

MY DAY WITH SCORPION EATERS

Some of the Remarkable Tortures Undergone by African Fanatics Described by American Who Witnessed Them.

They swallow live scorpions and choke not; they pierce themselves with swords and bleed not; they press red-hot irons to their naked flesh and burn not. Such are some of the marvellous feats performed by African fanatics in the sacred city of Kairouan, near Tunis, less than fifty miles from the Mediterranean coast. They may be witnessed any Friday afternoon by any one who is hardy enough to journey through the hot sands of the desert, for in Kairouan even infidels are allowed to watch the sacred rites.

Kairouan has eight-five mosques and ninety zaouia praying places, or Moslem schools, in which the fanatics go through their terrible ordeals every Friday afternoon throughout the year. What took place in the zaouia of Sidi Mohammed ben Aissa of Meknes one afternoon recently is described by Mr. Frank Edgardo Johnson, who was present, in the National Geographic Magazine.

"The high priest, called a sheik, the second high priest, called a moulid, and the third, called a caliph, and the elders of the zaouia formed a large circle, sitting on the floor chanting and beating their tom-toms, now fast, then slow. Several rows of men, bowing and swaying to the rhythm of the music. Faster and faster beat the tom-toms; faster and faster swayed the lines of men.

"After what seemed a long time a young man jumped from the front line and ran toward the sheik, or priest, who had arisen and given him his hand to kiss; whereupon he immediately stripped to the waist, keeping on only a pair of white Oriental trousers.

"A wooden box full of scorpions had been brought over to me to look at. There were black, yellow and white, and I knew from experience how dangerous they were. An under-priest, 'baché chaouche,' stood upon a sort of stool and held high above his head a large scorpion by the tail. The fanatic hawled, snarled, and jumped for it. The way a mad dog snaps at persons, and his eyes had an unnatural stare and glassy look, and he foamed and frothed at the mouth.

"After a few seconds the baché chaouche dropped the scorpion into the fanatic's open mouth. He gave one snap and gulped it down alive, to be followed in an instant by another. By this time about twenty men and youths were stripped to the waist, all snapping and frothing at the mouth. The first fanatic came so near me that I could feel his hot breath on my face.

"An under-priest had brought up two round swords—the size of my little finger and about one meter in length. The chaouche seized the flesh and muscles of the fanatic's shoulder, and, with a quick thrust, drove the forefinger through so that about fifteen inches protruded on either side of the shoulder. He then did the same with the second sword to the other shoulder. Two more forefingers had been brought by an under-priest. All the swords had handles of hard wood, shaped like a handle of a hammer.

"The fanatic braced himself and the chaouche, chanting a verse from the Koran, drove the sword into one side of the abdomen. The second side of the abdomen, likewise, the sword was driven in. With these four swords sticking into him, the fanatic walked about and the baché chaouche followed him and at every other step hit with full force with a kind of wooden hammer on the hard wooden balls fastened as handles to the swords, driving them deeper at every blow.

"The leaves of the 'prickly pear' had been brought in in large baskets, and other fanatics, instead of being thrust through with swords, lay down and rolled on a bed of prickly pear leaves—the Barbary variety, without thorns, and men covered their bodies with more leaves. The chanting and beating of the tom-toms continued meanwhile.

"The noise of the music and the you-you-you of approval from the women hidden behind great lattice screens, the close air and the odor of incense, mingled with the smell of sweat, made me almost nauseated. About seventy men—old, middle-aged, and young—underwent this terrible ordeal.

"The swords were pulled out by the chaouche, or moulid, who placed what looked like a large bandana handkerchief about the sword and over the wound, and with great force jerked out the sword. The fanatic would throw his arms around the neck of the moulid and cling to him, while he whispered a few words of comfort into his ear. Immediately his eyes would close and he would stare, and his face relax and become normal. During my journeys through the

Troglodyte country in extreme Southern Tunisia, I was frequently permitted, as guest of the caliph, to see the Assassins at their rites. One moonlight night, as everything was in full swing—Brebisch, Mohammed and I sitting on the flat roof, the courtyard being too small to contain all that wanted to follow the service—the captain of the Assassins, a digenees came up with several officials leaving for Morocco the next morning. Immediately everything stopped. The officers were non-believers, and they would not continue their religious rites. No threats of imprisonment or punishment were of avail.

"At the end of the service the met would lie stiff on the ground, apparently dead. Only one Assassin, however, biting their ears, would the fanatic come to. Five times during my stay at Foun Fatahoulne I saw the same man—he keeps the large Arab café near the market place—swallow from eight to fifteen ten-penny nails.

"One curious fact is that members of this sect are always proof against the stings of scorpion and snake bites, not only when under this sort of hypnotic spell, but when working at the daily task. I could not believe this statement until I saw it proved time and time again. Do they die? Do they bleed? were questions that I was asked frequently in America. If they die, one never knows, and they should not bleed, and do not as a rule, but they bleed profusely once in a while, and this is what one of the high priests told me when I asked them about it.

"If a man has broken any of the commandments of the Koran, or defiled himself in any way, and comes to the religious rites of the

Slaves

By Bertin Braley



When fashion first springs something "utter" and new We laugh at it loudly and fear it. And as we shrug our shoulders and glance askew And swear we will never come near it. But presently all of us note the new style And quickly thereafter we grab it. And the fashion at which we were aiming a smile Instead of a frown is a habit.

You swore up and down you would NEVER put on The sort of a hat that was "latest." Yet that is the style of a lid that you don And claim is the best and the greatest. Your good wife declared she would NOT wear a skirt So tight that she scarcely could "wobble." Yet here she comes pattering, natty and pert, In a gown that is exceedingly hobbie.

Now fashion's like vice—for at first you endure Then you pity the people who chase it. And then you respond to the mode and its lure And fall into line—and embrace it!

THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

March 3, 1912.
[Copyright, 1911, by Rev. T. S. Lincoln, D. D.]

The Call of the First Disciples.
Mark 1:14-28; Luke 4:1-11.

Golden Text—The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest. Matt. ix, 37-38.

1. Verses 14-15—How do you understand the phrase, "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God?"
2. What is the sign of the times?
3. If a man is truly penitent does he necessarily believe the gospel? Why or why not?

4. Verses 16-18—Take the two occupations, literal fishermen and "fishers of men," and say which would be the more honorable calling to one whom God had called to be a literal fisherman.

5. Did Jesus invite or command them to follow him?
6. How do you account for the strange fact that these two men so promptly forsook their nets and followed him?

7. Verses 19-20—Why did Jesus have a preference for unlearned fishermen rather than scholars to become his chief apostles?
8. Why is it probable that Jesus knew these men in advance and selected them for their fitness for the work?

9. Does God ever call any man to a work for which he is not fitted? Give your reasons.

10. Verses 21-22—Is every man under obligation to keep the Sabbath day and to do some good on that day, as Jesus did? Give your reasons.

11. Will any preacher who knows the mind of God astonish his hearers as Jesus did?
12. Verses 23-25—What proof is there that today a very bad man, possessed with the worst devil we know, may by coming to Jesus be suddenly made a very good man?

13. Luke 4:1-3—Should all true preachers be as popular and draw crowds like Jesus did at this time? Why or why not?
14. There are thousands of people on the streets and at different resorts who never attend any place of worship. Why is it the duty of the modern church to send the gospel to them where they are?

15. Verses 4-7—What reason is there to think that God takes as much interest in our secular business as Jesus did in the business of Peter?

16. Do all those who get God's directions on their business matters obtain from him reliable information as to where or how success may be achieved? Why or why not?
17. Why should our past business

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18. Verses 26-28—What proof is there that today a very bad man, possessed with the worst devil we know, may by coming to Jesus be suddenly made a very good man?

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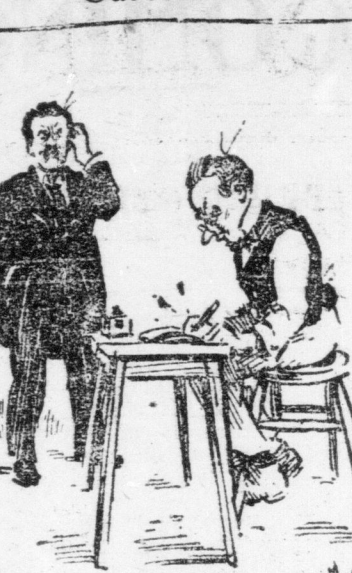
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35. Why should our past business

House of Commons Caricature



With the Honorable the Post Master General, more worried looking than ever, dictating the thousand-word memorandum to the Magdalen Islands.

failure be no bar to our faith concerning God's present business directions?

18. Verses 8-9—How do you account for it that this great business success made Peter see his sins?

19. Do phenomenal business blessings increase or decrease a good man's humility?

20. Verse 11—When is it right and when wrong for a Christian to give up his secular business and devote himself wholly to Christian work?

Lesson for Sunday, March 10, 1912. Jesus the Healer. Mark 1:29-45; Matt. ix, 23-25.

March 10, 1912.
[Copyright, 1911, by Rev. T. S. Lincoln, D. D.]

Golden Text—Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. Matt. viii, 17.

1. Verses 29-31—If this sickness of Peter's wife's mother had been that of any other woman would Jesus have been equally interested?

2. What benefit is it to us to tell God when our loved ones are sick?

3. Verses 32-34—Is there any reason to expect that God, in these days, will heal our sick in any way resembling the manner in which Jesus healed sick people?

4. How do you account for the fact that the devils all seemed to know Jesus?

5. Verse 35—Why was it necessary for Jesus to get up at a great while before day, and in a solitary place, engage in protracted prayer?

6. To what extent is it duty or privilege for every Christian to follow the example of Jesus in the matter of protracted private prayer?

7. Would you say that Jesus had certain set times for prayer, or did he pray only when he felt the need, and which method ought we to adopt?

8. Verses 36-37—Did Simon and the rest of them do well to disturb Jesus in his private prayer, or should they have waited until his return? Give your reasons.

9. Verse 38—What is the difference between the mission of Jesus and that of any one of his true followers?

10. Verse 39—Should a man with a special message confine his work to one church or to one town? Give your reasons.

11. Verses 40-42—If Jesus were preaching in the flesh today would he pay the same attention to the cure of physical diseases as he did in that day or would he refer them to the physicians and surgeons?

12. In view of the progress of medical science and the marvelous feats of surgery, would you say that God's present plan for the cure of sickness is by these scientific methods? Give your reasons.

13. If it is God's plan now to cure sickness by human methods, why did Jesus in his day cure people miraculously?

14.—Christ in that day was moved with compassion by individual cases of sickness and cured them miraculously.

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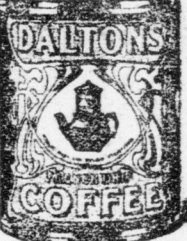
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NOVEL SERVICE IN ENGLISH CHURCH

Held in Dim Light So That Nobody's Clothes Can Be Criticized.

The well-known epicketer-parson, Rev. F. H. Gillingham, has discovered a problem in Birmingham. His parish—Holy Trinity, Bordesley—is both large and poor. Of the 12,000 souls within it there is a disquietingly large percentage making profession of no religious leanings.

How to reach the known non-churchgoers is Mr. Gillingham's difficulty. The other night he commenced an experiment novel to the Established Church in the city, and certainly not commonly adopted elsewhere. He held a lantern service, lasting from 10 to 11 p.m., in a room which there is a photograph of the vicar standing at the wicket, hat in hand, puts the position pointedly by quoting various excuses often heard by clerics:

I don't go to church, because—
I have no decent clothes.
I can't find my place.
I haven't time.

Accepting these excuses in all sincerity, the vicar has arranged lantern services, lasting an hour, to be held on the first Sunday of each month, at 10 p.m. The invitations conclude with these reassuring undertakings:

No questions asked.
No lights turned up.
No books needed.

A parish, of 12,000 and no curate implies much work. The vicar has an enthusiastic lieutenant, however, in a lay-reader, and a band of 30 workers has been recruited to go out into the highways and byways to extend the invitation to those who neglect to attend the services of any church.

Employers in this factory-dotted district have displayed the vicar's poster in their workshops, and Sunday night there was a motley crowd in the dimly-lighted church, who, having witnessed a lantern exhibition which combined religious and topical interests, were allowed quietly to slip away into the darkness, "no questions being asked."

BOOTH AS HAMLET.

Edwin Booth possessed the princely mind, the gloomy temperament, the introspective propensity, the contemplative disposition, the moody manner, the slender nervous physique that are appropriate to the character of Hamlet. He could be genial and even gay when in company with an intimate friend, but in general he was reserved

Residence, Dorchester Ave., Montreal West.



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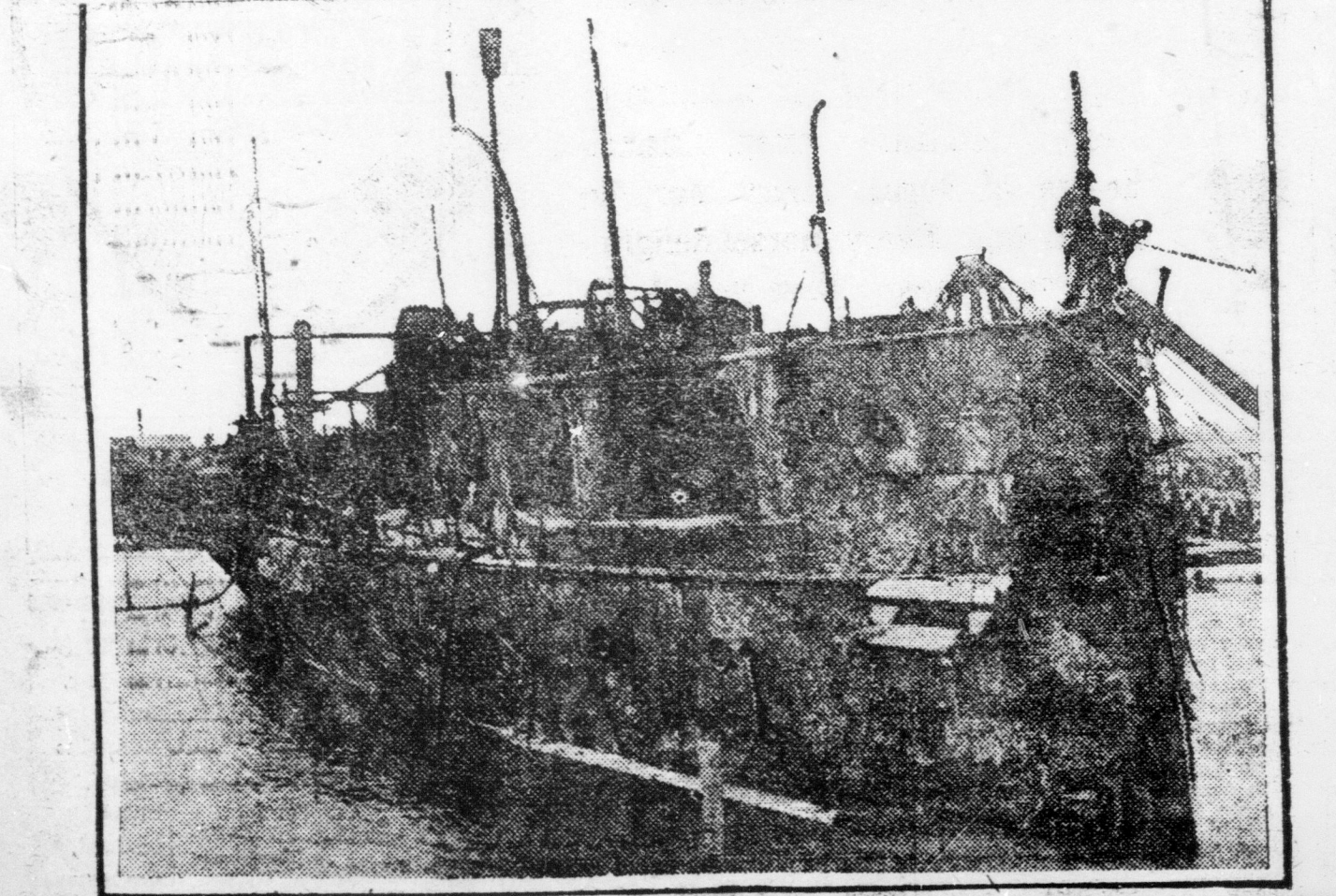
These words or expressions having the same meaning are contained in hundreds of the letters I have received during the past year. Many were from women who had suffered from various forms of womb, others from women who had escaped dangerous surgical operations, as the tumors and ulcers had been removed by the action of Orange Lily; and others who had suffered from suppressed menstruation, leucorrhoea, painful periods, etc. For all these and the other troubles known in general as Women's Disorders, Orange Lily furnishes a positive scientific, never-failing cure. It is applied direct to the suffering organs, and its operation is certain and beneficial. As a trial actually proves its merit, I hereby offer to send, absolutely free, a box of Orange Lily, sufficient for ten days' treatment, to every suffering woman who will write for it. Enclose 3 stamps. MRS. FRANCIS E. CURRAN, Windsor, Ont.

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might happen to me, and I believed that there was no horror that I had not imagined, but I never dreamed of such a dreadful thing as that." He was deeply religious, in the broadest sense of that word, and he was credulous of the possibility of spiritual ap- paritions.

First Photograph of the Maine Afloat Again After Fourteen Years



This photograph just received from sea soon, and sent finally to the bot the remnant of the battleship Maine was floated to the surface of Havana Harbor, Cuba, was taken just after temporary coffer-dam built about the wreck. The hull will be taken out to harbor by pumping water into the 16 ton.