# "ISLAND of the BLESSED"

Madeira Girls in Gala Dress.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

Madeira, the island to which the former emperor of Austria-Hungary and his wife have been banished, might be said to lie in the Atlantic Ocean—and the Middle Ages. And most interesting to Americans, perhaps, it was once the home of Christopher Columbus.

Once one has penetrated into the country back of Funchal, the only town of the island that may be called a city, the simplest and most primitive of civilized conditions are found. Plows are merely the wooden beams tipped with a point of iron that Roman peasants used; draft animals are oxen; grain is threshed by being trodden out on old-fashioned threshing floors; and even in Funchal the most common means of conveyance is the sledge dragged over cobbled streets by slow-moving oxen.

But with all its primitiveness Madeira is a land of great beauty and charm. It is considered by many, indeed, the modern version of the "Islands of the Blessed." It is situated in the latitude of Charleston, S. C., and the Bermudas, and is about as far southwest of the Strait of Gibraltar as the Bermudas are southeast of New York. Madeira, though, is not a low-lying islet, but was once a huge volcanic peak, and has rugged mountain scenery comparable to that of the volcanic islands of the Pacific. In its rich volcanic soil on the slopes of its peaks, and in the hot-house-like air of some of its deep valleys, almost every known type of plant can be grown. The island has become a great botanical garden. It is only necessary to climb its slopes to pass from the growth of the semi-tropics to that of the temperate zone. Bananas and apples, tree-ferns and oaks, oranges and pears flourish within a stone's throw of one another. Above three thousand feet where most of the cultivation stops the crests of the hills and mountains are covered with laurel and pine. Once Madeira supported dense forests of large trees, a fact which won it its name, meaning "wood." But the early settlers fired the forests to clear the land and the later growth was for the most part of smaller trees and shrubs.

### Scenery Is Magnificent.

The scenery of Madeira is on a magnificent scale out of proportion to the thirty-mile island.

One ridge rises to more than 6,000 feet, and one valley especially, Curral das Freiras, has the luxuriance and charm more to be expected of the tropical islands of the East. Steep rugged cliffs mark the greater part of the coast; and on the low ground about the occasional bays and widened canyons that open to the sea huddle tiny towns.

Possibly Maderia and the few small islands which make up the group were known to the Phoenicians and later to the Moors and the Genoese; but all records of their existence—unless vague legends be considered—had been lost by the beginning of the Fifteenth century. In 1418 or 1419 storms drove Portuguese mariners to the islands and they were therefore the first of the numerous small Atlantic islands to be discovered or rediscovered. Strangely enough it was little Porto Santo, not the relatively large Madeira, that was found. A colony was founded on the islet and remained many months before Madeira, only 23 miles away, was discovered.

Unlike the nearby Canary Islands where the native Guanches had attained a considerable civilization, the Madeiras apparently had never been inhabited before their discovery in 1419. The islands were, in fact, given over almost solely to vegetation. No mammals or quadrupeds were found except a few bats and a species of rat. The only other living creatures that existed in this island paradise were a few birds. Through colonization Madeira and Porto Santo were soon peopled and today the former has a density of population nearly three times that of the mother country, Portugal. Then began the pouring into Madeira of the floral good things of the earth, a procedure which has made it a wonderland for botanists. Of primary economic importance was the introduction of sugar-cane from Sicily. Soon a very important sugar industry had been built up. Grapes were brought in from Crete, and by the time of the American Revolution the famous Madeira wine had shouldered sugar from its place of importance.

### Not a Prosperous People.

In spite of the wonderful climate and soil of Madeira, its inhabitants are not very prosperous. This fact is probably chiefly due to the marked density of the population, to the lack of an adequate educational system, and to the brake applied to initiative by some of the governmental and fiscal regulations. Because of the pressure of population many of the young people have emigrated during the past few decades. Illiteracy is widespread.

The people of Madeira have many strains in their blood. Italians, Jews, Moors, negro slaves, and English have all contributed elements, but the Portuguese have always been incomparably the most important factor, and the resulting men and women are undeniably dark, swarthy sons and daughters of Portugal. Members of the upper classes are courtesy itself.

After wine production, Madeira's most important "industry" is its tourist traffic. For more than half a century the island has been the sun-parlor of the English, the white officials from the African colonies, and numerous Europeans. But to most of the tourists Madeira is Funchal, the little city of 25,000 population which nestles, gleaming white, in a big amphitheater on the south side of the island and which has many of the modern facilities which the outside world expects. Funchal's harbor is only a roadstead, but it is never deserted, for the city lies at an ocean cross-roads of the routes that lead between the Strait of Gibraltar and the West Indies and South America, and between South Africa and England. And it had in pre-war days lines that plied directly to England, the Canaries, the Azores and Portugal.

The precipitous streets of Funchal compelled the use of sledges instead of wheeled vehicles in the early days, and these quaint and primitive vehicles are still in use. The motive power is usually supplied by oxen and some of the sledges are luxuriously fitted out with elaborate canopies. A thrill can be gotten from Funchal's primitive vehicles not surpassed by that from the racing automobile, for it is customary in descending from the hills to coast down over the cobblestones on small sleds with greased runners. One of the regular excursions for tourists in Funchal, even though they stay in the island but a few hours, is a trip to an elevation of 2,000 feet above the harbor by a cog railroad and an exciting slide down. Walkers climbing the hills about the city regularly arrange to have "livery sleds" meet them at certain points on the heights that they may coast back to the lower levels.

Funchal's cog railroad gives access to several level roads which wind about the faces of the hills back of the city affording excellent views of the city and roadstead below. Opening upon these and farther up near the terminus of the railroad are the show places of the city. In some of these villa estates are to be found gardens of flowers and shrubs and trees whose beauty is probably unsurpassed anywhere in the world.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

# Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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## LESSON FOR APRIL 9

### THE LORD PRESERVES JOASH

LESSON TEXT—II Kings 11:1-17.

GOLDEN TEXT—The Lord preserveth all them that love Him.—Psalm 145:20.

REFERENCE MATERIAL—II Kings 11:18-20; II Chron. 23:1-21; Matt. 2:13-23.

PRIMARY TOPIC—God Takes Care of a Boy.

JUNIOR TOPIC—How a Boy Became King.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—A Boy Saved for a Great Career.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Secret of Personal and National Safety.

Joash, viewed in the light of his ancestors, was a poor prospect for a king. His grandmother was the wicked Athaliah and his great grandparents were Ahab and Jezebel. There was enough bad blood in his veins to assure his doom. Despite this fact, he brought about some noble reforms and turned the people back to God.

**I. Athaliah Usurps the Throne** (vv. 1-3).

1. Her attempt to destroy the seed royal (vv. 1). In order to remove any rival claimant to the throne she tried to kill all the royal male children.

2. Joash preserved by Jehosheba (vv. 2, 3). Though Athaliah was keen-eyed she was checkmated by another woman. Her fatal omission was not to get rid of the women too. This woman, the wife of the priest, stole away the child and hid him in the bedchamber for six years. God had promised that through the Davidic line the Messiah should come. In order that this line be unbroken Joash must be preserved. No purpose of God can fail.

**II. Joash Crowned King** (vv. 4-12).

1. Jehoiada's preparations (vv. 4-11). The high priest and his wife were intelligent and strong characters. As the high priest, Jehoiada felt that it was his duty to thwart the heathen project of Athaliah. Doubtless his co-operation with his wife made possible the saving of Joash.

(1) Secured the aid of the military leaders (v. 4). He knew somehow that these men were not loyal to Athaliah. (2) Bound them under solemn oath (v. 4). He took an oath of them in the house of the Lord. Honest men will stand by their word. (3) Excited their spirit of patriotism (v. 4). He gave them a sight of the king's son. This, no doubt, was a great surprise. Now having seen the heir to the throne they would risk everything, even their lives, in order to set him on the throne. (4) Co-ordinates all matters (vv. 5-11). The soldiers were divided into companies and arms were distributed to them. Each group was assigned to specific duties.

2. The coronation (v. 12). (1) The king's son brought forth. This was a great day in Jerusalem. After six years of usurpation, the people all the while supposing that all the heirs to the throne were dead, now to gaze upon the king's son would be a notable event. (2) Put the crown upon him. This was the formal induction into office. (3) Gave him the testimony. This was a copy of the law, showing that the king was to rule according to the law of God. The act of putting the law upon his head showed that the king himself would be under the control of the law. (4) Made him king. This shows that he was made king by the choice of the people. (5) Anointed him. They poured oil upon his head. This was the usual method of consecrating prophets, priests and kings. (6) Clapped their hands. This was a token of joy.

**III. Athaliah Slain** (vv. 13-17).

1. The noise of the coronation of Joash brough Athaliah to the temple (v. 15). Up to this time she thought her place on the throne was secure and that her heathen religion had free course.

2. Her dismay (v. 14). Upon her arrival at the temple she saw the king wearing the crown and surrounded by the guards, so that she could do nothing. In her despair she exclaimed: "Treason, treason!" How prone wicked men and women are to cry out as though they had been wronged when their wicked plots and conspiracies are exposed and thwarted!

3. Athaliah executed (vv. 15, 16). The orders were that she should not be killed in the temple. They led her out by the way of the horses' entrance to the king's palace and slew her. What a tragic end for the sinner! Sin can only prosper for a time.

**IV. Worship of the True God** (vv. 17, 18).

Joash was seven years old when he was made king. The high priest made a covenant between the Lord, the king and the people that they would be the Lord's people. In carrying out this covenant they broke down the temple of Baal and slew the priest of Baal.

### The Way to God.

Prayer carries us halfway to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms-giving procures us admission.—Koran.

### The Saddest Thing.

The saddest thing that can befall a soul is when it loses faith in God and woman.—Alexander Smith.

### Hope and Joy.

A propensity to hope and joy is real riches; one to fear and sorrow, real poverty.—Hume.

Riding backward in the truth doesn't make a man feel dizzy if he is escaping from the sheriff.

The use of soft coal will make laundry work heavier this winter. Red Cross Ball Blue will help to remove that grimy look. At all grocers—Advertisement.

### The Wool Combers.

In the Latin quarter of Paris one often sees groups of bareheaded women, sitting in some quiet corner of the street, perhaps within a church door, picking and combing the wool of their mattresses. No matter how poor a French peasant may be, he almost always possesses a comfortable bed with a wool mattress.

### Wouldn't Be News to Them.

Pattie was spending the afternoon at the home of the editor. During her stay she mentioned that her grandmother and aunt were visiting at her home. Whereupon the editor said he would have to publish it in the next issue of the paper.

"Oh, you needn't put it in our paper," said Pattie.

"And why not?"

"Well, because we know it," answered Pattie.

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### Heaven!

Jimmie was very fond of bread and preserves, and one day just before supper he came in, asking:

"Mother, may I have some bread and preserves?"

"Jimmie, I've told you a dozen times that you cannot have preserves before dinner. Run out and play a while."

"Well, I hope I die soon," Jimmie said as he was leaving his mother's presence.

"Why, Jimmie?" asked his mother.

"Well, I'll be sure to get lots of preserves in heaven," he answered.

"Who told you so?" asked his mother.

"Well, the Catechism says the Lord makes, preserves and redeems us," answered the theological Jimmy.

### All He Got.

Two tramps approached a likely looking dwelling on the country road and tossed up with their last halfpenny which of the two should call there and solicit alms.

One waited at the entrance gate, and the other walked up the drive toward the hall door. In a few seconds the latter reappeared.

"Well, did he give you anything?" asked his expectant companion eagerly.

"Oh, yes," was the reply. "He had a bulldog by the hand, and he gave me one minute to leave his garden. And here I am."—Scotsman.

Laziness is the undertaker who drops the shroud of obscurity around many a good man.

Don't be inanimate. Either pull up the stream or drift down.

A UNION OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

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For the ailing, half-sick housewife such a union is impossible. Often times even the slightest form of housework cannot be accomplished. Yet the work must be done.

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Had Nervous Spells

Horatio, Ark.—"I had nervous spells and awful bad feelings. My right side and my back hurt me all the time and I had been going down in health for six or seven years. For three years I had not been able to do my work without help. I weighed only 95 pounds when my husband's mother persuaded me to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Now I heartily recommend it to all suffering women, as I have gained weight and health. I can do all my work, anything I want to do."—Mrs. JIM REARICK, Horatio, Arkansas.

Reading, Pa.—"I was a nervous wreck and could hardly do my housework. I always had to have help or I would never have got it done. Through the advice of friends I have been taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for my nerves and Lydia E. Pinkham's Blood Medicine for my blood and I am feeling fine and doing my work all alone. I can recommend these medicines to any one, for they certainly helped me. I suffered for five years and Lydia E. Pinkham's medicines pulled me through."—Mrs. WALTER U. STOYER, 1218 Mulberry St., Reading, Pa.

Recommends the Vegetable Compound

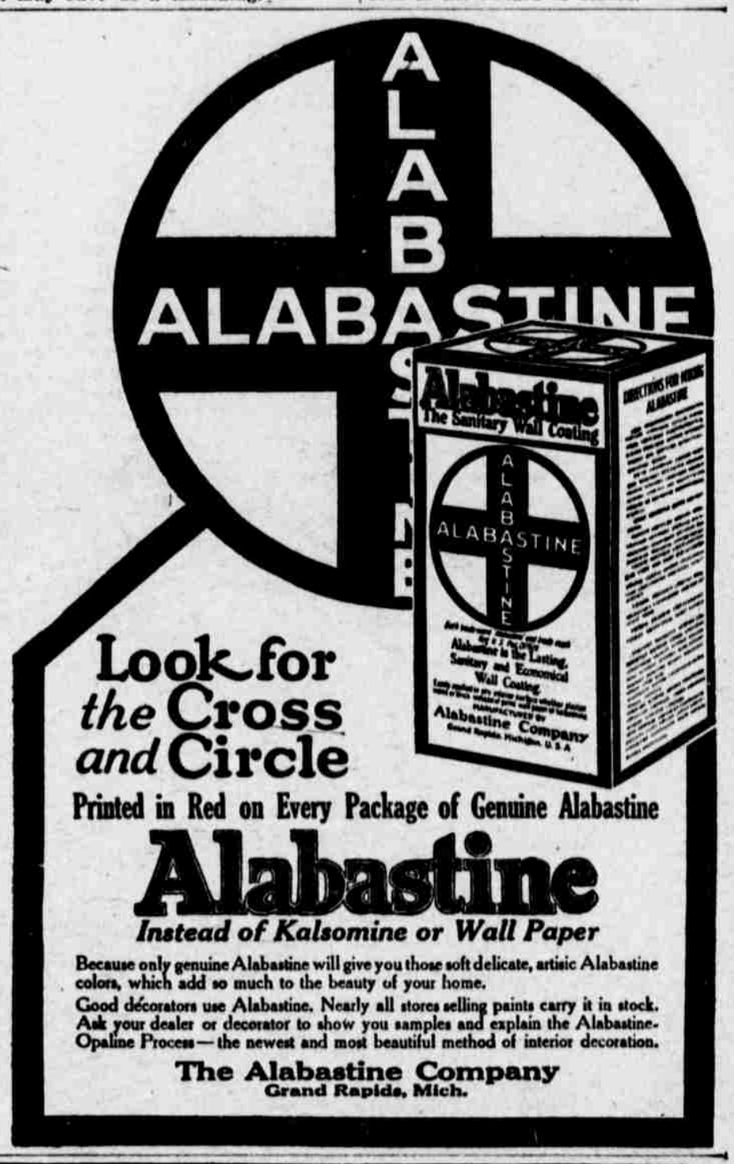
New Orleans, La.—"I have found relief from my troubles by taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and I praise it wherever I go. I could not do my work as it should be done for I would sometimes have to lie down because of the pains I had. A friend induced me to take your Vegetable Compound and I have got great results from it. I keep house and am able to do all my own work. I recommend your Vegetable Compound to my friends who have troubles similar to mine."—Mrs. T. FOECKLER, 1915 N. Derbigny St., New Orleans, La.

Cleanliness may be next to godliness on one side, but it is next to impossible on the other.

If we count a hundred when angry it may save us a thrashing.

If a man is unable to sleep in the morning when he ought to get up he has insomnia in the worst form.

A great many men owe their success to the failure of others.

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