

ALL SAINTS DAY AT JEMEZ, NEW MEXICO.

ALBERT B. REAGAN.

As the Jemez Indians are Catholics, they observe All Saints Day as other Catholics do, but after their own fashion. Whether mass is held in the Jemez church on that day or not, at daybreak the sexton commences to pound the two bells in the belfry of the church alternately with a hammer. This pounding he continues till sun up. The Indians then commence coming one by one to give gifts as prayers for the good of all saints. Some of these gift-carriers have baskets of grain, some baskets of fruit, others baskets of baked bread. On entering the church, each gift-carrier proceeds to the altar, and, having made the cross and said the appropriate Catholic prayer, he places his gift upon the altar and leaves the church at once. On going out of the church he pulls the two bell ropes as often as he chooses, causing the clapperless bells to pound each other into a dull monotonous choppy ringing, thus declaring to the village and to his God that he has deposited his gift. This gift depositing is carried on throughout the entire day. The proceeds, thus obtained, are given to the priest.

