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PAYING THE BLOOD TAX.

PEASANTS PAY MONEY FOR MURDERS COMMITTED IN 1375.

A Debt Which the Inhabitants of the Pyrenees Have Religiously Paid Annually for Over Five Centuries—The Ceremony Described by a Witness.

The Independent des Basses-Pyrenees publishes a very interesting description written by M. Alfred Calier, a French Protestant clergyman at Pau, of a ceremonial which he witnessed on the frontier of France and Spain. This ceremonial in the payment of a blood tax, and it appears that there are two or three places in the Pyrenees where the custom, founded upon the belief that a murder committed by the inhabitants of a village or canton upon those of an adjoining village or canton must forever remain a burden upon the descendants of their descendents,' is still observed.

Thus, about the middle of the fourteenth century, the inhabitants of the valley of Lavedan, having massacred the defrauded cadets of Aspe, were condemned by the pope to pay a perpetual tax of thirty ecus, which was levied upon twenty-three villages and paid up to the time of the revolution. In the Thirteenth century, if not earlier, a similar crime was committed between the valleys of Barèdous, in French Navarre, and Roncal, in Spanish Navarre.

The blood tax which the inhabitants of the former were enjoined by the pope to discharge is paid still, the ceremony taking place annually on July 16 in the mountains, about seven hours' march from Oose, at the pass known as La Peyre St. Martin. It is thus described by M. Calier:

A GALA SCENE.

A crowd of people is to be seen making their way to the rendezvous. The shepherds of the Barèdous valley, with their red waistcoats interspersed with dark tunics, the mayors and delegates of the villages of Arette, Lonze, Aramits and Issor, the frontiers of the mountain, the custom house officers without their guns, the clergy, represented by the priest of St. Engrace and two curates, and a few English tourists from Oose helped to make up this singular assembly. When we reached the narrow stone which marks off the frontier, with the name St. Martin inscribed upon the two sides of it in French and Spanish, we found ourselves face to face with the Spaniards, who formed an imposing group.

First was the alcalde of Isaba, who was to act the part of lord chief justice. He was wearing a black robe, bordered with red, and a large rollarette by way of hands, while he carried in his hand the wand of justice, in the shape of a black stick with a silver knob. The alcaldes of three or four other Spanish villages were similarly attired, and they were accompanied by a numerous suite, made up of delegates from the general junta of the valley of Roncal, the notary, the veterinarian, and others, the escort consisting of seven or eight armed carabineros and guards, while in the rear were a number of "bourrequeros," who had come to the hope of selling the skins of wine with which their donkeys were laden.

It was about 9 a. m. when the ceremonial, which has been observed without interruption since 1375, commenced by the French mayors donning their tricolor scarf, and by the Spanish alcaldes advancing toward the frontier stone, accompanied by a herald bearing a lance on which was pointed a red flame, the symbol of justice.

THE CEREMONY.

The two parties having halted at a distance of about twenty feet from their respective frontiers, the herald saluters for his red flame a white one, which is the symbol of pacific intentions, and the alcalde of Isaba exclaims in Spanish, "De yos vitsh for peace!" To this the French mayors reply in the affirmative, also speaking in Spanish, and in order to testify to the sincerity of their intentions, their herald lays down his lance upon the top of the stone in the direction of the frontier, whereupon the Spanish herald comes and inserts his lance into the French soil, resting the shaft against the stone so as to form a cross with the French lance. The mayor of Arette then comes and lays his hand upon the cross so formed, a Spanish alcalde places his right hand upon that of the Frenchman and the other mayors and alcaldes do the same alternately.

Last of all, the alcalde of Isaba steps forward, and, lifting his wand of justice over the pile of hands, pronounces the oath, which all swear to keep. After this oath has been taken the alcalde of Isaba exclaims three times, "Pas darane" (peace in the future). Peace is then sworn unanimously, and the people having given up all idea of vengeance the men of Roncal order the escort to discharge their guns in the direction of France. Then comes the reception of the blood tax, which took place at the three perfectly white merce, but owing to the difficulty of getting them exactly alike three white heifers have been substituted for them. The three heifers presented this year were week and twenty-three pounds, which is a large sum for the district, and after the Roncal notary had drawn up a process verbal, which was signed and sealed, a repast was served at the expense of the Spaniards, toasts being proposed in honor of Spain, France and England, the introduction of England being due to the presence of several English visitors. After the repast was over dancing followed, and so ends and quadry till next year.

The craze for clubs among women has found its culmination in Massachusetts, where the female convicts in the Women's reformatory at Sherborn have started a club of their own. The organization meets on Monday evenings, and three women in prison have the same chance and exercise as their wealthy and aristocratic sisters in the outside world.

NOTHING GROWN ABOUT ME.

A Rural Traveler Who Was Up to the Tricks of the City Sharpers.

He was an elderly man, probably fifty. His whiskers grew in a little in'l like Uncle Sam's, straight out from the point of his chin; his linen duster was evidently the same he had purchased to attend the state fair several years ago. He came out of the front end of the depot, gazed around in a bewildered fashion, up and down and across the street, and half a dozen cabmen rushed for him instantly.

"Cab, sir! Cab, sir! This way!"

"Any part of the city, sir, sire cab?"

"Take you to a good hotel, sir, for a quarter?"

One had his grip, the other the umbrella and a third had him pinioned by the nape of the neck of his duster. And then a well dressed man who had been watching the scrummage approached, and waving the cabmen aside said, "Where do you want to go, sir?"

He recovered his grip, umbrella and breath first, glanced up at the man, groaned a sickening curd, spasmodic grin, and as he gripped his belongings and backed off remarked sarcastically:

"That's some of your darned humbugs. You'd like to know who I come from, too, wouldn't yer! An ef my folks is all well, an how the crops and Sixtine you know somebody down in one town an use to play on my cow when yer was a boy! Speak out, ain't I right! Ain't my name Smith an don't I remember Hiram Johnson an his boy Dick that run off to California? An don't I recognize you? Yes, I guess I do, an if you don't git right onto hyar 'afore quick I'll call the perlice. I will. I know yer diffen. I ain't been in Indianapolis five times for nothin an don't take the papers just for the strap reports. You git now, quick."

"But I assure you, sir, you are mistaken. I don't know you and don't want to. I only thought—"

"Thought I'd like to cash a check, or play a lottery, or buy green goods, eh! What's yer partner? Ain't it pretty near time for him to show up?"

"I tell you, sir, you are mistaken. I am in the employ of the railway, and just thought I might save you some trouble with those cabmen. Now go on, and if you do get bamoozled, why don't say it wasn't your own fault," and the irate young man retired upstairs to the company's office.

The agriculturist winked the other eye in admiration of his own shrewdness, and calling a cabman, said: "Young man, you take me to the ——building; that's what the Universal Investment company is, ain't it? They advertise to pay $100 in six months on $1 a week put in, an beyuth, I'm goin ter buy some shares. Ther better's county bonds."—Chicago Times.

He Pee a Celebrate.

Dominic Johnson, whom old Brooklynites will recollect, was "taken in" once. A wealthy Benedict wrote to him to engage his services in tying the matrimonial knot, and hinted that he was saving a roll of five-dollar good pieces with which to fee the doctor.

"An evening or two later," said the clergyman, in telling the story, "the honored me with a call. He was accompanied by one of the prettiest little women I ever saw. I performed the ceremony, and he indeed upon my kissing the bride. He made an offhand display of a big thin roll well wrapped in tinfoil, and as I bowed him out he slid it slyly into my side pocket. When I returned to my library I examined the roll and found"—

"What?"

"A stubbedpin surrounded with tenpenny nails! A month or two afterward he wrote to me from St. Louis saying that he had changed on the wedding fee I was to have received for kissing his bride."

"There is a latter awaiting that brave," exclaimed the clergyman warmly, "and I never read of a tangling that I do not wonder if he isn't the victim traveling to glory under an alias."—New York World.

A Navy Officers' Club.

Few people in Brooklyn are aware that there is an excellent club in operation at the navy yard. It is called the Officers' club, and only officers of the army and navy are eligible for membership. The clubhouse is situated near the York street gate, is an unpretentious brick building, painted yellow, like all the rest of the houses at the navy yard, and not much for looks on the outside. The interior, however, is exceedingly comfortable and homelike. There is a restaurant attached to the club, and an excellent dinner is served three to the officers at fifty cents a head. The other meals are a la carte.

A number of naval men have bachelor apartments in the building, and a jolly time they have of it there. The late Admiral Porter, who was William Waldorf Astor's brother in law, lived at the club while he was stationed at the navy yard, and made himself very popular there.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Men Who Have Traveled.

In the matter of mere distance covered the records of the world's famous travelers do not make much of a show beside those of some railroad men. An old railroad man named Layton, now a sleeping car superintendent at Indian polis, has kept a record of his journeys since 1863, and the total is 2,336,240 miles. Conductor S. G. Hoons, late of the Reading, has covered 2,047,000 miles, and another Reading conductor has ridden something over 1,887,000 miles. Even these figures would probably be far surpassed by the records of some of the old captains of the ocean steamships.—New York Sun.

It was a Michigan man this time who blew out the gas at a hotel instead of turning it off, and was found at Sunlock in the morning sweetly sleeping his last sleep.

It is proposed to build a second Canadian Pacific road from Hudson bay to Alaska. Do let us have one. Three months in the year it can be used, and its freight will be for all comprehension.

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TESTIMONIALS.

TUD & CRAWFORD, Commission Merchants and Jobbers in Produce, Fruits Kind, Col., Feb. 10th, 1891.

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Gents—Enclosed find one dollar, for which send me a bottle of your Dragon Medicine. Yours truly, WILL TUDD.

Price 25 Cents. SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS.

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The First Step.

Perhaps you are run down, can't eat, can't sleep, can't think, can't do anything to your satisfaction, and you wonder what ails you. You should heed the warning, you are taking the first step into Nervous Prostration. You need a Nerve Tonic and Electric Bitters you will find the exact remedy for restoring your nervous system to its normal, healthy condition, surprising results follow the use of this great Nerve Tonic and Alterative. Your appetite returns, good digestion is restored, and the Liver and Kidneys resume healthy action. Try a bottle. Price 50c at S. C. Smith & Co.'s Drug Store. 4a

BERGMAN & LUNCH offer as a special attention $25 to the person guessing the winning number of the $1000 Piano to be given away Oct. 6th.

1000 pounds BEESWAX wanted at Johnson & Platt's drug store. 1f

CARD TOILETS are being sold for $5.00 and upwards at the Spencer, Bywater Co., opposite Temple, south. 3ff

Dentistry.

Dr. J. THOMAS, SURGEON DENTIST, No. 16 Main Street. All work guaranteed. Anæsthetics administered. Friends and patrons invited. 4

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Prisoner 14 Either Leaving Home.

Dr. M. J. Davis is a prominent physician of Lewis, Cass County, Iowa and has been actively engaged in the practice of medicine at that place for the past thirty-five years. On the 25th of last May, while in Des Moines, on route to Chicago, he was suddenly taken with an attack of cholera. Having sold Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhœa Remedy for the past six or seven years, and knowing its reliability, he procured a bottle, the two doses of which completely cured him. For sale by Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept. 4dis

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