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Explorations in Mexico: Discussion

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months, during which they are pledged to abstinence, do not partake of salt, and do not wash except with water brought from the country of the hikuli. The plant is often eaten fresh, slices being cut off much as we would eat an apple; but at a feast a kind of liquor is made by grinding the plants and mixing them with water. The main feature of the feast is a peculiar kind of dancing by men and women, whose faces are painted with various designs with a symbolic meaning.

As regards the fate of the tribes of the Sierra Madre del Norte, it can ultimately be but one—their absorption into the great nation to which they belong. The vast forests and mineral wealth of those regions cannot always remain the property of my dusky friends; the weaker must succumb to the stronger, and the Indians will ultimately all become Mexicans. True, the state of development which the tribes of the Sierra Madre did attain is not beyond the pale of primitive barbarism, owing to their environment and conditions of life; but the country has no reason to regret the inoculation of aboriginal strength and thought.

The Indian of Mexico is treated well by those in power, and he is considered a citizen. The influence upon the Mexican nation of the tribes that had risen to a certain stage of civilisation at the time of the conquest has been great and beneficial. Pure-bred Indians have become prominent as governors, generals, and clergymen. Honest, lion-hearted Benito Juarez, who guided the republic through its most severe crisis, was a pure-bred Zapotec Indian; and I hardly need to remind you that the present head of the Mexican Republic, President Porfirio Diaz, who has a certain amount of Mixtec blood in his veins, is not only a great man in his country, but one of the great men of our time.

Before the reading of the paper, the PRESIDENT said: There was no Council meeting this afternoon, and the candidates, of whom there are a large number, will be elected at the next meeting of the Council. We have with us this evening a very experienced Norwegian traveller, Dr. Lumholtz, who has been several years in Australia, and since that he has been studying the wild tribes in the northern parts of the Sierra Madre, in Mexico. He is going to give us this evening what I am sure you will find a very interesting paper. I now call upon Dr. Lumholtz.

After the reading of the paper:—

Dr. A. C. HADDON: Dr. Carl Lumholtz has added a new chapter to the history of man. The native tribes in these parts of Mexico were hitherto unknown to anthropologists, and it is very fortunate that they had such an able and sympathetic observer as Dr. Lumholtz. Dr. Lumholtz started life as a zoologist, and, like many other zoologists who travel, he found that the highest animal, or that animal which considers itself the highest, was perhaps quite as worthy of study as are birds, reptiles, and fish; thus he was gradually won from beasts to man, and I think the change has been a good one. Unfortunately, I have not been to Mexico, but this time last year I was in New York City, and I studied the very extensive collections that Dr. Lumholtz brought over with him; and it seems as if Dr. Lumholtz has imbibed something of those great ideas which are so

characteristic of the other continent, as he has brought home an immense mass of material. He not only collected widely, but wisely; and his collections were not the mere ransacking of the people, which is so often the case with those who call themselves anthropologists, but they consist of human documents which teach a very great deal. I heard a criticism in America to the effect that he describes his results in too great detail. But I take it that students of anthropology in five hundred or a thousand years' time will not regret the detail of travellers. They will often wonder how it was we said so little about what we had seen in foreign parts. The great danger is for us to write too little, and not too much, upon what we have seen, because the rapidity with which all anthropological data are disappearing is simply appalling, and the students of man in the future will be only too thankful for every scrap of information that we at the present time can give them; and if we do not give it with the amplitude that Dr. Lumholtz has done they will deservedly blame us. What Dr. Lumholtz says about the religious feeling of these people may strike you perhaps as being somewhat strange, but it is perfectly true; and if he had only amplified that point he could easily have proved his statements. The whole life of the people is one of worship, and it is extremely interesting to see how the different characteristics of a country react on the psychological life of people; this is also marked in the social and religious life of the Pueblo Indians. Dr. Lumholtz has studied particularly the symbolism of these Indians, and in his publication one sees that every little detail and ornament has its meaning. With us decoration and ornament are usually meaningless. We live in an æsthetic world which may please our artistic sense, but which has for us very little significance; whereas you will find amongst primitive people what we consider as mere ornament and only pleasing to the eye, has to them a definite and distinct meaning. Civilization loses much of what is a great element in the life of savage people. Very few of us can realize the amount of sentiment and of religious suggestion that is conveyed by what we regard as mere ornament. Not only has this ornamentation a religious significance, not only does it recall ideas to them, but the ornaments themselves are actually prayers; so, as Dr. Lumholtz says, speaking of the embroidery on their shirts, the people themselves are clothed with prayer—every object is practically a prayer. Miss Alice Fletcher, who has lived many years among some of the American Indian tribes, has also found that there is amongst them a religion which was totally unknown to the ordinary white man. It is only when you can get their confidence—and you can only get it by sympathy—that you find that the savage scalp-hunting Red Indian has a religion which is, from a religious point of view, an extremely high and philosophical one. It is only when we get sympathetic observers like Dr. Lumholtz that we can form any conception of the inner life and feelings and aspirations of these different races. The savage has never had a fair chance till the present day. We regard him as having no culture, and because he has no culture we think he has no moral or religious ideas, and the reason why we think so is because we do not know. If we studied them as carefully as Dr. Lumholtz has done, we should find that there was precious little difference between most savage people and ourselves, with the exception, perhaps, that the savage people would be found to be more honest and more religious, and to act up to their religious convictions more than we do. I am sure every one of us has thoroughly enjoyed this lecture of Dr. Lumholtz's, and not the least valuable part, perhaps, of the lecture was those charming songs that he gave us. I have heard the songs of Australians, of Papuans, and of various tribes in Borneo and elsewhere, but I must say I never heard such musical songs as those given by Dr. Lumholtz. I only hope that this will not be the last occasion upon which we shall have the pleasure of listening to and welcoming him.

Dr. GADOW: I regret not being able to make any remarks on Dr. Lumholtz's interesting paper, for a very good reason, namely, that those parts of Mexico I have recently visited are not the same as those visited by him. But when he spoke about these people and showed us these wonderful photographs, I was struck with the fact that the tribes I have seen about the Isthmus of Mexico did not bear the slightest resemblance to those people whose photographs we have seen on the screen. He made the remark that they suffered from two faults—they did not speak the truth, and they steal. Well, to my surprise I found that during several months of sojourn at different places on both the Pacific and Atlantic sides, we never lost any article, and when I asked some of the men occasionally, how it was they could leave their things about and they didn't get taken, they said, "No, it is not the custom here." I am sorry I cannot make any further remarks.

The PRESIDENT: You will agree with me that we have listened to a paper of very great value, as well as of great interest. I call to mind that this country of the Sierra Madre was the scene of some of the most adventurous exploits and discoveries of the early Spaniards, and there can be nothing more important in ethnology than to be able to compare the manners, the customs, and arts of the isolated Indians of the present day with anything that may have been said of them when the country was first discovered. I call to mind the name of the first man who ever visited the Sierra Madre country from Europe, Cabeza de Vaca. It is a strange name. It is curious that any one should be called "head of a cow," and I am tempted to mention the reason that his ancestor got that name. It was at the time that the Mohammedans were making their last great effort to gain supremacy in Spain, and when the kings of Castille, Navarre, and Aragon united to fight them and drive them back. The Almohade sultan had formed a great camp behind the mountains of Tolosa, and when the Spanish army advanced, all the narrow passes were found to be full of Mohammedan warriors. Then a shepherd boy, named Albaja, came to the kings and said, "I can show you a way across the mountains which is not guarded by Mohammedans, where I feed my sheep." The kings commanded that he should lead the van under the Lord of Biscay into this pasture, and it was agreed that he should place the head of a cow, which had lately been killed and eaten by the wolves, in the opening of the *barranca* or ravine leading to the pastures which opened on to the plain on which the Mohammedans were encamped, to guide the rest of the army. So they marched up, and a great battle was fought, called the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, which in 1212 A.D. settled the question for ever whether the Christians or Mohammedans were to be predominant. And afterwards King Alphonso sent for the shepherd boy and knighted him, telling him that his name was no longer to be Albaja, but that it was henceforward to be Cabeza de Vaca, "the head of the cow," in memory of the sign he had placed at the entrance to the ravine. And the explorer, the discoverer of this part of the world, on his mother's side, was descended from the shepherd boy. When Narvaez went to conquer Florida, Cabeza de Vaca was with him. They abandoned their ships and followed along the coast. Nearly all perished, there being no one but Cabeza de Vaca, three other Spaniards, and one negro left. They pressed on with that extraordinary intrepidity which the Spaniards of those days displayed. Cabeza de Vaca advanced from one tribe to another, slowly, but resolutely, determined to go on until he reached the other sea. He was eight years amongst these Indians who have been described to you this evening by Dr. Lumholtz, and after eight years, by the same means as Dr. Lumholtz has used, conciliatory means, he ended by becoming the friend of the Indians, and making them think he was a *shaman*, or great medicine man, and he succeeded almost alone in passing through and across these mountains down on to the

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Pacific side, and at last reached a settlement of the Spaniards. He reported his discoveries at Mexico, and another expedition was sent under a Franciscan, and then another under Coronado, the governor of New Galicia, and they penetrated not only into this country which has been described to you, but further on until they reached the country of the Zúñis. Well, we have these three narratives: we have the narrative of Cabeza de Vaca, I think, if I remember rightly, written by himself; we have the narrative of the Franciscan Niza; and we have the narrative of Coronado, most ably written by another hand, and giving an account of the Indians. We have these three narratives, and it would be, of course, of the greatest interest to compare all they say about the Indians of this country with the discoveries respecting those isolated tribes which have been recently made after a study of several years by our friend Dr. Lumholtz. If he will allow me to say so, I should be inclined in some respects to compare him with Cabeza de Vaca; he has shown the same resolute determination in the face of considerable difficulties from the Indians, and in the face of considerable physical difficulties he has shown that determination to do what he intended to do which was shown by Cabeza de Vaca. He has also shown the same anxiety to make friends, and the same power of conciliating the people among whom he was, which enabled Cabeza de Vaca to cross the continent, and which enabled Dr. Lumholtz to make these most remarkable and valuable researches among the Indians. We have to thank him to-night for opening up to us a subject of the greatest interest, which I am sure was quite new to most of those present; we have to thank him for the admirable way in which he illustrated his paper; and we have to thank him for those beautiful songs, showing what powers these people have as musicians as well as in other arts which they practise. I am sure, therefore, you will all join with me in a very cordial vote of thanks to Dr. Lumholtz for his most valuable paper.

HOW SPITSBERGEN WAS DISCOVERED.

By Sir MARTIN CONWAY.

ON May 18, 1596, two Dutch ships sailed from Vlieland, near Amsterdam, on a voyage destined to be famous in the annals of adventure and discovery.* In one ship Willem Barendszoon was chief pilot; the captain was Jacob Heemskerke Hendickszoon, proudly described on his monument as "the man who ever steered his way through ice and iron." In the other, Jan Corneliszoon Rijp of Enkhuizen was captain and supercargo, Arend Martenszoon of Amsterdam pilot. The chief honour of the voyage has always been given to Barendsz, but Heemskerke should not be forgotten, for he was a great sailor. He commanded the Dutch fleet at the victorious battle of Gibraltar in 1607, where he met his

* The authorities for this voyage are an extract from Barendsz's own log, printed in Hessel Gerritz' *'Histoire du pays nommé Spitsberg,'* translated in the Hakluyt Society's *'Three Voyages of W. Barents' (1876),* p. xvii.; and De Veer's *Journal of the voyage,* translated in the same book, p. 70. See also De Jonge's *'Opkomst,'* etc., vol. i. pp. 23-26; and S. Müller's *'Geschiedenis der Noordsche Compagnie,'* p. 43, note. The course of the ships is marked on Barendsz's own chart, which was engraved in 1598.