

The Flame of The Temple,

In the city of Kangluc something happened which caused the greatest excitement. This was twenty years ago and nearly everybody who knew of it has died or forgotten it. Something else happened which, although very serious to a few, was forgotten a deal sooner than the other thing.

Up on the hill just at the west of the town is the temple in which burned the Everlasting fire. A priest sat night and day by the altar upon which burned the fire and guarded it from profane touch and fed it with peanut oil. The story-tellers of Kangluc said that the flame had burned for a thousand years, and at first had been carried through the forest of Er Rarat, a hundred miles from the flame at Libb. But then they are such liars. You can never believe them.

It happened just at noon that the flame went out and the priest came running bare-footed down the street, shrieking and jerking at his long white beard. Of course as soon as the people knew it, shops and bazaars were closed as by magic, and in a little time the whole people were crowding and pushing up the hill, weeping and howling. This flame had been burning for a thousand years, you will remember, and to have it go out meant much.

Then, too, as is customary in any excitement, an Englishman was said to be at the bottom of it; and in scarcely ten minutes the town was threatened by one of the worst riots since the capture of Al Soor. However, the English officials talked and swore, and policemen broke heads, and the men at the club went into the mob with their polo sticks, and soon the disturbance was at an end. The shopmen sat calmly behind their wares and no one would have dreamed that such a turmoil was going on an hour previous.

Scarcely was this settled though, than it was discovered that Mrs. Ormsley's little boy was missing. Ormsley himself was off north and would not be back for two weeks, and Mrs. Ormsley was distracted over the lost. No doubt in all the riot of the afternoon, some one stirred by the idea that the English caused the trouble in the temple, had spirited the child away. This was the generally accepted explanation and parties searched through the city for a week but nothing was forthcoming. Threats were numerous, and a native dreads an Englishman's threat, but still nothing was discovered. These were the two things that happened twenty years ago.

After a while Ormsley and his wife went away, and were forgotten as we all are out here. Then the temple was closed up and the people worshipped in another temple on the other side of the town. The English residents changed and moved away, and the native ones died or did the same, and the old temple grew damp and musty, and natives said it was full of snakes and spirits.

Last summer Lieut. Bradford and John Camden came to Kangluc. They both had something of the archeologist about them, and determined at once to go into the old temple. They had worked together up in Syna and Axtam and knew what might be found in just such an old place as this.

One afternoon they started out, carrying light swords to deal with the snakes. At first they experienced some difficulty in getting into the ruin for the door had been walled up. When the flame is once extinguished in one of these temples the natives will have nothing more to do with it, so they wall up the doors.

Bradford and Camden climbed over the walls with the aid of vines and trees until at last they found an opening through which they passed, picking their way down to the floor. The building was lighted by an opening in the roof, and was in many places apparently in good condition. One or two foun-

tains were still running, though the basins were covered with creepers through which they could see glistening snakes.

They discovered nothing of any particular interest until at last they came to the altar upon which the flame had formerly burned. Part of this altar had crumbled and Bradford, probing around with his weapon, knocked more of it down, and lying against one of these inner sides they found a little skeleton. On one of its finger bones was a little gold ring with the name Ormsley stamped plainly upon the inside.

Hardly had they found this when there came tottering out from a little alcove an old man, clothed in rags and bearing the scars of innumerable wounds.

Camden afterwards related that if it had been possible he would have gone into the fresh air at once, but not being able he thought he might as well see what was going to happen.

Lieut. Bradford understood something of native life and nature and by skillful questioning succeeded in drawing out the account of the fall of the temple.

On a certain day many years before, so said the priest, he had been watching at the altar. His vigil had been a long one, and it was toward noon that he fell asleep. When he awoke he looked at the altar and saw the flame was out—the flame which had burned for a thousand years—and during his watch also.

Closet by stood a little English child laughing. Without doubt this was the cause of the terrible disaster. The awfulness of his negligence made him desperate and he strangled the child and thrust it into the altar. Then he ran forth.

That same night he had been tortured in that very temple and the scars showed what had happened. He had been left for dead but had got well again, though sometimes his mind was not clear. That was caused by the torturing. He lived in the temple still, for he liked to be where the flame had burned and where the child had died.

GEORGE C. SHEDD.

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Geo. W. Bonnell,
C. P. & T. A.

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SHERIFF SALE.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT by virtue of an order of sale issued by the clerk of the district court of the third judicial district of Nebraska, within and for Lancaster county, in an action wherein Emma G. Burwell is Plaintiff, and Wesson G. Miller et al Defendants I will, at 2 o'clock P. M., on the 28th day of September, A. D. 1897, at the east door of the Court House, in the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska, offer for sale at public auction the following described lands and tenements to wit:

Lots nine (9), ten (10), seven (7), eight (8), one (1), two (2), three (3), four (4), five (5) and six (6) of Miller's subdivision of lots seven (7), eight (8), nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11) and twelve (12), of block forty-eight (48) of University Place, Lancaster County, Nebraska.

Given under my hand this 26th day of August, A. D., 1897.

John J. Trompen,
Sheriff.

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