

**CATALOGUE OF A  
COLLECTION OF OBJECTS  
ILLUSTRATING THE  
FOLKLORE OF MEXICO**

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Catalogue of a collection of objects illustrating the folklore of Mexico by Frederick Starr

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OF  
A COLLECTION OF OBJECTS  
ILLUSTRATING THE  
FOLKLORE OF MEXICO.

BY  
FREDERICK STARR,  
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

WITH THIRTY-TWO FIGURES.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE Collection of Objects described in the following pages is a gift by Professor Starr to the Folk-Lore Society. It is due to him, as well as of interest to the Members of the Society, to state shortly how it was this gift came to be made, and upon what conditions. Being at Chicago in the latter days of August, 1897, I took the opportunity of calling on Professor Starr, with whom I had already had some correspondence on anthropological matters, and whose personal acquaintance I was anxious to make. He received me with great kindness; and in the course of the interview I learned that he was making a special study of the anthropology of Mexico; and he showed me many interesting things which he had brought back from his travels in that country. I was especially attracted by a series of pottery figures (*Tastocanes*) representing the characters in a passion play performed in one of the country districts of Mexico, and a series of masks, also in pottery, worn by the actors. As I listened there came upon me the wish to secure a set of the figures for the Folk-Lore Society; and I inquired whether it would not be possible to do so. Professor Starr readily and kindly undertook to procure a set for me. After my return home, however, I received a letter from him, intimating that he had changed his mind, and offering instead to make at his own expense, and present to the Society, a Collection of Objects illustrating the Folklore of Mexico, subject to three conditions:—

1. That the Collection should be kept as a Mexican Collection, with the donor's name attached.

2. That the Society should print an Illustrated Catalogue which he would prepare and pass through the press.

3. That the objects should be displayed at a meeting of the Society, which he would attend, and when he would describe and explain some of the more important items.

This letter I forwarded without loss of time to Mr. Alfred Nutt, then President of the Society, who took the matter up warmly. A Council Meeting was called, and Professor Starr's generous offer was gratefully accepted. The Collection arrived in London last winter; and in June the donor himself came over and unpacked the boxes. A joint meeting of the Folk-Lore Society and of the Anthropological Institute was held, by the kindness of the Institute, at its rooms, on the 27th June, at which Professor Starr exhibited and explained the Collection.

It would be out of place to attempt here a formal appreciation of either the Collection or the Catalogue. Their value will be obvious on the most cursory glance at the pages which follow. As a sample, however, of the minuteness of Professor Starr's ethnological observations, I would draw attention to the section on Children's Outdoor Games, occupying upwards of 33 pages of the Catalogue—a section of course unrepresented by anything in the Collection. The scientific interest and importance of Children's Games have hardly as yet been adequately recognised. But anthropologists who, like Professor Starr, have had the opportunity of studying the games of savage children on the spot, are awake to the lessons that may be learnt from them. The account of the games of Mexican-Spanish children given here may be compared with those of British and American children's games by Mrs. Gomme and Mr. Newell, and with that of Sicilian children's games by Dr. Pitrè in the thirteenth volume of his great *Biblioteca*

*delle Tradizioni Popolari Siciliane*. Dr. Feilberg's study of the game of Hopscotch as played in Denmark (*Folklore*, vol. vi, p. 359) will also form an admirable commentary on the analogous games reported and illustrated by diagrams in this volume.

The formal thanks of the Folk-Lore Society have already been tendered to Professor Starr. But the Society desires further to place on record here its keen sense of gratitude for his generosity, and to express the hope that the Collection in its permanent place of deposit (the University Museum of Archæology and Ethnology, Cambridge) and this Catalogue may realise the intentions of the donor, by the facilities they will afford, especially to British and American students of anthropology, for studying the traditions of the Mexican-Spanish population of the ancient empire of the Aztecs.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

HIGHGARTH, GLOUCESTER,  
*October, 1899.*