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PREHISTORIC STAMP FOUND.

One of the most remarkable archaeological and ethnological discoveries made in Mexico since Prof. William Niren found the famous clay tablets of life and death down in the jungles of Guerrero, has been made amid the buried pile of petrified idols uncovered by the sand diggers of Atzacozaco.

This find consists of nothing less than an official seal, or stamp, used by some prehistoric emperor or king in affixing his O. K. to papers of state. The discovery was made about eighteen feet beneath the surface of the old river, or lake bed, which exists near the pretty suburb above named. This stream or pool has long been dead, the waters having been diverted by Nature in another direction, so that now it is merely a basin of gravel overlaid with sand.

The artifact, which is about two inches in diameter, and in a perfect state of preservation, is remarkable for the fact that it contains on the side used for stamping, several concentric circles at the margin, then a ring of hieroglyphics much resembling the characters of the ancient Russian alphabet, and around the center three more concentric rings.

The center itself is a corrugated hole, evidently used for the insertion of a wooden or stone handle. The upper surface of the seal, which is, of course, circular in shape, is rounded, so that the entire object forms almost a perfect hemisphere. On the top are other marks, evidently carved in the seal after the clay had hardened, and possibly intended to represent the signs of the zodiac, as they were known to the primitive astronomers of Mexico.

When found, particles of some black substance, evidently either wax or some ink-like fluid, were still clinging to the face, showing that the seal had not been subjected to very great action by the waters.—Mexican Herald.

LAYMEN FOR THE BENCH.

One of the peculiar forms which criticism of the courts has recently taken is disclosed in the suggestion of Lieutenant Governor Strange of Wisconsin, who declared that laymen rather than lawyers should be called to the bench for interpretation of the laws. He made no exceptions, contending that laymen should fill the judicial chairs in the United States court, and in all other courts.

This suggestion is quite contrary to the conventional idea. The presumption has always been that judges were selected largely for their judicial temperament and knowledge of the law. Everybody knows that the presumption is a violent one in possibly half the cases.

It has not escaped notice that some very bad lawyers have made very good judges. They may not have disclosed much judicial erudition or literary excellence in their opinions, but there has been justice, palpable right and respect for good law.

Too often the learned lawyer, when elevated to the bench, is seemingly bent on determining causes that come before him on laws that are quite surprising and wholly inexplicable to the layman.

Too often the learned judge seems ambitious to show the unlearned just what manifestly ridiculous things can be done according to certain law and precedent of which they may not have previously heard.

Possibly the non-professional would always be able to get away from law and precedent long enough to administer justice, especially where the requirement of justice is plain. From many decisions of courts it is quite easy to conclude that the trained lawyer could not adhere to justice if it entailed a rejection of the "weight of opinion."

Then it is possible that a layman, if elected to the bench, might realize how important time is in litigation, and actually hurry important cases to

trial. Or he might manifest some conception of how expensive the services of lawyers are, and seek rather to free the litigation from professional entanglements than to multiply them about him.

In short the layman on the bench might seek to make of courts avenues wherein differences may be speedily adjusted with fairness to all concerned, rather than fee mills for lawyers and laboratories for judicial experimentation.—Lincoln Star.

TRUTH ABOUT ANANIAS.

"Who was Gamaliel?" asked Professor James Russell Lowell of a student in his Dante class. "A little mountain in Judea," came the prompt answer. In these days when the Bible stands dusty on the shelf every one knows of the Ananias club and its founder, who, being also the committee on admissions, has modestly declined election, although many, including such prominent persons as Mrs. Storer, Judge Parker and Baldwin, Mr. Dix, and the late Mr. Harrison, have considered him eligible and urged his claim to membership; but astonishingly few know who Ananias was and how he achieved his fame.

The prevalent impression is that Ananias was a notorious and unmitigated liar. History does not depict him. It gives us only these facts: The primitive Christians adopted a scheme of socialism, which was quickly abandoned, as all such schemes have been. But when it was organized enthusiastic believers sold their possessions and put them into the common fund, administration of which was centralized in apostolic hands. These contributions were free will offerings. In this respect they differ from taxes, which they resembled in that they were payments by individuals for the uses of the community. Possibly Ananias did not believe in the "square deal." Perhaps his wife, Sapphira, was thrifty, believed in laying by, and exercised the influence a prudent wife should have over an extravagant husband. It may be that both doubted the eventual success of the socialistic plan; if so, the events justified their prescience.

However this may be, they evidently wished to keep up appearances with the socialistic and progressive party of their day. Even now some politicians are "regular" with mental reservation. So they also sold their possessions and put part of the proceeds into the common fund, but they kept back some thing for a rainy day. It does not appear that either made an affidavit, or that one was necessary. So far it appears, they were only guilty of that secondary and very common form of lying, suppression of the truth. Very prominent, pious, and wealthy persons of our own time who on general principles loudly decry dishonesty in the abstract do every day what Ananias did. He simply dodged his taxes. But when this transpired to the clairvoyant vision of St. Peter, that impetuous saint hotly rebuked the equivocator who was so ashamed that he didn't answer a word. He retained no astute counsel to argue that there was no intent to deceive, and to demonstrate that "truth is this to me and that to thee, and whether truth or falsehood, let it be." "He fell down and gave up the ghost, and the young men arose and buried him." Then, although wound up, he nevertheless stopped going on.

The incident shows that history does not always repeat itself, and that some folks are luckier or cleverer than others. There is precedent that allows a citizen of New York to escape taxation here by saying in an affidavit: "I have been, and am now, a resident of Washington," and subsequently to explain that residence and domicile are very different, that the former depends upon intent, and that the phrase "I am a resident" is susceptible of the construction "I am domiciled."—New York Sun.

His Sarcastic Friend.

He was very proud of his new automobile—talked automobile, dreamed automobile, read automobile. Finally his friends became a nuisance, and each to himself swore softly that he would hide his time and at the proper moment give him a little verbal thrust. Finally one long suffering individual was asked to go for a ride. Excuses were of no avail. He was bundled into the machine and taken for a spin through the parks and over the boulevards. In due course of time, without any serious mishap, they pulled up at the Automobile club. The auto crank and his guest were soon surrounded by several of their friends.

"How did you enjoy your ride?" was asked of the auto crank's friend. "Until today I never thought an automobile could go so fast," was his reply. (Here the auto crank was all attention. That was some praise for his car. Right out in public too. That would silence some of the scoffers who said his machine should be called Smith.) "Why, do you know there was a car went by us at such a clip that I could hardly see it."

The auto crank glared, and under his gaze the group melted away. They had had their revenge.—Pittsburg Gazette-Times.

SIDEGLITS ON MEXICAN REVOLUTIONS.

To any of the very few Americans who have real knowledge of the type of Mexican that represents the great mass of the Mexican nation, the present uprising against the Diaz government is not surprising. The surprise is that such manifestation has been so long in coming and that the minor manifestations of similar interest and purpose has been so few and far between during the more than thirty years of Diaz supremacy. The man who knows Mexicans knows well that there has not been a single year in all the years since Diaz, as a revolutionist himself, overturned the government headed by Lerdo de Tejada in 1876, when an element just as numerous, strong and eager as backed him in that enterprise has been awaiting the chance to overthrow him and his government in turn. That he has been strong enough to prevent the change and to place a veneer of modern civilization over the Mexico of today, that has impressed the world with the belief that the day of revolutions is over in Mexico forever is proof of how great a man he is, but to accomplish such reality as he is generally credited with, he would have had to change the character, instincts and habits of the Mexican race, and that he has not done. The Mexican of today is the same who has revolted and overthrown every ruler since Mexico became independent with but three exceptions, Victoria, the first president; Juarez and Porfirio Diaz, and who rebelled often and at last successfully against the rule of Spain.

The great bulwark, the middle class, that prevents in the United States such movements as Mexican revolutions is practically nonexistent in Mexico. There is but the upper and lower class in the Mexican republic and the latter comprise the great majority of the people and are pure Indian in blood. Out of the 12 million of Mexicans less than a million are in any part of Spanish or other foreign descent. It is the humble "hombre" of the masses, the Indian, who supplies the material for Mexican revolutions, who by instinct and character is always against authority and existing government and ready to take part in its overthrow and just ready to in turn overthrow the power he has established. The common, every day Mexican, such as one can see every day along the Rio Grande border working as laborer, is type of the masses all through the republic. Indian, as he is, he loves to raid, plunder and loot, and opportunity for these always comes with such uprisings. It is this kind of a people which the Diaz government has kept under restraint for so long a time.

But the average Mexican is not of himself inclined to take the initiative in revolution or anything else, but his instinct is to follow anyone who leads, and there are plenty of these as the present uprising shows. The leaders are almost entirely of the upper class, who have disappointments, unrealized ambitions and grievances against government. It is easy for any of these to collect a following. The owner of a great hacienda of thousands and hundreds and thousands of peons on his land who hold allegiance to the master the same as vassals to a feudal chief, and will follow him in any enterprise the same as a Highland cataract of old times followed the head of his clan. It seems strange in this age that this should be true anywhere, but it is true in Mexico. Let that master be in exile for years and his reappearance in revolt against the government is hailed with welcome, and in turn the successful leader finds that the outcasts have the same disposition to overthrow and the same elements to assist. It is all because of the Mexican character, so different from that of the American of the United States, that the one furnishes no standard for estimating and judging the other.

This writer has mingled much and for years with the common Mexicans along the Rio Grande, has worked with them and over them, has taken their frijoles and their tortillas with them in their jals and slept there with them and he has reason to like them, but so strong is their revolutionary propensity and instinct that speaking from experience, every little bunch of such Mexicans have within them a cabal against the Mexican government and a disposition to resent governmental authority of any kind. In time when there is no opportunity to take to the larger enterprise their nature finds vent in cattle stealing and plundering raids across the border. That Rio Grande border is fifteen hundred miles long, a country sparsely settled, and most difficult. There are stretches of it over which an eagle, flying so high that the earth below looks like a map, cannot in all the vastness below see a single human or human habitation. In such a country it is easy for a body of raiders to assemble, raid to one side or the other, return and dispose of their loot before

word of it gets to the rurales of Mexico on the Texan rangers, vigilant, brave and alert as they are, and such bands are always the nuclei of Mexican revolutions. They attempted to start against Diaz in 1908, captured a Mexican border town, raised the revolutionary flag, were routed by the rurales and dispersed to the American side to plot and plan again. They comprised what there was of reality to the Garza revolution some fifteen years before. At this very day the chief hero of the Mexican population at Brownsville, Matamoros and the country along the lower Rio Grande is old Cortina, bandit and freebooter, who ruled that district just after the American Civil War in defiance of both the United States and Mexico and whose memoirs health this writer has drunk many a time along with convivial and enthusiastic Mexican friends. There are but instances that go to prove the manner of man that is the type of the great mass of the Mexican people, kindly in their way, possessing many fine qualities but with an ingrained spirit of lawlessness nowise unchanged by modernity.

For some reason, the sources of which are a mystery in greater part, there is in every Mexican a profound conviction that the United States intends to make war on their country, to subjugate it, to turn its resources, its railroads, etc., over to American capitalists of the kind described by the scolded muckraking magazines and make slaves of the Mexicans in like manner as did the Spaniards and the Mexican is determined to desperate resistance.

In every Mexican revolution Americans have taken part and in every instance their experience has been that of the traditional man who interfered to prevent a husband from beating his wife, both man and wife turned upon the interloper. The healthiest thing in the world for an American to keep away from is civil war in Mexico.—Kansas City Star.

THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S.

A woman living on an income of \$1,000 a year recently paid out of it an annual tax of \$425—nearly half. Another living on an income of \$1,200, paid \$250—one fifth.

Asiatic Russia? some may ask. No. New York. They live in New York City and paid these taxes there.

The first is the wife of a paralytic. The disease impaired his mind, he became incapable of managing his affairs, made ducks and drakes of most of his property and finally the courts adjudged him incompetent. A trust company—God save the mark!—took over the remnant and invested it in corporation bonds. Under the New York law these are taxable, and his wife had to pay.

She did not know the difference between taxable and non taxable investments. Few small investors do. The trust company knew, and was guilty of plain misfeasance for not investing her money otherwise. But she was small fry, and the company probably did not waste much thought on her or her affairs. At all events, between the New York tax law and the trust company, she was knaved out of half her income.

The second woman is a widow whose whole capital is invested in mortgages on New Jersey real estate. Her lawyer had given her a curbstone opinion (she also being small fry) that these were not taxable, and he was wrong. They are exempt if the holder lives in New Jersey, but not if he lives in New York. Ignorance again, coupled with professional carelessness, cost that woman one-fifth of her income.

We are told that Russian taxation sometimes takes away all a man's income, but as far as I know it has never tried to take any more. New York taxation, however, has done just that, and succeeded.

Some years ago a farmer and his wife, advanced in age, sold the farm for \$5,000, and let the money stand in a mortgage, intending to live on the interest. They discovered, too late to do any good, that the mortgage was taxable. In the first year, local circumstances put up the tax rate above the rate of interest. The poor man did not get enough out of his investment to pay his tax, and had to go out to day's work to raise the balance.

We will now look at the other side of the picture. In the stringency of 1907 Mr. August Belmont, finding that a little ready money would come handy, proposed to mortgage the Park Row building to the Rothschilds. The tax on this mortgage would amount to \$40,000. Now Mr. Belmont is not small fry. His lawyers are never careless and never give him any curbstone opinions. So among them they arranged the following plan. Mr. Belmont deeded the property outright to the Rothschilds, and had the deed recorded—deeds are, of course, exempt. At the same time he drew up a "gentlemen's agreement" with the Rothschilds' representatives, calling for the

return of the property when the conditions of payment should be fulfilled. This agreement was marked "private."

But by some oversight of the Rothschilds' attorneys, when the deed went down to the registrar's office for record, a copy of the agreement went along, too. The recording clerk is paid by the folio, and copies whatever is set before him. He entered agreement and all into the record of the deed. Nobody in the office noticed the peculiarity of the transaction; but one day an outsider leafing through the records saw it and showed it to the authorities. Perceiving at once that the instrument was no true deed at all, but really a mortgage, they tried to have the mortgage tax collected; but for some reason the state's attorney, Mr. Jackson, did not see his way to move in the matter, and Mr. Belmont never paid.

Just such inequities are perpetrated from year to year under the rickety, shambling, inhuman anachronism called the general property tax—the idea of which is that taxes should be levied equally on all kinds of property. Not in proportion to one's ability to pay, nor in proportion to the benefits received from government, but equality, at the same rate, upon all aggregations of property.

The United States is the only civilized country that adheres to this insane idea of taxation. England, Continental Europe, Canada, all have abolished general property tax as unsound in theory and outrageous in practice. The United States retains it. Nearly all the states have had a tax system as New York—some worse—but New York does very well for an example because it is conspicuous.—Albert J. Nock, in the December American Magazine.

Burma's Gilded Pagoda.

Bangoo, the princely city of Burma, grew up around the sacred spot on which is built the great Shooay Dagon pagoda, one of its principal wonders. "Rising to a height of 300 feet, its size is greatly enhanced by the fact that it stands on an eminence that is itself 100 feet above the level of the city," says a writer. "It is covered with pure gold from base to summit, and once in every generation the gold is completely renewed by public subscription. Yet throughout the interval the process of gilding goes on perpetually. Pious people who seek in this way to express their veneration and to add to their store of spiritual merit climb up daily with little fluttering packets of gold leaf, which they fasten on some fraction of its great surface. There is no more picturesque sight offered by it than that of a group of these sicken worshippers outlined high against its gold in the act of contributing their small quota to its splendor. The pagoda itself has no interior. It is a solid stupa of brick raised over a relic chamber."

Old Man of the Mountain.

The title "Old Man of the Mountain" was first applied to Hassan Ben Sabbat, who founded a formidable dynasty in Syria A. D. 1090. He was the prince or chief of the sect of the Mohammedans. Having been banished from his country, he took up his abode in Mount Lebanon and gathered round him a band of followers, who soon became the terror alike of Christians, Jews and Turks. They paid the most implicit obedience to his commands and believed that if they sacrificed their lives for his sake they would be rewarded with the highest joys of paradise. For 200 years these "assassins," as they called themselves, continued to be the chief of the country. Whenever their chief, the "Old Man of the Mountain," considered himself injured he dispatched some of his assassins secretly to murder the aggressor. This is the origin of our use of the word assassin for a secret murderer.

Serpents and Music.

Barnard concludes from his personal observation of cobras in Ceylon, says the Scientific American, that the serpent's traditional love for music is a pure fable and that the only effect of music is to arouse the reptile's curiosity, which is excited by any loud and acute sound. The cobra protrudes its head from its burrow alike on hearing the snake charmer's flute, the rattling of a chain or the sounds made by beating the ground with a switch. It appears to perceive only sounds of high pitch, for it pays no attention to the low notes of the flute or the beating of the drum. Barnard also confirmed in Ceylon the results of observations made in the London zoological garden on the supposed power of fascination exerted by serpents upon birds, and he concludes that this power of fascination is also purely imaginary.

Arms and the Men.

"I see you have your arm in a sling," said the inquisitive passenger. "Broken, is it?" "Yes, sir," responded the other passenger. "Meet with an accident?" "No. Broke it while I was trying to pat myself on the back." "Great Scott! What for?" "For minding my own business." "I see. Never could happen to me, could it?" "No." "And if it did I wouldn't be blame foot enough to tell it." "Then there was silence in the car.—Chicago Tribune.

Music.

Of all the fine arts, music is that which has most influence on the passions and which the legislator ought the most to encourage.—Napoleon Bonaparte.

In Portiers.

Host (at village inn, entering bedroom at 3 a. m., to occupant of the bed)—Beg pardon, sir, but two more tourists have arrived. Have you slept enough?



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Solon's Answer.

"What is the most perfect form of government?" was once propounded at the court of Perander, king of Corinth, one of the seven wise men of Greece. His six fellows were present, and of them Bias answered first, giving as his opinion, "Where the laws have no superior." Thales of Miletus, the great astronomer, declared, "Where the people are neither too rich nor too poor." In his turn said Anacharsis, the Scythian, "Where virtue is honored and vice detested." Said Pittacus of Mitylene, "Where dignities are always conferred upon the virtuous and never upon the base." Said Cleobulus, "Where the citizens fear blame more than punishment." Said Chilo, the Spartan, "Where the laws are more regarded than the orators."

The last to reply was the youngest but wisest of them all, Solon of Athens, who said, "Where an injury done to the meanest subject is an insult to the whole community."

Its Purpose. They stood in front of one of Washington's leading furniture stores. The windows were full of beautifully inlaid pieces of furniture, such things as are only within the reach of the rich and are meant to lend an additional touch to the already perfectly appointed home. Among them was an afternoon tea table. It was a frail, delicately constructed piece on rollers and brought to mind an artistically governed hostess serving tea to a select coterie, while the conversation dealt with nothing more heavy than the latest fiction and comic operas.

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Probate Notice.

State of Nebraska, Platte county, ss: In the County Court, ss and for said county: In the matter of the estate of Hannah Davis, deceased, late of said county. At a session of the County Court for said county, holden at the County Judge's office in Columbus, in said county on the 19th day of November, A. D. 1916, present John Hesterman, County Judge. On reading and filing the duly verified petition of Geo. E. Davis, praying that letters of administration be issued to Daniel Schram on the estate of said decedent. Thereupon, it is ordered that the 10th day of December, A. D. 1916, at 2 o'clock p. m., be assigned for the hearing of said petition at the County Judge's office in said county. And it is further ordered, that due legal notice be given of the pendency and hearing of said petition by publication in the Columbus Journal three consecutive weeks. (Seal) JOHN HESTERMAN, County Judge. Dated, Columbus, Neb., November 21st, 1916.

IN THE SUNNY SOUTH.

Every first and third Tuesday very low home-seekers' excursion rates are in effect to the South with 25 day limits, and every day the winter tourist rates are in effect with all winter limits.

TO CALIFORNIA: Daily excursion rates with attractive conditions, limits, stop-over privileges, side trips, etc. are in effect. The annual winter movement to Southern California by thousands of Americans who desire to escape the rigors of the North is now under way.

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