Pigeon-Hole Cemetery of Guanahuato and Its Countless Occupants

ACRES OF SANDWICHED HUMAN BODIES.

Mexican Funerals Dearer Than Life While Decorated Street Cars Serve as Hearses in the Metropolis.

[Copyright 1851 by Frank G. Carpenter.] GUANAHUATO, Mexico, June 3 .- Special

Correspondence of THE BEE. HE strangest burying round of the world is here at Guanahuato, I have visited the most curious graveyards on record, but l have never seen anything that compares with the horrors I saw today. I have stood in the lonely garden of the Wat San Kate in

Bangkok in Siam and have watched the hungry dogs fight over the bieeding flesh of the dead humans who were thrown there for burial. I have seen the vultures by the hundreds swoop down upon the naked dead bables of the Parsees as they were laid upon the Towers of Silence at Bombay, and I have wandered among the tombs of the thousand generations of Chinamen which fill the sides of the White Cloud mountains near the big city of Canton. I have admired the sculptured marules representing living wives bending over their dead husbands in the wonderful Campo Santo in Genoa, have seen the dead piled naked on top of one another in the cemetery at Naples and have wandered among the bone receptacles of the catacombs at Rome. I have seen the mummy tomos of Egypt, the burning ghats of the Gauges, the cremations and quick lime burnals of the Japanese, but the sights of this Mexican cometery are stranger than all. I do not find them down in any of the books on Mexico and I would hardly have believed that they existed had I not seen them with mine own eyes. Imagine, if you can, the bones of 100,000 human beings torn to pieces and piled one on top of another tike so much corn in a granary. Put all ages and sexes together. Tear them limb from himb and mix the mass of skulls, legs, arms and ribs together so that the bony fingers on one runs into the hollow eyes of its neighbor, and the parts of the different skeletons lose themselves in the vast pile of this vaulted granary

Pigeon-Holes for Brains and Bodies. This gives but a faint idea of what I saw today. The cemetery of this city of Guanahuato is situated on the top of a high hill overlooking the town. I rode up to it on a little donkey and was admitted to it by an Indian who had a nat fully a foot high on his swarthy head, a revolver a foot long tied to his leather pelt and a pair of buckskin pantaloons which fitted his lean legs like a glove. This town is a mile and a half above the sea. The air here is as dry as are the bones of these skeletons the year round, and nature wears a perpetual smile of blue skies, bright flowers and bracing air. The cemetery gives a view of hundreds of low mountain peaks, every one of which covers incalculable riches of silver and gold, and the precious metals undoubtedly lie under the very bones of these tens of thousands of the dead. I entered by its wide gate and found myself surrounded by great walls in a court which contained perhaps five acres of ground. The walls of this court were about eight feet thick, and as I examined them I found that they were in fact made up of pigeon-hole about three feet square and six feet deep, some of which were open and others of which were closed with marble slabs, on which were printed the names and virtues of the dead who were shelved away within. There were thousands of these pigeon-holes and my guide showed me a card giving the rates. From it I see that these holes are rented out to the bodies of the dead, and the guide tells me that the most of them are taken for about five years, after which the bones of the deceased are taken out the pigeon hole is cleaned out and it is ready for the next occupant. It costs \$25 for the use of one of these pigeon holes for five years and this seems to be the shortest term for which they are leased. A man who wants one perpetually can have it by paying \$100 and if he cares to crowd his whole family insum of \$500.

to the same hole he can have it for the lump Graveyard Sandwiches. The ordinary dead are, however, buried in the ground. The city of Guanabuato is rich but its great wealth is in the hands of few. The majority are too poor to buy a vault for any number of years and the masses are buried. The rates are also on the rental basis. It cost a dead man \$1 to lie two years in these burial grounds and after that his bones are taken up and another body tills the hole. The five acres which make up the court cometery are literary composed of bone dust, Each removal has left some pieces of a skeleton behind, and the ground is made up of the dust of past humanity. In going over it, you see little pieces of bones sticking up everywhere, and at one point where a number of graves was being dug, I noted pieces of skulls and other bits of skeletons among the mixture of dirt and bones thrown up. I was interested in watching the digging of the graves and in the curious manner in which the bodies were laid in them. One digging here suffices for a number of burials. The hole made is about two feet wide, seven feet long, and from six to eight feet deep. The first corpse that comes gets the bottom berth. He is taken out of his rented coffin and laid with his head on a bunch of leaves, and over him is put perhaps six inches of dirt. The grave is then ready for the next arrival, who is buried in like manner, and so the bodies are sandwiched one on top of the other until the grave is filled. Guanahuato is a very unhealthy city, and the death rate is very large. During the past month there were four burials a day in this cemetery, and I saw six graves already dug when I visited it. Three of these were only balf filled, and the others had nothing whatever in them.

Catacombs and Mummies. Leaving the court, I was next conducted down into the great store house for the bones of the dead after their leases have expired, and they have been ousted by their laudlords from their tenements above. Going down a winding stair so narrow that my sides grazed the walls as I passed, I entered a long vaulted passage walled with stones and paved with cement. This passage was well lighted by openings from above, and it was dry and free from smells. It runs clear around and under the edge of this five acres of cemetery, and is in fact a wailed tunnel about twelve feet high, six feet wide and more than one thousand feet long. For ages this tunnel has been the receptacle of the bones of the dead of this city, and it is now almost filled. Only about two hundred feet of it remain vacant, and the entrance to it is in the middle of this. I stood at this point, and looking either way I could see the great piles of skulls and other pieces skeletons jumbled together in sorts of shapes and mixed up into one heterogeneous mass of bones rising in a slanting way from the floor of the tunnel at an angle of forty-five degrees to the roof.

A GRANARY OF SKELETONS. The feet of men rested in the skulls of women and I saw a great toe in the grinning teeth of what may have once been a beautiful girl. About another skull, the bones of an arm



were thrown almost caressingly, and legs and arms, ribs and thighs, whole and in bits, were piled up one on the top of another like so many stones, and the whole, ghastly as it was, looked more like the piled up Indian corn in a crib than anything else.

Some Dead Azters. The most ghastly things, however, in this great vault were the mummles wno stood, eaned against the wall, guarding as it were, the remains of the thousands of broken skeletons beyond them. There were at least one hundred of these mummies, each of which was more horrible than anything you will see in the museum of Bonlak, near Cairo in Egypt, or any of the horrid examples of South American and Alaskan mummies which you will find in our national museum in Washington. The air here is so dry that it sucks the nices out of the dead, and these mummies have been made not by spices and by linen bands, but by the atmosphere. They are nore horrible and life-like than the artificially preserved article, and they retain the features and the expressions of the dead, shrivelled it is true, but all the more horrible in their thousands of wrinkles. Here, against the wall, is the mummy of a bearded ian. His face is perfect and the whiskers faded into a bleached dust color by hundreds of years, cover the whole of the lower part of his face. His clothes have long since rotted off of him and his bare chest, slightly sunken, looks like the parchment of an old drum. I tap it with my pencil to test his lungs, and it gives forth a hollow drum-like sound of renonstrance. His shriveiled arms are crossed and his withered brown legs are straight As my eye travels down them, I see that a part of an old boot still clings to one of his feet and that the other, like all the rest of his clothing has rotted off, long long ago. Next to this gnastly object stands a mummy more ghastly still. It is that of a woman whose white teeth are as well preserved in death as in life, and whose black tongue sticks through these in a sort of leer. She has a wealth of long black hair reaching to her waist, and even in death she shows some signs of grace and beauty. Next her stands a man whose features seem to be contorted with agony and a little further on is the mummy of a boy of twelve whose mouth is wide open and whose sunken frame makes you think of a skeleton of Smike, the persecuted student of Squires at Dotheboys hall.

A Coffin for a Tripod. I had my camera with me in this vault and wished to take a photograph of it. There was however no place on which to rest the camera, and I suggested to the guard of the cemetery that he go and get me a board. He at once picked up a coffin from a little pile which contained the mummies and babies and taking the mummy out held it under his

arm, while he propped the ceffin on arm, while he propped the ceffin on end and made it stand level by putting a thigh bone from the great heap under one corner. Upon this I rested my camera and succeeded in taking a very fair picture. Before I left I took another picture of this man with the mummy in his arms, and another of him and his brother ghoul holding up the municipal coffin in which all the dead of this town have to be brought to the graveyard. There are no hearses in this mountain city. There are no hearses in this mountain city, and the town has fixed rates for the rent of its coffins. These coffins are so big that another coffin can be placed inside of them, and they are carried on the shoulders of the bearers up the steep hill. As soon as they enter the cemetery the coffins are placed on a lodge or stone and are opened, for the pur-pose, it is said, of seeing that not more than one corpse is buried in one coffin, and that the cemetery gets its full fees for every corpse. The roadway up to the cemetery has many coffin shops, but the caskets, though expensive, are very rudely made, and many of those for babies are painted a light blue or grained in oak. I saw at Zacatecas a boy carrying one of these blue coffins on his head. but whether he was on his way to the ceme-tery or to the house of mourning I could not

Mexican Funerals.

The general customs of mourning in Mexico are somewhat different from ours. Mourning is much more general and black is put on for intimate friends and for distant relatives. It is, however, worn a shorter time but the occasions for mourning dresses are so frequent that every lady has her mourning suit in her wardrobe. If, for in-stance, a young lady dies, her friends wear black for her for thirty days, and if it is the young girl's mother who is dead, the friends will put on black for nalf that time. Ladies do not attend funerals in Mexico, but they pay visits of condelence soon after the death, and such visits are made in mourning clothes Cards and letters of regret are always sent to the family at the time of a death by such friend who cannot call, and the announce-ments of funerals are of the most touching and extravagant nature. Funerals are cele brated as a rule, almost immediately after death and in Mexico city as soon as possible after the twenty-four nours' which the law prescribes that the dead should be kept before interment. The coffin is procured im mediately, the cards are sent out and the ceremonies take place.

Street Cars as Hearses.

Mexico city is perhaps, the only place it the world where the street cars are the hearses. There are no other kind used and the car lines make a good thing out of their funeral business. There are 150 deaths a day in Mexico city and you see these cars draped in black and driven by drivers in nourning spinning along the road towards the cemetery every hour or so during the week. The funeral car has a raised place in



A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR its center for the coffin. It is open at the sides but has a black canopy at the top and its decorations are more or less emborate ac ording to the charge for the service. Bo-and it comes a second car containing the mourners and the cars go very fast as they have to go on the same track as the other cars and here the dead have to run to get out of the way of the living. The car service costs all the way from \$1 to \$120 per funeral, and some of the higher priced cars are covered with silk, and in the case of the dead being nfants or young people, are often trimmed

What it Costs to Die in Mexico. Maxico city is in fact a very expensive place in which to die. A funeral costs \$500 at the least, if it is at all respectable, and in the case of foreigners the expenses run up into the thousands. This is especially so when it is desired to take the bodies out of the country. If the friends of the dead are not posted, all sorts of extravagant charges are imposed upon them, and the estate of a are imposed upon them, and the estate of a Kansas millionaire named Smith, who died here tately, paid \$2,000 for expenses here. Among the charges was one of \$500 for em-balming, and I beard of a case yesterday in which a Mexican embalmer or doctor charged \$5,000 for preparing the body of a French-man who died here, for shipment. The work was not properly done and the deceased could not be sent away, whereupon one of the American newspapers published an article as to the outrageous charge. The doctor then brought suit against the paper saying it was true he had brought in the bill for embalming as stated but as the body had decored. Everything was jumbled together in the balming as stated but as the body had decome ing seminary, the largest educational instiguent democracy of death. The bones of old posed before he began, he was not able to state in Northern Penusylvania, have represented in and on one another.

Everything, however, is expensive in Mexico and the undertakers have to make high charges. All of the materials for coffins are charges. imported from abroad though they are put together here, and the prices are proportion-

Mexico as a Healthful Capital. Mexico as a Healthful Capital.

The death rate of Mexico city is very high. It is said that it averages about thirty-seven in the thousand, and the only wonder is that it is not higher. Were it not for the perpetually bright sun and the high altitude, the city would be a morgue, a vast charnal bouse, a Golgotha, a phace of the skulls. Think of a city which has had a population of hundreds of thousands for many generations built upon and over a swamp, with no drainage whatever, and let this city go on with its accumulated mass of filth increasing year by year and sinking down into the soil, and you have some idea of sanitary Mexico city. A constant miasma rises here at high and the water is only three feet under the city. Is it any wonder there is no place in the world where typhus and typhold fever is so prevalent as here and is it not surprising that the Mexican capital is for many people a favorable health resort! The climate is so equable, the thin, dry air and the not sun suck up the juices of decomposition, and such people as are careful and sleep above the ground floor are in little dauger. Outside of the city there is no danger whatever, and if it had been built on high ground it would be the finest health resort of the world. As it is, foreigners have to be very grangly of their beauth here, and the foreign The death rate of Mexico city is very high. world. As it is, foreigners have to be very careful of their beaith here, and the foreign cemeteries contain many occupants. The American cemetery contains about twelve hundred, and it is so full that the colony is about to purchase a new one. Still I have met several Americans who told me that their lives have been saved by their coming o Mexico, and this country is said to be the est resort in the world for consumptives. The great death rate comes from the lower clases, who sleep right on the sewer-like ground, and the Mexican agent of a well known life insurance company tells me that luring his first twenty-eight months here he id not have a single death to pay for out of the great number insured. FRANK G. CARPENTER.

A Suggestion. If you are troubled with rheumatism or a lame back, allow us to suggest that you try the following simple remedy: Take a piece of flannel the size of the two hands, saturate it with the size of the two hands, saturate it with the size of the two hands, saturate it with the characteristic pain. Balm and bind it on over the seat of pain. It will produce a pleasant warmth and relieve you of all pain. Many sewere cases have been cured in this way. The Pain-Balm can be obtained from all

### SINGULARITIES.

J. W. Lynch of Felton, Dela., has a healthul three-legged calf. There is a mocking bird in Eatonton, Ga. at can talk and whistle "Johnny, Get Your Hair Cut.

Maud Evans of Beaver Falls, Pa., who is only sixteen years of age, has a third set of natural teeth. John Reynolds of Dutch Neck, Deia., near Smyrna, owned a lamb with five legs until an

eagle bore it away. The biggest orange tree in Louisiana is claimed to be in Terrebone parish. It is 15 feet in circumference and 50 feet high. The yield this year is expected to rech ten thou-

sand oranges. Oroville, Aia., has a boneless boy. He is four years old, weighs twenty-five or thirty pounds, cannot stand, as his bones seem to be like soft rubber; but he can scratch the base of his head with his foot, or roll himself into

A strange and terrifying beast is prowling about Woodland, Pa., carrying off cattle and scaring, the fiercest dogs. No one has caught sight of it yet or identified it, but its tracks have been measured, and are about sixteen inches long and eight broad, with long claws. George Waters, living four miles east of Alexandria, La., has a sow which had eight pigs. He found them in the pen when four hours old. Four of them were not extraordinary, but the other four were tailless, and all of them had his perfect ear-marks, viz., a crop and a slit in the right ear and a swallow in the left.

A. J. Williams of Garfield, Wash., had a four-legged chicken hatched on his farm. was strong and healthy, but was accidentally killed. The second pair of legs were rather frair specimens and too far astern to be effreak was that one pair of legs was dark blue and one pair yellow.

Mrs. Martha Harnish of Pequa township. Lancaster county, Pa., became the mother of a healthy male child having only one ear, the left, but that as large as the ear of a full-grown person. The only visible trace of the other ear is a small hole where the ear ought to be about the size of a pea. Otherwise the baby is perfectly formed.

Mrs. Rebecca L. Lapp, wife of F. H. Lapp, a workman in McIlvain's rolling mill, Reading, Pa., gave birth to a wonderfully fine, large boy baby, weighing exactly sixteen pounds, with blue eyes and golden hair. Dr. D. G. Long says the baby is as large as an ordinary four-months-old child. Both mother and baby are doing well. The mother is thirty years old, and has six other children. A cow beionging to Joe Turner, a ranch-man near Livingston, Mont, gave birth to a calf no larger than a common sized jack rab-bit and of about the same color. Some forty-eight hours after it was found Turner, out of curiosity, weighed the diminutive creature and it tipped the beam at just fifteen pounds. It was perfectly formed and as lively as any calf, and bids fair to develop into a cow of

usual proportions.

One of the curiosities of the waters around Fortress Mouroe, Va., is the swelling toad. It is a six-inch creature of the finny tribe, with the skin of a toad, which is capable of expansion to the size of a Thanksgiving day football. It has to be handled carefully be cause its bite is said by the colored folks to be poisonous. Its belly is white, like that of a toad, but as prickly as a chestnut burr. In order to see it swell its captor has to rub this prickly skin with a stick, when the creature will immediately begin to draw in air, which it can not expel so long as it is held bottom side up.

A New Move. Leslie & Leslie, 16th and Douglas, C. J. Frice, Miliard Hotel.

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EDUCATIONAL.

Havmaking parties are the latest educational innovation in Vassar. An college infirmary to cost \$3,000 will be erected at Princeton this year. The programmes of the various summer schools this year promise greater attractions Twenty-seven negroes and eight Indians

omposed the graduating class of Hampton normal school The twenty Utah schools of the new west commission close for the summer vacation between June 5 and 17.

The University of Upsula, Sweden, during the present term has an attendance of 1,658. Of these 254 are in the theological department, 740 in the philosophical, 443 in the law, and 221 in the medical.

Victor F. Lawson of the Chicago News has given Adelbert college of the Western Re-serve university at Cleveland \$50 as a prize to the student who passes the best examina-tion in English for entrance to the college. The building fund of the new Chicago uni versity has been enlarged recently by \$500,-000, making a total of \$1,250,000. In addition to its building fund is the endowment fund

of \$2,000,000 for the support of professors, scholorships, etc. Steps are being taken to combine the three colleges of New York city and form one grand university whose buildings will occupy the grounds of the Bloomingdale insane asylum—a forty acre lot and one of the finest

utes on Manhattan island. The educational interests of Spain are in a tepiorable condition. Three-quarters of a nillion in back salary is due the teachers, and no assistance has been received from the government in seventeen years. Many of the schools are sustained by charity.

Berea college, Kentucky, is the only insti-tution of learning south of the Ohio which admits to its privileges white and colored students in about equal numbers and on terms of perfect equality. It was founded by Rev. John G. Fee, a Kentuckian, and the son of a siaveholder. on of a slaveholder. Seventy-five male students in the Wyom

Had the newspaper not published the fact, tout of the refund of the culinary department to give them strawberry shortcake, a delicacy thing, however, is expensive in Mexico cacy reserved for the professors.

A remarkable volume will soon be pre sented to the Harvard university library. contains manuscript copies of all the con-mencement programmes of the college from 1780 to 1890, comit specimens of the order of commencement exercises at intervals from the first graduation in 1642 to the revolution-

A grandutece of James G. Birney, the abo litionist, whose Horary was given to the Johns Horkias uffiversity about six months ago, has offered a prize of \$100 for the best original contribution to American history made by a studged of the Hopkins during the year ending June, 1802. It will be known as the Scharf-Birbey brize.

### IMPIETIES.

Even the May weather has turned hetero-ox, and wants warming at a stake. "Life is full of trials," signed the deacon. Yes; particularly for heresy these days," out in his wife.

Satan-I wish I'd stayed in heaven.-Imp-Whyt-Satan-I'd like to hear Barnum and Noah swap bear stories. Officials at Waterville, Me., have forbidden the holding of religious services in the town poorhouses, as it "excites the paupers."

Rev. Straitlace-Really, the church seems ead. What shall I do to arouse it? Cynicus -Deny the inspiration of the scriptures. "The preacher who lives altogether in his study will soon be dead in the pulpit," says some one. Brother Talmage manages to get all the physical exercise he requires in the

Rev. Dr. Morse, president of the California college at Oakland, accuses Rev. Frank Dixon, paster of the Tenth Avenue Baptist church in that city, of heresy. Church people are arraying themselves on either side. "It ain't always de man dat makes de mos noise in church dat hez de mos' religion, deah breddern. A mule kin make mo' racket wif

his mouf dan a dozen good hosses, but wen it comes to gettin' up an' gittin' de mule ain't

At a ministerial conference the presiding officer announced that Elder H. would, at the afternoon session, read a paper on "The Devil," and added, "please be prompt in attend-ance, for Brother H. has a carefully pre-pared paper and is full of his subject." About eight hundred clergymen of Phil delphia will be summoned before the board of health in the course of a few days to show cause why they have failed to report to the

registrar nearly two thousand marriages which they have celebrated within the past twelve months. The difference between the Dutch church and the Presbyterian is that one follows the Heidelburg catechism and the other the Westminster, between which there is no difference. The Dutch in New York city have the advantage of owning the immense property of the Collegiate corporation. So it is dollars, not sense, that keeps them apart.

Rev. Dr. G. H. Smyth, pastor of the Second Collegate Reformed church of Harlem, has received \$12,000 in return for his resigna-tion. He wanted \$20,000, but a compromise was effected. A faction of the consistory thought he was too old and requested him to resign, and this led to a difference between paster and people with the result as stated. A priest in Lorraine was before the courts for insulting the imperial family. He had refused to shrive and give absolution to a dying man in a room where pictures of the Emperor and Empress Frederick hung. He got out of it by declaring that his objection was to the empress being depicted in a very low-necked dress, which he considered un-

suitable. In the West United Prespyterian church at Kirrlemuir the other Sunday afternoon the minister was calmly preaching his sermon when a modern Jennie Geddes, infuriated at one of the male members of the choir being asleep, hurled her tible at the head of the delinquent from the gallery where she was sitting. The hible missed the sleeper, but struck the shoulder of another man in the cnoir, who started up amazed. The min-ister became pale, paused in his discourse, and exclaimed: "What's wrong?" "The and exclaimed: "What's Wrong." The bible struck the wrong man," she cried ris-ing up in her pew, although her friends vainly attempted to hold her down; "'twas meant to wauken the sinfu' sleeper."

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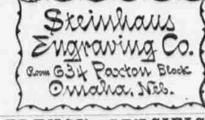
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