all I ask."

"The police are fools, and you are a fool. I know nothing about the Black Pearl."

"Come, China. A thousand pesos for its use and the knowledge how to use it."

"A thousand pesos," muttered the old woman. "Have you the money with you?"

"Aye, that I have, and I want its use for only this one night."

China waddled into an adjoining room, whence after much delay she brought forth a package carefully wrapped and sealed. "You must not undo this, señor," she said, "or you, too, will suffer if you see the pearl."

The laughter and song in the adobe casta stopped at a knock on the outer door, and Ned Warren's pretty Acapulcan answered the summons. A neat parcel was handed her by the messenger, which she eagerly unfolded. "With the compliments of —," it said, but she knew the handwriting.

"How funny at this hour!" she thought, but her snapping black eyes danced with glee as she undid the parcel and found it to contain an immense black pearl set in beaten yellow metal of quaint workmanship. At her exclamation of delight the others grouped about, and the object of their admiring glances was laid upon the table for inspection.

An instinctive shudder passed through Sanford as Muriella laid it under the candle light. It seemed to emit a peculiar light, and a queer, pricking sensation went through his veins as he viewed the jewel—the largest of its kind he had ever seen. As he looked a feeling of exhilaration came over him, such as he had not felt during the evening.

"That last drink of tequila was too much," he thought, but the others, too, were beginning to evince signs of liveliness even greater than all the hilarity of the night had brought forth. A faint blue haze seemed to cover every object in the room. The figures of the girls at intervals looked far away and then near by, while a feeling of utter recklessness pervaded his whole being. All the phantasms of the opium eater could not be more weird than those which came into Sanford's brain as his gaze was riveted on the jewel lying among the candles grouped around it on the table. In their dim light it seemed to grow and grow, emitting a demoniacal glow that, but for the spirit of recklessness which possessed him, would have filled his soul with dread.

"The fandango," cried one of the girls, with a wild burst of laughter. "Let us dance once more, for I feel as though my feet were on fire," and when the guitar sounded the notes of the dance the dancers seemed to enter into it with fabled delight and boisterous enthusiasm. Back and forth they crossed, swaying like willows in the wind, with hands on hips and heads well back, their feet pattering and stamping to the twanging of the guitar. Faster and faster their movements became, as the music seemed to fill every fiber with its wild action.

Five bodies were found in the adobe casta next morning, but with no marks of violence or other signs to show the cause of death.

The gossips of that quaint Mexican seaport tell a weird tale of a black pearl, taken from the gulf, that acts upon beholders as does the loco weed upon all who taste that evil plant, and they tell, too, of a mad dance of death years ago when two foreigners and three beauties of the place fell exhausted about the jewel, whose demoniacal fire kept them treading the fandango till every energy was gone and life went from them.—John Craig in San Francisco Argonaut.

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