

Natives of Belgian Congo



Chief of the Bapotos.

Climbing Parasite in the Congo.

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

The natives of the interior of Africa are very different from those of the coast regions who have absorbed the worst that civilization has to offer, yet many a traveler, touching only the fringe of the Dark Continent, builds his ideas of its people on those corrupted by alcohol, European morals, and the passion for gain either by fair means or foul. In the Belgian Congo, for example, where there are to be met typical negroes of the tropics, one finds people who are frankly savages, to be sure, with customs disgusting to the westerner but who possess good traits for all that. If the tribes are approached properly hardly one will be found which is not naturally good-tempered, and in most instances hospitable and trustful.

Stanleyville, the chief station in north-central Congo, was a few years ago a strange mixture of an Arab, European and negro town. Whatever harm the Arabs may have done to the natives, and there is no doubt that in their slave-raiding expeditions they have slaughtered them by the thousands, they certainly have taught them many a good thing. It was the Arabs who introduced rice, Madagascar potatoes, beans and many useful plants. They have taught the natives cleanliness and established schools in many centers.

The town is much used as an outfitting point for expeditions but at times it is disappointingly short of supplies. In making trips up the Congo river from Stanleyville one must cross the river below the falls and have his luggage carted to a point on smooth water above the cataracts.

Queer Bambala Customs.

Among the people of Congo few possess stranger customs or present more curious contrasts than the Bambala tribe, who live in numerous villages on the banks of the Kwilu Jumba river in the southwestern part of the country. Each village is under its own chief, who holds the position by virtue of his wealth and is succeeded at his death by the next richest man of the tribe. His principal function is to act as money-lender to his subjects. No tribute is paid to the chief, but he has a right to the ribs of every human being killed for food and to the hind legs of each animal killed during the great hunts. If a chief is young enough, he acts as leader in war; otherwise one of his sons takes his place.

Intermediate between the chief and the ordinary freeman is an hereditary class called *muri*, who may not eat human flesh nor yet the meat of fowls. They are distinguished by an iron bracelet and a special headcovering of cloth, which may not be removed by any one under penalty of death, even if the offender did not intend to touch it.

The bracelet of a *muri* passes at death to the nephew (sister's son), who succeeds to the dignity, and the heir must steal the skull of his uncle. The corpse is buried for some two months, then the skull is exhumed, painted red, and placed in the house its owner used to occupy. The nephew must gain possession of it at night without being observed, and after hiding it for a few days in the bush, take it home to his hut.

If a *muri* is killed in war, his bracelet is sent home, but the skull has to be stolen as before from the hostile village. The chief privilege of a member of this class is the right to a portion of each animal killed in hunting.

Ordeal by Poison.

In disputes, where two people of the same village are concerned, a poison ordeal is employed as judge. Whether a man is accused of witchcraft, parricide or of some minor of-

fense, he declares himself willing to take poison to prove his innocence. The poison, which is derived from the bark of a native tree, is usually ground fine and mixed to a thick paste, from which are made five small loaves and these are administered one after the other to the defendant. During the next fifteen minutes, if it is a case of witchcraft, the bystanders call on *Moloki* (the evil principle) to come out.

The poison usually acts very quickly; it may kill the accused or cause purging or vomiting. The last-named effect alone is regarded as a proof of innocence. In the second case the prisoner is compelled to dig a hole. He is then given a fowl to eat and enough palm-wine to make him quite intoxicated. After this he is laid in the hole, or possibly goes and lays himself down, and is then buried alive in order to prevent *Moloki* escaping with his last breath. A large fire is kept alight on the grave for two days, and then the body is exhumed and eaten.

An innocent man is carried around the village, decorated with beads, and his accuser pays a pig as compensation for the false charge.

Decorated With Scars.

In color the Bambala are very dark brown, the hair is absolutely black, and the eye a greenish black with a yellow cornea. The face is not of the ordinary negro type, but much more refined; thick lips, for example, are quite exceptional, and only a small proportion have flat noses.

Tattooing is not common, but both men and women "decorate" themselves with ornamental scars. They rise above the surface of the skin sometimes more than an inch.

The ordinary food consists of manioc flour made into a paste with water and boiled. The leaves of the plant are also eaten prepared with palm-oil and pepper. Animal food is not limited to goats, pigs and other domestic small fry, for, frogs excepted, everything fits to make a stew, from ants and grasshoppers up to man.

Human flesh is, of course, a special delicacy, and its use is forbidden to women, though they do not disdain to indulge secretly. Other titbits are a thick white worm found in palm-trees, locusts, rats, and blood boiled with cassava flour. Human flesh is not the only food forbidden to women; they may not eat goat's flesh, hawks, vultures, small birds, snakes, animals hunted with weapons, crows, or parrots. To the rule against flesh killed with weapons there are two exceptions—the antelope and a small rat.

Rich people, who indulge in luxuries, eat kola nuts in great numbers. A kind of native pepper is known, and oil is obtained from the palm-nut. But the chief condiment is salt, which is made of the ashes of water plants. There is, however, a strong preference for the imported salt, which is in crystalline form as a rule, the crystals being perforated and strung on a string, which is dipped into the food-pot. On a journey salt is eaten as a stimulant and salt water is also drunk.

As regards animal food, if there is abundance it is simply boiled and eaten with the fingers. It must be remembered that meat for the Bambala is simply a bonbon, much as chocolates are for us. Once when a white traveler killed an elephant, which the natives were at liberty to consume, blood, skin, and bones, if they pleased, after they had eaten as much as they wanted they went to him and asked for their dinner.

Cannibalism is an everyday occurrence, and, according to the natives themselves, who display no reticence except in the presence of state officials, it is based on a sincere liking for human flesh.

CHURCH FOR YOUNG PERSONS

Indianapolis Minister Successful in Operation of Branch for the Boys and Girls.

A junior church, the membership of which is limited to persons between six and sixteen years old, with the preacher the only adult present, is being successfully operated in Indianapolis. The plan was inaugurated by Rev. N. S. Sichterman of Grace Presbyterian church, that city.

According to Doctor Sichterman, there are 60 children ranging in age from six to sixteen years who are members of the Junior organization. They have their own room for services, which are of 30 minutes' duration, and have their own officers. The plan was put into operation in January and Doctor Sichterman is so pleased with the results that he expects soon to double the membership.

Doctor Sichterman said the idea of forming a junior church developed from his experience in church while a boy.

"My people came from Holland and settled in a neighborhood of Hollanders in a small Michigan town," he said. "The church I attended as a boy also used the Dutch language and the sermons sometimes lasted two hours or more. I well remember how tired and restless I would get as the time dragged on, for the sermon, while appealing to adults, was not such as would appeal to the child.

"It was this experience which gave birth to the junior church idea, and last January I started the organization."

CAN GROW NEW TUSK IN YEAR

Discovery is Made That the Walrus May Prolong World's Vanishing Supply of Ivory.

A remarkable discovery at the seal rookeries on Friblof islands may prolong the world's vanishing ivory supply. Last summer an obnoxious bull walrus was mauled by government seal keepers, and in the fight one of its long tusks was broken off. This spring the same recalcitrant mammal returned, and to the surprise of both natives and attendants the tusk had grown out five inches, the end still showing the ragged edge of the break.

It is now believed that an annual crop of this excellent ivory can be harvested by cutting off one-half of one tusk each year from the bull walrus. The one left intact is used by the mammal in digging clams and sea food. In a year the stub would have grown out enough to serve as a pickax, so the other tusk could be sacrificed for the fancies of man.

Walrus ivory is in great demand in China and Japan, where it is utilized for small carvings.

Graphite and Siberia.

Extensive deposits of graphite exist in northwestern Siberia, on the left bank of the River Kureika, near the junction with the River Yenisei, 90 miles from the mouth of the latter river. The graphite area forms a horizontal plateau, the elevation of which varies from 20 to 50 feet above the normal level of the River Kureika. The plateau contains two layers of graphite, which is of a solid steel-gray color, soft and of an excellent quality for the manufacture of pencils. It is believed that in the future these graphite will supply Russian demands and that large quantities will be available for export. The chief sources of graphite have been Ceylon, Bohemia, Germany, France and the United States. The annual world production has been approximately 120,000 short tons.

The Modern Girl.

If the modern girl is freer than her predecessor, she is, like her brother, more self-possessed. Her range of experience and of information is wider and her desire to know greater. She has seen more of the world and heard more of it, if not directly, then by the vicarious efforts of scores of agencies. She has no doubt broken through many irrational taboos, but she is trying hard to replace them with standards more suitable to the complexities of life in this generation. And if it is put to a *maik* vote whether she is to return to the dress, manners, temperament and mental outlook of her eighteenth or even nineteenth century ancestor, there will only be an insignificant minority to vote against her as she is.—Baltimore American.

Father Love vs. Mother's.

Among some fishes the male assumes all the care and anxiety of parenthood. And this is true of at least one or two families of birds. The male ostrich hatches the eggs and looks after the little ones. The greatest enemy of the eggs and young of the stickleback fish is the mother herself. She not only has no affection for them whatever, but would eat every one of them if she weren't prevented from doing so by the father. In very few species of fish do the females care anything for either the eggs or the young.

Among fishes, therefore, the instinct to save the young is not the wonderful mother instinct found in the human or other higher species, but the father instinct.—Detroit News.

Brought Home to Him.

"What is Daubson working on now?" "A picture entitled, 'The Great American Desert.'"

"What gave him that inspiration?" "His cellar was robbed."—Birmingham Age Herald.

HAPPINESS

By MILDRED WHITE

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Theodosia came to sit on the arm of her husband's chair. He was a new husband and he smiled indulgently. "Where today, pretty one?" he asked. "I am not quite sure," she answered doubtfully; "my old adventurous spirit calls, and one does not know where that may lead. Perhaps it is just that I am so happy, that I feel the desire to pass some of my happiness on."

The husband tenderly regarded the eager face. Dossie stooped to kiss him. "Good-bye, dear Chum," she said.

As she reached the business section of the city, the young disciple of happiness decided to comfort herself with a cooling glass of soda. And the soda glass touching Dossie's fingers stickily, she went into the wash room of the department store basement to clean them. "Never mind," remarked a pretty girl, powdering her face at the glass, "you are welcome." She continued her conversation with a companion, engaged in the same renovating purpose.

"Yes," she went on, "it's a swell stone, an' he giv' it to me, an' we're going to the show tonight, an' he has a swell car, an—"

"Oh, come out of it, Rosie," the friend pleasantly remarked. Leaving the room, the two glanced back to where a silent figure sat aloof.

"The millionaire lady has her usual grouch on," Rosie said mockingly. Abruptly the dark-haired girl arose, coming to bathe her hot forehead in the basin next to where Dossie stood.

"It's a very warm day," Dossie said invitingly; her overture was silently received.

"And—you are tired," she added in impulsive sympathy.

"I have my work to do," the girl answered evenly, "like the others."

"But you look different, some way," Dossie was thinking aloud. "More—used to it."

The girl straightened her hair and smiled. It was a weary smile.

"I am—different, I am afraid—they leave me quite alone."

"Please," said Dossie, "may I not see you again? Could you take lunch with me today—some place?"

The girl's dark eyes finished their study. "Thank you," she agreed; "if you will allow me to pay for that luncheon. I am a wage earner, you know—and not in want."

"I understand," Dossie said. "At the Brown Tea Room, then, at 12?"

The name, "Millionaire Lady," occurred to her when the girl from Bromley's quietly slipped into the seat reserved at the Brown Tea Room.

Dossie placed her calling card upon the table; the girl smiled.

"Thank you," she said, "your name is known to me, through patronage. I work in Bromley's under an assumed name. I came here when my father died. Before that I had a happy home of my own. That is why all this is strange to me."

Dossie leaned forward, earnestly she spoke her own reason for wishing to make another happy.

"And so," Constance Wilmot ended her story. "I could have borne bravely any sorrow save that of disgrace. But to think that my father, the trusted adviser of many, had ruined by false investments those who trusted him—that I suffered in like manner mattered least. The man who loved me was most deceived. I could not face him; I came away, finding employment under an assumed name. I think John Calver will not learn of me here, and in time will love some one worthy. My little home town of Wilmot was named for our family long ago."

Dossie arose, the girl holding her hand between her own.

"You will come to visit me soon, as you promise, Constance," she reminded.

"Have you any happiness left to bestow upon your husband?" that young man asked at evening. Dossie sat on the arm of his chair.

"We must drive to Wilmot village this evening," she told him. "I want to see a Mr. John Calver, who is to be invited to our house for an evening, while Constance Wilmot of Bromley's is with us as our guest. It's funny," added Dossie, "how happiness is bound to spread!"

Seek Gold and Diamonds.

An expedition has sailed from Liverpool for the Araguayan river and some of its principal tributaries in Central Brazil in quest of gold and diamonds. The expedition's hope rests upon experiences in those parts of a mining engineer. This engineer has stated that the Araguayan gravels would yield payable gold. He was hopeful they would discover copper in commercial quantities. He found diamonds in tributaries of the Araguaya, and also discovered payable gold in the gravel of the river. The country is peopled with tribes of Red Indians, whom the engineer speaks of as being friendly. He also hopes to locate a tribe reported to wear round their necks strings of gold in rough nuggets. The party will leave the liner at Para and proceed by steam launch which they have with them up to Tocantins river, of which the Araguaya is an off-shoot.

Few Autos in China.

China, with four times the population of the United States, has only 8,000 motor vehicles.

CALL ON U. S. FOR SUPPLIES

Various Countries Are Asking Uncle Sam to Provide All Sorts of Merchandise.

Have you any chrysoprane or varisetics to sell? If so, write the Department of Commerce, foreign trade division, Dr. Julius Klein, the director, has requests for 'em on his desk from Australia. If you don't know what they are, they are precious stones.

Our South American neighbors in Brazil are more prosaic in their wants. They are asking for sanitary drinking fountains.

Canada wants moving-picture machines and wireless telephone sets.

With the Volstead act putting a crimp in the business over here, anybody with a left-over stock of bangs and bung pegs can find a ready market for them in England. The British also want garbage cans.

Ditto above. The French are asking for oak casks.

Ditto again. Chile asks for corks.

The prohibition bureau, with an eye to business, might fill the order from Mexico for alcohol distilling plants by shipping down some of the wildest stills seized over the country.

Evidently all the Italian boot-blacks are not over here. There's a request from Italy for shoe polish.

Musical instruments are in demand in Palestine and Spain.

The canny Scots want calculating machines.

Poor old Siberia would like a square meal of dried fruits and vegetables and prepared milk.

RACED LIKE THE GREYHOUND

Botafogo, Most Famous Horse of Argentina, Was Known to Turf Followers Throughout World.

The most famous race horse that the fine studs of Argentina ever bred was probably Botafogo, for he was renowned among turf followers the world over. He died near Mar del Plata a short time ago, being only eight years old. Not particularly fortunate in his parentage, as great racers usually are, he nevertheless became a phenomenon of the track. At two years he sold for \$25,000 at auction, although he was never good looking.

When he raced the horse stretched himself out like a greyhound. He made his debut in 1917, and all the classics fell before his amazing speed. One day when he was not in form and lost to Gray Fox the event was regarded in Argentina as quite a national catastrophe. In a subsequent "revenge race" he defeated his conqueror with perfect ease before the greatest crowd that ever assembled at the Palermo tracks.

Actor Who Could Not Write.

The true story of "Joe Miller's Joke Book" is an interesting bit of literary history. Truth is that Joe Miller never read a joke in his life, and therefore could not have compiled a book of jokes. For Joe Miller could not read. He was an ignorant actor, who achieved great success in 1714 at the Drury Lane theater in London. And the only way that Joe Miller could memorize the lines of his parts was to have them read and recited to him until he was able to repeat them, the duty of this drumming dialogue and cues into the comedian's mind being entrusted to a wife, whom he had married for the purpose.

Off the stage or on, Miller was not a wit or humorist. But a year after his death a pamphlet appeared in which 247 jests were given, of which only three were ascribed to Joe Miller. They had been compiled by a man with the appropriate name of Mottley.

By the middle of the Nineteenth century the number of jokes had been increased by successive compilers to 1,546.

Power in Silence.

The proper value of the power of silence is probably best expressed in the scriptural reference to the various convulsions of nature, the wind and the earthquake, followed by the still, small voice. Coming down to a more recent period and a less renowned authority, we are reminded of the man who advised his son to keep his mouth shut so that people would not know he was a fool. This advice is still good for the great majority. Astronomy is said to be one of the best means of teaching the individual his relative unimportance in the universe of matter, but to be left alone, far from any human habitation, in a vast silence will probably accomplish the same.

Employer Paid for Nut.

A curious point in workmen's compensation has been settled by the English Court of Appeal. A collar, who did not drink or smoke, was in the habit of carrying a nut in his mouth, apparently for much the same reason that some people carry chewing gum. One day while at work he slipped and fell; and the nut was jerked down his windpipe suffocating him. The court held that the accident was "in the course of his employment," and entitled his widow to recover.

Poor Mule!

"That," said the city man, "is what I call downright brutality. That man ought to be reported to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. 'Why? What's he doing?' 'What's he doing? Can't you see how fast that mule has to walk to keep out of his way when he's pushing the plow?'—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

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