

THE HOUSE OF ADELANTADO MONTEJO.

FIRST HOUSE BUILT BY THE SPANIARDS IN YUCATAN. Merida, Yucatan, was founded on the site of an ancient Maya city, called Tihoo, in 1542, by Don Francisco de Montejo, Lieutenant-Governor and Captain-General. He was son of the Adelantado, Governor and Chief Justice of the provinces of Yucatan and Cozumel, Don Francisco Montejo.

Having conquered the nation, the Spaniards first built their dwellings like those of the aborigines, which are oblong huts, with the corners rounded. The wall is made of posts about six feet high stuck in the ground, tied together with very strong withes, as are the rafters of the roof. This is very slanting, and made of long, thin sticks, closely interlaced, and thatched with palm leaves brought down to within three or four feet of the ground, to serve as protection from wind and rain, being cropped short only over the doorway. The interstices between the posts that form the wall are filled up with mud, smoothed and whitewashed. There are no windows, but generally two doors, exactly opposite each other, though many have but one. The huts are 15 to 20 feet long and about 10 feet wide. The earth serves as a floor. These dwellings vividly recall to mind those of the Fans and others of equatorial Africa, as described by Paul B. Du Chaillu. Some of the huts have stone walls; then the thatch is cut shorter.

When the conquerors were no longer satisfied with that sort of dwelling, they destroyed some large stone mounds that surrounded what is now the central square, called *Plaza de la Independencia*, and used the stones to build their city, commencing on the same spot. The first house constructed under Montejo's direction is on the south side of the square, yet in good condition, because Senor Don Jose Maria Peon, the present owner, takes great pride in it, has the facade kept clean, and all necessary repairs made. On a stone in the facade are inscribed these words in Spanish: *The Adelantado Don Francisco Montejo caused this to be made in the year 1549.* The historian Father Cogolludo, in his interesting "History of Yucatan," book iv., chap. x., p. 205, says that the facade alone cost \$14,000.

Prominent among the elaborate ornaments are Spaniards stamping upon decapitated heads of Indians. The Spaniards are in full armor, while the Indians are represented with tears streaming down their cheeks. Alas! that this should be even yet symbolical of the social condition of the poor Indian, though a free (?) Mexican citizen!

The Montejo building is a curious combination of Spanish and Indian art. The invaders designed, the vanquished did the work, and many of the signs and figures are emblems of mythology and superstition. The structure is a little narrower at the top than at the base, as seen in the illustration. At the very top, above a tablet held by two lions, is a face, said to be intended for the Adelantado himself, and we see a similar face just below the middle of the cornice under the tablet.

Not far from this second face, on either side of it, are others, the son and daughter of the same gentleman. Beneath are the warriors mentioned, and between them the Spanish royal coat of arms.

Then comes the window, more like a great doorway, and a circular balcony, with several small heads just below the railing. Yet lower, and closer together, is another row of infantile heads, perhaps meant for cherubim. The balcony rests on the shoulders of a nude man, who, like a caryatid, sustains it as Atlas, in Greek mythology, was supposed to support the earth; only in this case the burden appears to be somewhat heavy for the individual, if we judge by his sad expression and forced posture.

Near the upper corner of the gateway is a face intended for a portrait of King Fernando. At the opposite corner is the sculptured bust of a woman in low necked dress, representing Isabella, Fernando's queen. The two faces are turned toward each other. A few feet below them are medallions, with pictures of a man and woman: on one side, Señora Dona Beatrice de Montejo; on the other, Senor Don Francisco Montejo, first owner of the house. Altogether this old edifice is curious and unique.

The gateway leads into a large open court, surrounded by apartments that have nothing interesting about them, being just the same as those of any other house in Merida. ALICE D. LE PLONGEON.

THE eyebrows may be darkened permanently by a silver hair dye, which can be had from any druggist.

Strange Remedies.

In an article on "Strange Medicines," in the *Nineteenth Century*, Miss Cumming quotes a few of the healing spells which are to this day practiced by the peasantry of various districts in Great Britain, and which are considered certain remedies.

The Northumbrian cure for warts is to take a large snail, rub the wart well with it, and then impale the snail on a thorn hedge. As the creature wastes away, the warts will surely disappear. In the west of England, eel's blood serves the same purpose. For goiter or wen, the hand of a dead child must be rubbed nine times across the lump, or, still better, the hand of a suicide may be substituted.

In the vicinity of Stamfordham, in Northumberland, whooping cough is cured by putting the head of a live trout into the patient's mouth, and letting the trout breathe into the latter. Or else a hairy caterpillar is put into a small bag and tied around the child's neck. The cough ceases as the insect dies.

Another cure for whooping cough is offerings of hair. In Sunderland, the crown of the head is shaved and the hair hung upon a bush or tree, with the full faith that as the birds carry away the hair, so will the cough vanish.

In Lincolnshire a girl suffering from the ague cuts a lock of her hair and binds it around an aspen tree, praying the latter to shake in her stead. In Ross-shire,

erysipelas is to cut off half the ear of a cat and let the blood drip on the inflamed surface.

In Cornwall, the treatment for the removal of warts or small pimples from the eyelids of children is to pass the tail of a black cat nine times over the part affected.

In Devonshire, the approved treatment for scrofula is to dry the hind leg of a toad and wear it round the neck in a silk bag; or else to cut off that part of the living reptile that answers to the part affected, and, having wrapped the fragment in parchment, to tie it round the sufferer's neck.

In the same county the "wise man's" remedy for rheumatism is to burn a toad to ashes and tie the dust in a bit of silk to be worn round the throat.

Toads are made to do service in divers manners in Cornwall and Northampton for the cure of nose bleeding and quinsy; while "toad powder," or even a live toad or spider, shut up in a box, is still in some places accounted as useful a charm against contagion as it was in the days of Sir Kenelm Digby. The old small-pox and dropsy remedy, known as *pulvis aethiopicus*, was nothing more nor less than powdered toad.

Frogs, too, are considered remedial. Thus, frog's spawn placed in a stone jar and buried for three months till it turns to water has been considered wonderfully efficacious in Donegal, when well rubbed into a rheumatic limb. In Aberdeenshire, a cure for sore eyes is to lick the eyes of a live frog. A man thus healed has thenceforth the power of curing all sore eyes by licking them!

In like manner, in Ireland, it is believed that the tongue that has licked a lizard all over will be forever endowed with the power of healing whatever sore or pain it touches.

Another Irish remedy is to apply a fox's tongue to draw a thorn from the foot. The tooth of a living fox, worn as an amulet, is deemed a cure for an inflamed leg. For deep-seated thorns, the application of a cast-off snake skin is efficacious—not to attract the thorn, but to expel it from the opposite side of the hand or foot.

In some of the Hebridean Isles, notably that of Lewis, the greatest faith prevails in the efficacy of perforated water-worn stones, called "snake stones." These are dipped into water, which is then given to cattle as a cure for swelling or for snake bite. If the stone is unattainable, the head of an adder dipped in the water gives an equally good result.

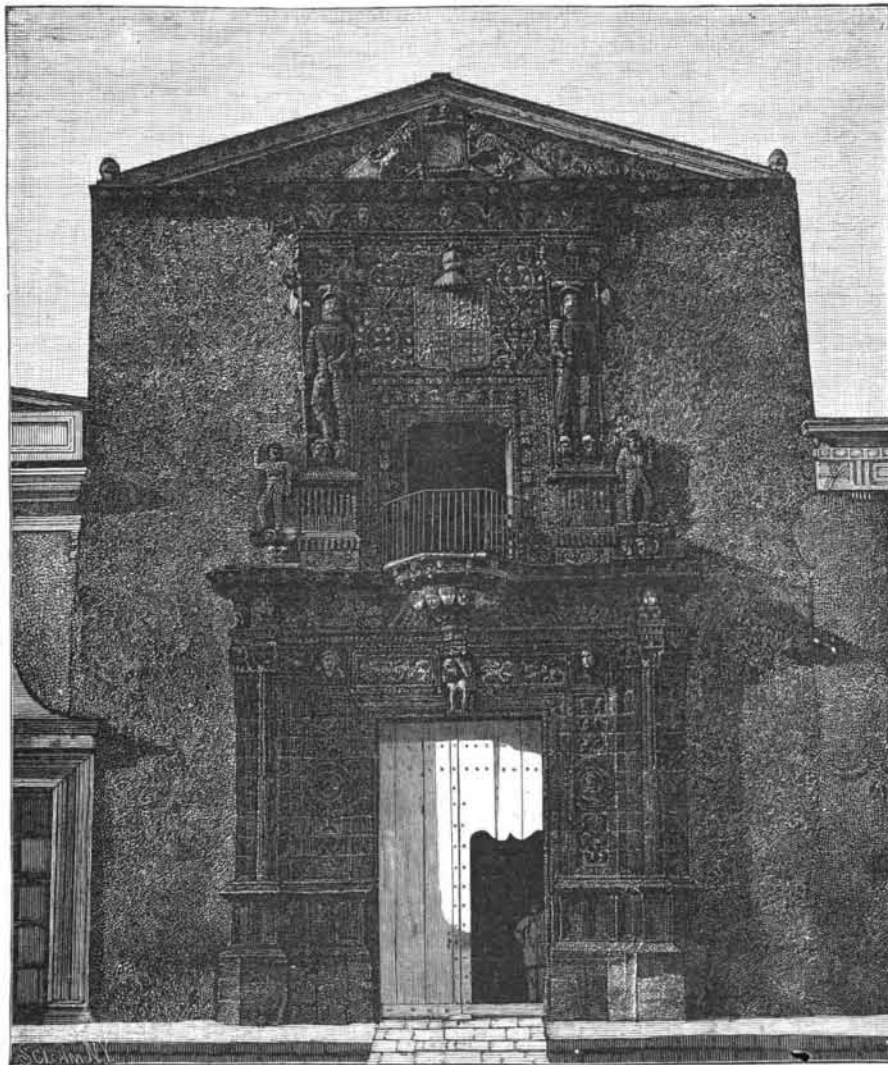
In Devonshire, any person bitten by a viper is advised to kill the creature at once and rub the wound with its fat. It is said that this practice has survived in some portions of the United States, where the flesh of the rattlesnake is accounted the best cure for its own bite. Black, in his "Folk Medicine," states that the belief in the power of snake skin as a cure for rheumatism still exists in New England. Such a belief is probably a direct heritage from Britain.

In Durham, an eel's skin, worn as a garter round the naked leg, is considered a preventive of cramp, while in Northumberland it is esteemed the best bandage for a sprained limb.

So, too, in Sussex, the approved cure for a swollen neck is to draw a snake nine times across the throat of the sufferer, after which the snake is killed, and its skin sewed in a piece of silk and worn round the patient's neck. Sometimes the snake is put in a bottle, which is tightly corked and buried in the ground, and it is expected that, as the victim decays, the swelling will subside.

Treatment of Insect Stings.

The stings of insects, such as gnats, mosquitoes, etc., says *Le Pharmacien Populaire*, are often painful. In such a case apply spirit of hartshorn or volatile alkali to the part. Spider bites are not only painful, but often venomous, and it is necessary to wash them with salt water or diluted vinegar. The sting of the bee is harmful only when the sting remains sticking in the wound. So the first thing to be done is to press the wound in order to make it bleed, since the blood that flows will carry along a portion of the poison. Then suck the wound and wash it well with water and then with a solution of knes powder. This latter, which is much used in England, consists of three parts of chloride of lime to eight of common salt. An ounce of this powder is to be dissolved in a tumbler of water. If this composition is not to be had, Goulard's extract may be used. For the sting of the scorpion, volatile alkali should be used, and after the pain subsides, an emollient cataplasm may be applied.



THE FIRST EUROPEAN HOUSE BUILT IN MERIDA, YUCATAN, A. D. 1549.

where living cocks are still occasionally buried as a sacrificial remedy for epilepsy, some of the hair of the patient is generally added to the offering. At least one holy well in Ireland (that of Tubber Quan) requires an offering of hair from all Christian pilgrims who come here on the last three Sundays in June to worship St. Quan. As a charm against toothache, it is necessary to go thrice around a neighboring tree on the bare knees and then cut off a lock of hair and tie it to a branch. The tree thus fringed with human hair of all colors is a curious sight and an object of deep veneration.

The remedy for a toothache at Tavistock, in Devonshire, is to bite a tooth from a skull in the churchyard, and keep it always in the pocket.

Spiders are largely concerned in the cure of ague. In Ireland, the sufferer is advised to swallow a living spider. In Somerset and the neighboring counties, he is to shut a large black spider in a box and leave it to perish. Even in New England, a lingering faith in the superstitions of the mother country leads to the manufacture of spider web pills for the cure of ague, and Longfellow tells of a popular cure for fever—

"By wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell."

This was the approved remedy of our British ancestors for fever and ague; and in Sussex, a live spider rolled up in butter is still considered good in cases of obstinate jaundice.

At Loch Carron, in Ross-shire, an occasional cure for