

Wives of a Dusky King.

QUAINT WHIMS AND WAYS IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

Tribal customs in Central Africa provide interesting reading in "The Bakitara," written by a famous missionary, the Rev. John Roscoe. Before the Baganda made their incursions, Kitara, or Bunyoro, was the largest and most powerful kingdom in the lake region of Central Africa. The Bakitara themselves were invaders and milk-drinkers to whom the cow is sacred. The aboriginal negroes were their servants attending exclusively to agriculture. If one of these servants married into a cowman's family he was looked up to by his own people, "even his parents kneeling before him to address him." The supreme God, worshipped by the Bakitara—Ruhanga—"was regarded as having retired from active participation" in affairs, and the care of the tribe was in the hands of numerous minor deities, including a "god of small-pox," a "god of Albert," and a "god of the weather." The rain-makers had "pots for supplying rain, wind, hail, or any other type of weather." If the down-pour was excessive, the king sent for the chief rain-makers and put them in the rain in an open space near the throne-room, with great pots of rain-water before them which they were compelled to drink. The king slept in the royal dairy. On the floor there slept a man of a certain clan, "and the king stepped over him as he left the bed." The chosen man was always very black, and the king, when stepping over him, was supposed to leave the darkness of night upon him. Before the king's rising there was a quaint ceremony of anointing the royal toes, for "removing evil from the king in order that he might step forth without fear." After the king had entered his bed "no one in the royal enclosure was expected to remain awake." If the king was "blistered" a treatment in common use—each wife had a blister made on the same place, to show her sympathy with him and, by sympathetic magic to help him. On behalf of the king it was the duty of a woman, whose official title was Mulanga, to "visit the kraals and see the girls for herself and choose those who would please him." There were risks attached to the honour of being a king's wife. Cows and other bribes, therefore, were eagerly offered to Mulanga, and tears of entreaty shed. It was "usual for a man to bite the woman he loved on the upper arm so as to leave a lasting mark." Should a cat or pet monkey bite or scratch a wife on the arm "she was sent away to her family, for such a mark was looked upon as a sign that she had a lover." An adulterer would therefore bite a woman on the under side of the arm, where no one but herself would see it. Dogs were kept and treated with great care both by cowmen and servants. They are kept tied up when there was any infectious disease about, especially if it were small-pox, for they were supposed to visit every place hunting for food and to carry infection with them. Any dog found wandering in a place where there was disease would be killed at once.

Why Fish Have Scales?

Very much as we grow "nails," and horses and other animals hooves, in the places most requiring protection, so the fish's skin has produced "scales."

Each type and shape—there are several, some being square, others all but circular—is most suited to the peculiar habits of its wearer, helps in every case designed as a protective covering, a sort of armour, against the rocks and other obstacles which would otherwise injure the tender under-skin.

The colour scheme, too, of the scales tends to make the fish invisible, and so serves as a kind of camouflage against its enemies.

The scales, being laid slate-wise, each separate plate overlapping, make for easier motion, the arrangement offering the minimum of resistance to the friction of the water, while the slimy secretion which oozes through binds the armour and at the same time prevents it from becoming water-logged and heavy.

Bread crumbs can be used on top of macaroni and cheese, scallopedysters and many other dishes.

BILLY'S UNCLE



By BEN BATSFORD

Cleaning-up Ancient "Finds."

When treasures, such as those recently discovered in Egypt, are unearthed they are by no means ready for preservation in the cases of a museum. They need "spring-cleaning" first by highly-skilled hands.

Metal objects, of gold, silver, and bronze, are usually in good condition. Sometimes, however, they are too tarnished to show up well in any photographs to be taken, and in that case they are renovated by gentle rubbing with linen and soap and water.

Clothes and draperies after a period of many thousands of years are naturally frail. To preserve them they are sprayed with a solution of dissolved celluloid.

Leather, which has become black and hard through age, presents a difficult problem. No thoroughly efficient softening substance has been discovered, but experiments are being made with castor oil, lanoline, and vaseline.

Plaster also needs extremely careful handling, especially when it has been painted or gilded after being laid on wooded objects.

Where it has come away from the wood, or where there is slight damage, paraffin wax is poured in as a liquid, whilst portions of the painted surface which may have come away are fastened on with the celluloid solution.

Words We Misuse.

Is it polite to call, say, an ex-Cabinet Minister, an idiot? We often do it, and really it's quite a civil and proper description, though we don't know this when we use the word.

Originally an "idiot" only meant a private individual, as opposed to someone in office. Then it came to mean someone who wasn't in office, because he wasn't fit to be, and so in time it picked up its present sense of a fool. So really in that particular case we used the word exactly right—without knowing it. Just because it has changed it's meaning.

"Patent" Means "Open."

"Patent" is another queer word. We always look upon it as meaning private and secret. Somebody has the secret of a patent medicine, as someone owns the patent rights of some invention.

Really the word means open, and the monopoly of the secret invention used to be granted by the Crown to someone under Letters Patent. This meant a grant open for all the world to read, and anyone who cared to take the trouble had the right to inspect the document hanging over the monopoly. So in time we began to look upon a patent as equivalent to a monopoly. The meaning has changed again.

"Handsome" Men Were "Handy" Men

Take "handsome," which really means a handy man, someone always ready when wanted—Some wife—a long time ago—must have once referred to her hubby as the sort of man always ready to take a turn at the mangle or do an odd job, and so the word got to mean a proper sort of man, and gradually changed to a good looking man. But that wasn't it's old meaning.

Look at "ague," a sort of fever. It's all that is left of the old French words, *fièvre ague*, meaning, Sharp Fever. We've forgotten the "fever" and kept the "ague" and the result is our "ague." There's another good word "gone wrong."

Dead Restored.

Dr. Dennis Crile, a prominent physician in Chicago, has aroused considerable comment by claiming that he has restored to life persons who were absolutely dead. The professional standing and mental accomplishments of Dr. Crile forbid the thought of deliberate misrepresentation, and his announcement has therefore excited more than ordinary attention. Dr. Hugh N. Mackechin, president of the Medical Society, told a press representative that "the process of Dr. Crile's restorative to life is injecting by a hypodermic needle into the dead heart an extract called 'adrenalin,' which is an extract

SUFFERED FROM SEVERE PIMPLES

On Face, Caused Intense Itching. Cuticura Heals.

"I suffered great annoyance from severe pimples on my face, which I attributed to the use of poor soap. The pimples were hard, red and rather large, and feasted. They were scattered all over my face and caused intense itching and burning. My face looked unattractive. This condition lasted about two months.

"I read an advertisement for Cuticura Soap and Ointment and purchased some. I could see an improvement, and in two months I was healed." (Signed) Miss E. F. Miller, Arthur, Minnesota, Prince Edward Island.

Beauty your skin by daily use of Cuticura Soap, Ointment and Tablets.

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Efficient Type Of Airplane Carrier.

LONDON, May 18. (A.P.)—Every building in London with a flat roof has become a potential airbase by reason of the invention of apparatus to facilitate the landing and taking off of airplanes from the decks of Britain's air-craft carriers. The business man of the future, English air experts predict, will ride in an elevator to the roof of his home and leave by airplane. The invention which will make this possible will enable every navy of the future to put to sea with not only a vast number of airplanes, flying-boats and seaplanes, but its own airbases and workshops, say these writers.

Already some vessels have been converted into aircraft-carriers by the United States, Great Britain and Japan, but the British admiralty has laid down ships of this kind, which are held to be better than those of any other power. They have not only been provided with airplane landing facilities, but are as well equipped to carry out repairs as is any ground station of the Royal Air Force.

The decks of these aircraft-carriers are entirely free of all obstructions. The funnels for carrying away smoke are set on the starboard side. The recent appearance of two of these huge aircraft-carriers in the Dardanelles threw a fright into the Turks, who believed them to be strange monsters of the deep.

In the new type of aircraft-carrier there are two decks connected by huge lifts. The upper is the airdeck, and the lower is equipped with workshops for carrying out repairs. There are also supplies of necessary spare parts, ranging from a propeller to a complete engine, all ready for instant use. The flying deck is fitted with a searchlight and landing-light tower, which make it possible for a machine to land at night, the light illuminating the deck of the vessel and the surrounding water. There are also cranes for hoisting on board flying boats which need repair.

It is now possible for the fastest machines to land with safety on the deck of an airplane-carrier. An arrangement of nets brings the airplane to a standstill without danger, and a machine which attains a speed of three miles a minute can land in a distance of not more than 40 feet.

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