

were lighted all around and throughout the church, while clouds of incense floated over all. Each one in the large congregation was provided with a candle two feet in length. The music, both orchestral and choral, was grand. Chairs were provided for all, and the floor was handsomely carpeted. The best of society was represented, and I never saw a more elegant assemblage, all in deep black. President Diaz with his cabinet occupied seats near General Jackson and his friends, so there was a commingling of nationalities as well as of tears on that day.

Funeral cards are elaborate both in style and diction. The following will give an idea of the forms in general use:

"Died yesterday at half-past twelve, Señorita Dolores Garcia. Her mother, brothers, and relatives, in informing you of this sad event, beg that you will lift your prayers to the Eternal for the repose of her soul, and be kind enough to attend her funeral, which will take place to-day at four o'clock at the Church of Santa Vera Cruz."

The sending of cards or letters of condolence follows, as a matter of course, and where families have an extensive circle of acquaintances, every day in the week finds them writing to their afflicted friends.

Below will be found another still more poetic in its language, which was sent me upon the death of the gentleman named, who was the father of Señor Alberto Bianchi, the well-known author and journalist:



A la sombra del árbol santo de la Cruz, ayer á las ocho de la noche, voló al seno de su Criador el alma del

SR. D. ALBERTO BIANCHI

(PADRE).

Sus atribulados hijos piden para él oraciones á la piedad de sus hermanos en Jesucristo.

México, Setiembre 23 de 1886.

(Translation.)

Under the shade of the holy tree of the Cross, yesterday at eight o'clock at night, ascended to the bosom of his Creator, the soul of

SR. D. ALBERTO BIANCHI

(FATHER).

His afflicted children ask for him prayers from the piety of his brethren in Jesus Christ.

México, September 23, 1886.

The wearing of mourning is universal, not only for near relatives, but also for friends. A young lady dies, her companions don the somber garb for thirty days; if the father or mother of the girl should die, it is worn for fifteen days. By this time some other relative or friend may die, when the custom is again in force, and may be indefinitely prolonged. During all this time they seclude themselves from society. On visiting a house of mourning, likewise, custom prescribes a black dress; and for these ever-recurring occasions mourning costumes are an essential part of every lady's wardrobe.

Ladies do not attend funerals, but visits of *pésame* (regret) are made immediately after death, and for nine days those who cannot call send letters or cards of condolence.

The national feasts are those of the 16th of September and the 5th of May. Differences of opinion may exist upon every other subject; but on those days, the former recalling the *grito* (call) of Hidalgo for Independence, and the latter the victory of the Mexicans over the French at Puebla, all hands and hearts are united in giving them a fitting and enthusiastic welcome.

Courtship is something of a serious matter as undertaken under Mexican auspices. The probation may extend from five to ten years, or may even exceed that of Jacob, and at the end of this period the devoted Romeo has perhaps never entered the house—possibly not even spoken to his Juliet. Patience is a virtue all possess; and as time is of no consequence, they content themselves with waiting for something in the future. The lover walks slowly back and forth before her house for hours at a time, days and nights alike. Perhaps it

is from this fact that he assumes the unromantic appellation of *haciendo el oso* (playing the bear). He may also play the bear on horseback, and his "ladye faire" knows by intuition when he will pass, and, securely



LOVE-MAKING FROM THE BALCONY.

screened from public gaze remains behind the curtain on the balcony and merely shows her head or salutes him with her finger-tips. She goes to church or on the plaza, sure that he is not far away, and though they do not speak, a glance or smile each day is worth a lifetime. But frequently tiny *billets doux* find their way to the angel upstairs, by means of strings, and the family is none the wiser.

I remember to have seen one young man "playing the bear" until my deepest sympathies were enlisted in his behalf. Day by day he repaired to the same spot, on the corner of the street opposite my window, at No. 6 la Primera de la Providencia. For months the trying business had gone on, until he was reduced to a mere skeleton, and his hollow eyes had that expectant expression which marks the victim of love in Mexico. So

interested was I that I determined to know something of the fair creature to whom the luckless swain was yielding up his mental, moral and physical strength.

The father of the girl was so much opposed to the match, the young man being only a medical student, he forbade his going nearer than two squares of the house.

Having seen the effect of "playing the bear" on this lover, I was curious to see how the girl sustained the ordeal. Directed by his fixed and steady gaze upon the house, I found her standing on the balcony with only her head visible. Her eyes were fixed on him, and now and then the dainty little hand made motions towards him. After a few months thus spent, the poor fellow disappeared from the corner, which was perhaps the end of their love-making.

I was told by several English-speaking Mexicans that the larger proportion of the young men of the country greatly prefer "playing the bear" from the sidewalk, to entering the homes of the señoritas, even if permitted by custom.

I witnessed the opposite of this in the case of a young Mexican girl who had been reared by an American sister-in-law. Lupe was pretty and attractive, and naturally at an early age was the recipient, from the young men who had come within sight of her, of numerous bearish favors; but two of them, Fernando — and Julio —; became more deeply enamored than the rest; but the sister was determined there should be no "playing the bear," so she invited the young men to call at the house. I have seen as many as ten or twelve in her parlor in one evening, all animated and interested—each one being only too pleased to take his turn at a few moments' conversation with the señorita.

But a *dénouement*, quite unexpected, came. One of the young men who had become desperately enamored of the girl, found he had a rival in one of his friends. A dispute arose, some of the boys espousing one side and the remainder the other, until bloodshed seemed inevitable. No case in chancery ever required more skillful diplomacy than this, calling for the good offices of at least half a dozen outside

friends to adjust the matter and prevent a catastrophe. The rupture between the boys was never healed, but neither of them won the señorita. So, after all, perhaps it is better that they should have "bear playing" in order to win their wives. I confess that after witnessing these love affairs I was for once, as our latter-day politicians say, "on the fence," and quite as ready to fall on the "bear side" as on that of our less conventional, more modern love-making.

A Mexican lady related to me a method of courtship somewhat different. A señorita is sometimes made aware of the interest a young man takes in her, by being continually followed when walking along the street. In the course of time he writes a letter which he leaves with the *portero*, and it is always necessary to enlist the interest of these men by the bestowal of a little cash. She pays no attention to his first letters, but after a while she may perhaps notice his advances. He goes to the house each day and finds out her movements from the *portero*, governing himself accordingly. At last, accompanied by a responsible friend, he makes bold to call on the father and asks her hand in marriage. Then the father asks the girl if she is willing to marry the young man. She replies she cannot say until she has met him. When at length he calls, every member of the family, and even the servants, have the privilege of being present. After this, he is the *novio oficial* (accepted lover), but even if the marriage be postponed six months or as many years, he is never left alone for a moment with his *fiancée*.

Once admitted as *novio oficial*, it may be imagined that the fervor of his devotion will find vent in many lover-like expressions. As indicative of their warm, poetic imagination and passionate Southern nature, I append a few of the most characteristic of these phrases as used by both sexes:

Niña de mi alma!	Child of my soul!
¿Me quieres?	Dost thou love me?
Te adoro, te idolatro!	I adore thee, I idolize thee!
Me muero por ti!	I die for thee!

Eres mi dicha!	Thou art my happiness!
Te amo mas que á mi vida!	I love thee more than my life!
Eres mi único pensamiento!	Thou art my only thought!
Me mato por ti!	I kill myself for thee!
No te olvides de mi!	Do not forget me!
Siempre serás mi!	Thou wilt always be mine!
Tú serás mi solo amor!	Thou wilt be my only love!
No me engañes!	Do not deceive me!
No sabes cuanto te amo!	{ Thou dost not know how much I love { thee!
Oye, hijito, ¿me quieres de veras?	Say, my boy, dost really love me!
Que feliz soy á tu lado!	How happy I am by thy side!
No dejes de escribirme!	Don't fail to write me!
¿Vienes mañana?	Will you come to-morrow?
Ingrato, Ya lo sé todo!	Ingrate, I know all!
Pero hija, eso no es cierto!	But daughter, it is not true!
¿No me crees?	Dost thou not believe me?
Perdoname corazon!	Pardon me, heart!
Adios chula, hasta mañana!	Good-bye, precious, until to-morrow!
Sueño contigo!	I dream of thee!

The señorita is not intentionally, or by nature, a flirt. She would scorn to inveigle in her meshes the affections of her admirer. But, in addition to her irresistible eyes, there are certain little social and toilet graces which she unconsciously employs in a most expressive manner that never fail to bring him to her feet.

The most effectual and indispensable toilet accessory is the fan. Of every size, style, and color, it is often an expensive item in a fashionable lady's outfit. When manipulated by the fair owner—opened wide and waved in graceful challenge, raised to eyes or lips in witching coquetry, or even when peacefully folded in jeweled fingers—its language is varied and expressive.

Great care and attention is bestowed upon the *pañuelo* (handkerchief), which plays, too, an important part, second only to that of the fan.

For a young man of moderate means, matrimony is a serious undertaking. He not only furnishes the house and home, but the

bridal outfit as well. But in some of the wealthier families parents furnish the greater part of the latter themselves, restricting the purchases of the groom elect to perhaps the bridal dresses, the jewels, and other accessories. An ivory-covered prayer-book is an indispensable offering from the groom. The bridal tour is one expense from which he is now exempt, but as facilities for travel increase, perhaps in the near future, this item may be added to his already long list of expenditures. I believe the event of matrimony is no less troublesome than the long and tedious courtship. The war of reform made three marriage ceremonies necessary. Two months before, the young people must register at the cathedral, giving date of birth, in what city or country, vocation, etc., whether widow or widower. After this, the priest registers the same at the civil office, and their intentions must be placed on a bulletin board outside the office for twenty days. For five Sundays the priest publishes the bans. After this, accompanied by the notary public, he goes to the house of the bride, where she is asked if she acts of her "own free will and accord," and other necessary questions are put with as much freedom as though the subject were a transfer of real estate. A few days prior to the church wedding, the judge of the court, accompanied by six witnesses, the priest being one, performs the civil marriage. The dress worn on this occasion is presented by the groom.

I witnessed a church wedding at "Santa Brigida," and the Mexican ceremony is a pretty one. The groom passed many coins through the hand of the bride, indicating that she is to handle and control the household funds. They knelt at the altar with lighted candles in their hands, emblematical of the Christian faith, and a silken scarf was placed around their shoulders, after which a silver cord was put around their necks, and the ceremony was complete.

An American who contracts marriage in Mexico, regardless of faith or creed, must have three ceremonies—two in Spanish, and one more in either English or Spanish. This is the invariable rule even when marrying his countrywoman. He must, besides, make public notice of his intention by having it announced on

a bulletin board for twenty days. He may evade or escape the latter by the payment of a sum of money—it is said from \$60 to \$150; but in any event, he must have resided one month in the country. The three ceremonies consist of a contract of marriage—civil marriage, the only one recognized by law since 1858—and the church service, which is not compulsory with Americans, and may be celebrated in their own homes. The first two must take place before a judge, and four witnesses, at least, including the American Consul. The contract of marriage includes a statement of names, ages, lineage, business, and residence of the parties. The ceremony of the civil marriage—the legal one—is always in Spanish.

The length of time required for the completion of one of these marriage arrangements may be from one or two days to three months, as the parties understand facilitating such matters. But once such a knot is tied, it would be a difficult task to have it loosened by even the expert fingers of a Chicago lawyer.

Weddings are not generally widely announced. Intimate friends are invited to the marriage in the church, and afterward participate in the festivities that follow at the house. After the wedded pair are established in their own home, they send cards which read:

*"Tirso Calderon y Julia Hope*

*tienen el honor de participar á Vd. su enlace, y se ofrecen á sus ordenas en la casa, munero 6 a de la primera Providencia"* ("have the honor to inform you of their marriage, and their house as above mentioned is at your service"). In other words, you are considered a friend of the newly-wedded pair, and they will be happy to see you in their house.

Cards announcing a birth are thus expressed:

*"Tirso Calderon y Señora*

*tienen el gusto de participar á Vd. el nacimiento de su hijo, y lo ponon a sus ordenas,"* which means, in few words, that this gentleman and his wife have the pleasure of announcing the birth of their son, and place him "at your orders."