

A GRANARY OF SKELETONS.

Pigeon-Hole Cemetery of Guanabato and Its Countless Occupants.

ACRES OF SANDWICHED HUMAN BODIES.

Mexican Funerals Dearest Than Life While Decorated Street Cars Serve as Hearse in the Metropolis.

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Guanabato, Mexico, June 3.—[Special Correspondence of The Bee.]

A strange, burying ground of the world is here at Guanabato. I have

visited the most curious graveyards on record, but I

have never seen anything that compares with the bones

here. I saw today, I have

stood in the lonely garden of the Wat Sah Kade in

Bangkok in Siam and have watched

the hungry dogs fight over the bleeding

bones of the dead humans who were

thrown there for burial. I have seen the

vultures by the hundreds swoop down upon

the naked dead babies of the town as they

were laid upon the Towers of Silence at Bom-

bay, and I have wandered among the tombs

of the thousand generations of Chinamen

which fill the sides of the White Cloud moun-

tains near the big city of Canton. I have

noticed the sculptured marbles representing

living wives bending over the dead hus-

bands 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 tombs of Egypt, the burning ghasts

of the Gauges, the cremations and the lime

burns of the Japanese, and the signs of the

Mexican cemetery 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, that

bones of 100,000 human beings torn to pieces

and piled one on top of another like so much

corn in a granary. Put all ages and sexes to-

gether. Tear them limb from limb and mix

the mass of skulls, legs and ribs to-

gether so that the bony fingers on one runs

into the hollow eyes of its neighbor, and the

parts of the different skeletons lose them-

selves in the vast pile of this vaulted granary

of bones.

Pigeon-Holes for Brains and Bodies.

This gives but a faint idea of what I saw

today. The cemetery of this city of Guan-

abato 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 nut fully a foot high on his

swarthy head, a red cap and a pair of

leather boots and a pair of buckskin pants

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 balmy air. There are no clouds

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 en-

tered by its wide gate and found myself sur-

rounded by great walls in a court which con-

tained 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-holes

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 placed the names and epitaphs of the

dead who were shoved 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 five or six years, and that

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

\$300 and if he cares to crowd his whole family in

to the same hole he can have it for the lump

sum of \$500.

Graveyard Sandwiches.

The ordinary dead are, however, buried in

the ground. The city of Guanabato is rich

in its great wealth in the hands of few.

The feet of men rested in the skulls of women

and I saw a great toe in the grinning face of

what had once been a beautiful girl.

About another skull, the bones of an arm

were almost carelessly and legs and

arms, ribs and thighs, while in and in

many places, the whole, ghastly as it

was, looked more like the piled up Indian

corn in a crib than anything else.

Some Dead Aztecs.

The most ghastly things, however, in this

great vault were the mummies who stood

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 Boniak, 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 Wash-

ington. The air here is so dry that it sucks the

juices out of the dead, and these mummies

have been made not by spices and by linen

bands, but by the atmosphere. They are

more horrible and life-like than the arti-

ficially preserved articles, and they retain the

features and the expression of the dead

shriveled it is true, but all the more

horrible in their thousands of

wrinkles. Here, against the wall, is

propped the mummy of a bearded

man. His face is perfect and the whiskers

faded into a bleached dust color by hundreds

of years, even 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 its lungs, and it

gives forth a hollow drum-like sound of re-

monstrance. His shriveled arms are crossed

and his withered legs are straight.

As my eye travels down I see that a

part of an old boot still clings to one of his

feet. His clothes have long since rotted

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Had the newspaper not published the fact,

the bill would hardly have been withdrawn.

Everything, however, is expensive in Mexico

and the undertakers have to make high

charges. All of the materials for coffins are

imported from abroad though they are put

together here, and the prices are proportion-

ately large.

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 per-

petually bright sun and the high altitude, the

city would be a morgue, a vast charnel house,

a place of the dead. The American, his-
tory of the city which has had a population of

hundreds of thousands for many generations

built upon and over a swamp, with no filtra-

tion, and let this city go on with its accu-

mulated mass of filth increasing year by year

and sinking down into the soil, and you have

some idea of sanitary Mexico city. A con-

stant miasma rises here at night and the

water is only three feet under the city. Is it

any wonder there is a place in the world

where typhus and typhoid fever is so preva-

lent as here? It is not surprising that the

Mexican capital is for many people a fa-

vorable health resort. The climate is so

equable, the thin, dry air and the not sun-

ken up the juices of decomposition, and

such people as are afflicted with the

ground floor are in little danger. Out-

side of the city there is no danger whatever,

and the Mexican capital is for many people

the best resort in the world for the consump-

tive. The great death comes from the lower

classes, who sleep right on the sewer-like

ground, and the Mexican capital is for many

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out of the refuse of the culinary department

to give them straw, shortcake, a deli-

cious reserved for the professors.

A remarkable volume will soon be pre-

sented to the Harvard university library.

It contains manuscript copies of all the

commencement programmes of the college

from 1780 to 1880, and specimens of the order

of commencement exercises at intervals from

the first graduation in 1636 to