

MAGIC IS FACTOR IN MEXICAN GAMES

EXAMPLES ARE REPORTED

Various Rites and Beliefs Are Interwoven in Theory Athletic Efforts, Reports Museum Expert

"Just as it seemed certain that Purdue would block the Maroons, Coach Stagg chanted an incantation and hurriedly buried some bones. This so bewitched the Boilermakers that they broke in panic and Chicago was easily able to score a touchdown."

Above is the sort of statement sports writers would have in their reports of football games if college athletics were conducted on the same basis as the contests between teams of certain Mexican Indians. A complicated system of magic is employed in the games of these tribes, who live in the state of Chihuahua and to this day conserve many customs which they practised long before the coming of the Spaniards.

Hybrid Games

Among these tribes are the Tarahumare, who have a game which is a hybrid between a marathon race and a football game. Two footballs of the type they use, and a large assortment of bows and arrows, home-spun clothing, blankets and other objects which they wager on the contests, are on exhibition in the Hall of Mexico and Central America at Field Museum of Natural History. The Mohave Indians of New Mexico play practically the same game.

J. Eric Thompson, assistant curator of Central and South American archaeology of Field Museum, tells of the contests of the Tarahumare as follows:

"The Tarahumare are famed for their marathon running. Such is their endurance that they are able to run down even the swiftest deer. They

are often employed by ranchers to round up wild horses, and they invariably succeed, although it may take two or three days of fast running. However their skill and endurance is chiefly employed in marathon races.

Sides Are Chosen

"Sides are chosen and the members of the teams go into training. A manager is chosen to supervise each side. His duties are chiefly magical. He must see that no member of his team is bewitched, and he must sacrifice to the dead so they will help him. The bones of the dead are believed to produce feebleness; consequently an astute manager will bury bones at a place he thinks the rival team is likely to pass, warning his own men of the spot.

"Immediately before the race the runners smoke special cigars, made of the blood of turtles and bats stirred together, dried, and mixed with a little tobacco. These are believed to give the smokers greater swiftness and endurance. The race usually starts about mid-day. The morning is taken up in making bets of various objects, and in practising magic to assist the home team and harm its opponents.

Long Course

"The course run is often 150 miles long. It is divided into a dozen or so laps. The whole course is run without stopping. The Tarahumare race is distinguished from an ordinary marathon by the fact that the teams kick along a small ball as they run, dribbling it along as a football is dribbled in association football, except that the ball is kicked as far forward as possible. The men are forbidden to touch the ball with their hands, and their chief warns them that if they do so they are doomed to hell. The balls are made of the foot of oak trees of soft cottonwood, and are only about three inches in diameter.

"The runners wear magical rattles of deer-hoofs and pieces of hide, which are supposed to keep them awake. They do not run very fast, but keep up a steady six miles an hour for the whole 150 miles, stopping a second or two to drink cal-

THE LIBRARY OF THE... meal drink. At night the course is lit up by torches of pitch pine, carried by the runners or their friends. The Tarahumare are extremely bad losers. The losing team never concedes that the winners are better runners. They always insist that they were defeated by the unsportsmanlike magic employed by their rivals."

Thinking Out Loud

Under a new order a government agent is prohibited from employing his wife as a stenographer. Who said governments were heartless?

To be a bachelor in Italy, one must be able to pay the government 100 lier a year. And yet they say money doesn't bring happiness.

Americans spend \$287,000,000 a year for soap. There's no little boy in this country who couldn't think of a better use for all that money.

"A man has a right to control his wife," says a judge. But then, she might have a good "right" herself.

A French diplomat says the farmers in America do more thinking than any other class. Well, it does take a lot of thinking to understand the various plans for farm relief that have been formulated.

Thieves stole a \$400 painting from the University of California, leaving a Rembrandt worth \$20,000 untouched. Which shows the importance of education.

A British chemist says that in the future much of our food supply will be obtained from wood. Some of it tastes that way already.

Leach Cross, famous pugilist, has become a dentist. Probably he will prove to be a very inexpensive one, as he can do without anaesthetics for his patients.

Two girls, sisters, had their wedding ceremonies performed in an airplane speeding over Baltimore. But then they had to come down to earth, just like all brides.

Questions and Answers

Q—What year was the last government land in Illinois taken up under the homestead law?

S. E. K., Danville.

A—Perhaps it hasn't all been taken up yet. Frank Heavner, of Pearl, a school teacher, learned in 1926 that nobody held title to an island in the Illinois river between Pearl and Montezuma. So he proceeded to homestead it. After filing a claim he built a home on it and made other improvements. This year his corn ran fifty bushels to the acre.

Q—Can you give me the figures on concrete highway construction in Illinois for the year 1928? What is the total mileage in Illinois at this time?

F. A. J., Waukegan.

A—If the weather holds good the total amount of concrete road laid in Illinois in 1928 will be approximately 1,300 miles. Illinois now has about 7,700 miles of concrete highway.

Q—Can you tell me what percentage of the people of Illinois live in districts where gas is available?

C. M. D., Elgin.

A—It is estimated that Illinois has more than 7,000,000 population. Figures recently compiled estimated that approximately 4,500,000 live in cities, towns or communities piped for manufactured gas.

Taken For Man, She Sues

Suits for \$90,000 damages have been filed against the Coronado hotel by a woman guest who charges that the house detective slandered her when he broke into her room, suspecting she was a man because of a heavy voice induced by a cold.

WIDER HIGHWAYS SAFER IS URGED

MOTORISTS FAVOR THEM

President of Chicago Motor Club Is Chairman of National Wider Highways Association

"The slogan, 'Wider Highways Are Safer Highways,' is finding much favor among motorists who have occasion to negotiate the present system of narrow roads prevailing throughout the country," says Charles M. Hayes, president of the Chicago Motor club, and chairman of the National Wider Highways committee of the American Automobile association. "Congestion is one of the greatest contributing causes to automobile accidents," Mr. Hayes points out. "Narrow roads can carry only two lanes of traffic. If there is a stop and go light where the road leads through a village, the flashing of the red light will back up traffic for miles on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays. A slow-moving vehicle, whether it is a truck or someone 'breaking in' a new car can hold up traffic for miles, causing great delay and irritation."

"Any car wishing to pass another car must turn out into the path of vehicles coming from the opposite direction, and this is the cause of many serious and fatal accidents. This is all dangerous, it is costly, it is nerve-racking, and it is unnecessary. "With automobile registrations increasing at the rate of, say, 5 per cent, which was the increase of 1927 over 1926, there will be 1,156,365 more passenger cars and trucks on the highways of the nation this year than last, and it stands to reason that conditions on the roads will be chaotic, as well as unsafe, unless immediate steps are taken to provide adequate highways."

Buy a Trunk and Finds a Body in It

J. E. Butts purchased a trunk for \$14 at an "unclaimed baggage" sale at a railway station. Inside he found miniature casket containing the dismembered body of a Japanese. The trunk was lined and hermetically sealed with metal. Resting on the casket was an imperial Japanese passport, made out to Hisamata Zaa, forty-eight, a native of Okinawa Ken. The trunk had been in the custody of the Canadian Pacific for a year.

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Sweaters - Pullovers - Lumber Jackets

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