

Why the Little Blacks of Africa Grow up as Savages



In Party Dress

THEY do not play, nor smile, nor sing. No toys, dolls, or building blocks, no pretty little dishes, no go-carts, drums or guns bring joy to their young lives—these pitiable children of darkest Africa. Born in the dark depths of the forest or on the sun-scorched plain, the juveniles of the jungle know nothing of childhood's joys. They grow up, poor little solemn-faced pickaninnies, in the fear of strange and horrible gods.

In parts of Africa parents take their children before the shrines of weird and terrible deities and lash their backs with whips. If the tortured ones wince or cry out, it is interpreted as a sign of disloyalty to the god, and the children are, in many instances, horribly mutilated.

Should they become sick—and all children at times get sick—it's not castor oil or cough medicine for those little fellows. A witch doctor comes along and makes a foul, nauseating compound, and performs terrifying rites with strange incantations.

Is there wonder that such children grow up to become savages? Is there wonder that Christian missionaries have trouble in converting them—when the children are ill-treated, frightened and taught that theft is an honest profession? Not only is childhood joyless, but it is brief—the little ones are made to labor almost as soon as they can walk.

RECENTLY a missionary, the Rev. Karl W. Kumm, visited America. Before hundreds of people in all parts of the country he told of the unbelievable conditions existing in the Sudan.

He told how children were killed to appease the angry heathen gods, of little ones put to hard labor in the fields, of children sold into slavery or captured by Mohammedan Arabs.

By no means has the light of Christianity flooded inmost Africa; cannibalism by no means has disappeared. Every year thousands of blacks are sold into slavery, among them many children. Girls are married, or sold into marriage, at the age of 3 years, and when 10 or 12 are claimed by their masters.

There are no childhood games, no toys, no mirth. Rather, the children are regarded as cattle, of so much value in beads and shells. They are taught a terrible belief in the terrible gods. To remain in favor of the deities there must be sacrifice, and children are often sacrificed.

Have you ever read of childhood in the jungle? Of how the toddling darlings in Africa are reared? No?

NO HALO OF ROMANCE

Perhaps the reason that the story of childhood has never been written is because of the lack of childish romance. Undoubtedly we pleasure-loving people of an educated country like to read of happy children; we like to hear childish laughter; we are prone to close our eyes upon all that is not colored with the rosy halo of the fairy tale.

But let us take a trip to Africa. A baby has been born. Inside the low, smoky hut of mud and bamboo poles there is heard a plaint. Then there is a cry and a jabber of tongues like to nothing but the caecus of monkeys in cocoon trees.

Grandmothers, uncles and aunts fill the hut. They shriek and clamor in gutturals. The old grandmother of the newly arrived babe officiates. Her dark, withered face, as black as ebony and as withered as an aged apple, makes horrible grimaces as she takes the child and looks into its screwed-up tiny black face.

Then, as the others shout and shake their hands, the grandmother suddenly plunges the child into a tub of cold water. There is a wail—it seems as if the tiny mite had burst its lungs. Shivering and writhing, it is taken from the water and doused with powder of the red dyewood tree. This is an astringent and contracts the skin. Is it a wonder the babe screams?

Then comes the most important duty, the appeasing of the gods. Amulets are brought out and fastened about the baby's neck. Fetiches are tied about the loins. And outside what a din! Could any spirit, however evil, withstand such a noise?

There is wild dancing of the tribe, cries of exultation, contortions of black bodies. Fires blaze, tom-toms and drums are beaten, there are repeated ear-deafening explosions. This is to scare away the evil spirits.

These evil spirits—hush, they are spoken of only in whispers—want the life of the little one. They are always around, wishing to do evil. The child may get sick; it may die, or the evil one may enter the body.

But when the amulets are blessed a beneficent spirit enters them, and the child will be protected for years.

But, the tribesmen ask, is it a boy or girl? If a girl, there are murmurs of savage dismay and the twisting of savage faces. Perhaps quietly will pass the news that twins have been born. There are howls of terror. An evil omen. The gods send a warning. What have they done to merit such disaster?

They hold council. Gravely the black men decide that one child must die. There is no parrying about



First Dolls They Ever Saw



Baby's Cradle in Africa

carrying the decision into effect. Even the mother does not protest.

But of the child that remains, what hopes are built on it? It becomes the idol of the tribe. It will become a chief; it will possess rare brilliance. In shorts the mother bends and hugs or digs the ground, the baby, protesting or weakened by continued protest, falls asleep, the torrid sun falling on its face.

The African savage may loiter idly at home while his wife cultivates plantains, guinea corn, Indian corn, sweet potatoes or other plantation produce. And while the mother tends and hugs or digs the ground, the baby, protesting or weakened by continued protest, falls asleep, the torrid sun falling on its face.

The majority of the babies born in a kraal die. Every man has several wives, usually as many as he can afford, yet his family is comparatively small because of the rigorous lives of the children.

Perhaps the child gets sick. Whoever heard of a baby that didn't get stomach ache, cholera infantum and other diseases of which the blacks know nothing by their Latin names.

Now comes the witch doctor. He is the despot of the village. He possesses power to drive away evil spirits and to cure bodily diseases. All the children fear him, yet are afraid to disobey him.

Disease is believed to be the indication of an evil spirit. So Mr. Evil Spirit must be dispossessed. Now what does the witch doctor do?

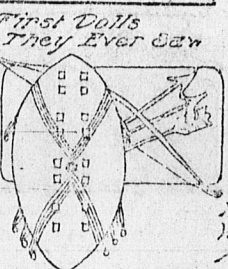
While the women moan the grizzled old man makes weird and mystic signs in the air. He sings divers incantations. He groans and shrieks and adjures the evil one to depart.

Then he gives the "medicine." These "medicines" are appalling concoctions, and are made of the remains of dead bodies, of the brains of dead men, of the carcasses of animals and of minerals and ashes.

If the brain from some renowned person or an ancestor can be found, it is mixed with chalk and given the infant. Great things are then expected, for this medicine, besides driving out evil spirits, is said to give wisdom.

Another choice and potent remedy is made from the eyeballs of enemies or white people. These are often chopped up to fine particles and administered.

Sometimes the remedies do not work. Ah, he says, with a sagacious scratch of his head, some direction of his was not followed. So he will almost to invoke the aid of a greater spirit for a consideration.

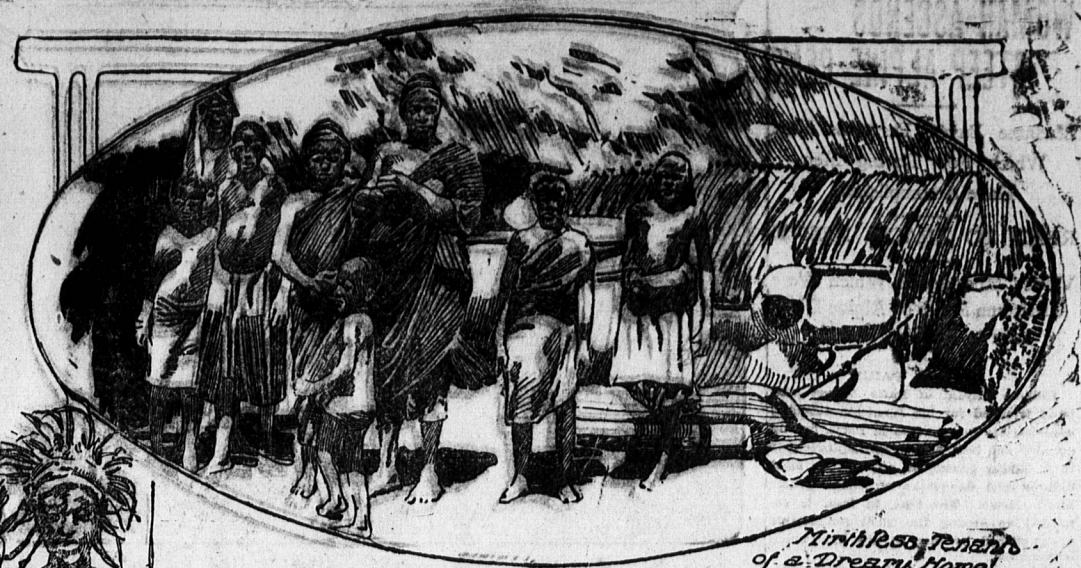


After That the Witch Doctor Adjoins Them

And here is where the black often wrongs themselves on one side. The mother of the sick child is perhaps victim of another wife of her husband. She whispers to the witch doctor her belief that the woman has bewitched the child, and the witch doctor enters with her for a consideration. Then comes the trial. The alleged witch is brought before the chiefs and accused.

From the time the children of the blacks can be made to understand they are impressed with the thought of the terrible "Dodo." He is a god who tests the fidelity and faith of the boys when they are initiated into the secret society, and who also chastises women.

From childhood the savage girl is taught to keep away from the Ju-ju House, where is supposed to



Mirthless Remains of a Dreary Home

well the awful and vengeful deity. Girls are continually frightened with this spirit. He is said to be an old man, and his favorite way of punishing the disobedient is to mutilate the unfortunate ones.

Among most of the African tribes the men of the village belong to a secret society, which forms the governing body. The members elect the King or chief. Women slaves and little children are denied the secrets.

The god of the society, known as "Dodo" in the Sudan and as "Uruko" in other parts of the black continent, is supposed to issue the mandates. At the midnight meetings of the members the god speaks. While the members bow in worship about a big fire they hear his voice. And no one dares say the god is a man. This one would surely die.

At the age of 12 years the boys are usually initiated into the society.

It is night, and the initiates, naked save for beads and amulets, are led into the forest. During their childhood they have heard of the malignant spirit; they have been warned of him. Now they are to meet him. Their legs nearly fail to carry them through the thick jungle.

They are mere children, yet they are put through one of the most severe initiatory services imaginable. Through the darkness comes a cry, the shrill, ominous call of a night-bird. There are murmurings among the trees, mysterious and terrifying sounds to the initiates.

Finally they reach the spot where wood has been piled, where a great fire is lighted. Then begin the incantations. The tribesmen dance as the boys kneel about the fire, their timid hearts sinking for fear of terror.

The priests howl, shout and beat their hideous drums. The discord reaches its height, and then as the initiates kneel some—something—passes by them, and a stinging lash falls across their backs. They are beaten until white ribs, until the skin is cut and the blood pours out.

But they must neither wince nor cry. Woe to the boy that faints, or faints under the terrible ordeal. The god is testing their strength. Those that cannot stand the test must die. They know this, and they bear up bravely. But alas! One moans and falls. Another cries. The loss of another quiver.

Weaklings are murdered. The wailing and screaming of the priests ceases, and those who have withstood are seized. They are carried into the jungle. In the morning their bodies are brought into the village. The priests tell the people the god has destroyed them.

Those who stand the test are declared fit to be initiated into the secrets of the cult and into the arts of the warrior. The father touches his son to use the arrow. The boy follows the men into the forest; he sets traps for wild animals, and learns to hunt, to build huts, and at last to carry a gun. Thus he grows to be a man. And he begins to build a hut for himself in anticipation of marriage.

Missionaries have declared that on their travels through Africa they never once saw a toy of any kind except that they took them. And when they gave the little African dolls and playthings, the children regarded them in amazement; their first impression was of flight.

The savages of Africa do not live in scattered huts in the jungle, but in communities. In the evening it is customary for the people to meet in the market-place, where the children dance to the beating of drums. This practically is their only play. And

how solemn they seem as they dance, slap each other's arms and stamp their feet.

The lives of the boys in some places are comparatively easy; they go fishing or hunting in the woods, or idle away their time. As soon as the girls can get around they are put to work in some form. It is not uncommon to see girls 5 and 6 years of age working on the plantations.

Considering the fact that they are betrothed at the age of 2 and 3—practically sold for so many horses and cattle—and that they are taken by their husbands in marriage at the age of 12, it ought not to be surprising that they are taught to prepare eggs, cornmeal, yam, plantain and other vegetables at an age when girls play with dolls in other countries. It is the custom that they be taught early to do all hard work, and it is quite the proper thing for a woman to build a hut and bamboo hut for herself and her husband before her marriage.

IN DANGER FROM SLAVE RAIDS

Another terror of the children is the raid for slaves. Parties of Arabs scour the most remote parts of Africa and carry off the children. According to Dr. Kumm, the horrors of which Livingstone wrote years ago are repeated today.

P. J. Tonkin, late medical officer and naturalist to the Hansa Association's Central Mission, in the Sudan, recently wrote the following to a missionary in this country:

"One of the chief causes of the enormous development of the trade in slaves are the most convenient currency. Cowrie shells, the ordinary medium of exchange, are useless for large transactions.

To carry a hundred pounds worth of cowries a hundred yards would need 300 men, and the cost of postage of such a sum a hundred miles would eat up the whole money. For this reason slaves are used as currency.

"I knew an emir who, finding himself a little short when making up the yearly tribute for the emperor, sent a detachment of soldiers to a village in his own territory, 100 miles from the city gates, and one, moreover, that paid him regular tribute, with orders to bring in all the young women and girls at work on the farms; and it was done—sixteen were picked out, and the rest sent back.

"I have known nearly 8000 square miles of territory absolutely depopulated by the ruling emir. I crossed the raiding territory myself and saw with my own eyes huge walled towns entirely deserted, thousands of acres of farm land relapsing into jungle and an entire population absorbed. And this sort of thing is not done once or twice in a century, but is absolutely being done somewhere or other every day.

"During the above raids the old men and women are kicked out of the way and cannot take their own property. The inclination of the individual raider, the young men are shackled, the boys tied together, the girls and young women roped neck to neck. A blade gleams in the freight, drip, and is dried. The babies are collected together and bundled into skins and bags.

"I spoke to one of the men who were with the raiders and said: 'Surely they cannot take these things into Tripoli?' The consul would not allow it.' He smiled. 'What do the consuls know about it?' 'But what do you do with these children?' 'I've killed them.' 'What do you do with these children?' 'I've killed them.' 'What do you do with these children?' 'I've killed them.'

"We take them to the gardens, to the houses of the rich Arabs. Then at evening time, they are put on board a Turkish vessel and sent to Asia Minor and to Constantinople to the harems of the rich Turks to a life of misery in a far-off country."

25 CENT MEALS IN \$25 RESTAURANTS



live there economically, too, if he knows how to order.

What can a person get for a quarter or half a dollar in the places where most of the dishes run above the dollar mark?

YOU would be surprised to know the number of rich men—millionaires—who come here for luncheon, and who pick out the cheapest things they can get," declared the head waiter in a big hotel recently.

"Certainly, it's economy. I don't suppose it could be anything else. I have seen men who could write their check for a million come in here, scrutinize the menu card and pick out the dishes that cost little.

"They will get a cup of coffee or a sandwich; perhaps insist on getting an order of meat, fish or vegetable, and many often come in pairs, buying only one order and dividing the food.

"What strikes me as singular is that some of these men take no account of the money they spend at dinner. They buy the choicest foods they can get, they seem to pick out the most expensive dishes and they'll drink wines and let the money flow.

"Very often, dinner is more of a social event; it is, perhaps the chief pleasure of the day, and then a man usually brings friends or members of his family."

"Then a person could really live cheaply in a place like Sherry's in New York; the Bellevue-Stratford, in Philadelphia, or the Auditorium in Chicago."

MILLIONAIRES often dine on 50-cent lunches, too. And they take these meals at the very restaurants and hotels where, in the evening, they think nothing of paying \$25 for dinners—perhaps \$50.

There is practically no limit to the amount of money one can easily spend in the palatial hosteries and eating houses of the big cities. But the man of limited means can

could gratify every little whim and caprice of our palate.

But, more than all, the place allured. Coming from a 5-and-10-cent lunch house, steaming with the odor of food, we felt a yearning to dine in the spacious rooms, amid palms, where electric fans create breezes that cool and where the odor of flowers fill the air.

Why not do it? Why not go and get your lunch at these "swell" places, and pay your 25, 50 or 75 cents? There are many men who pay at least 50 cents for lunch—the majority pay, perhaps, 25. Well, why not take a trip over to the electrically cooled and palmy rooms of the hostelry?

You may sit face to face with Mr. Multi-Millionaire, and you'll be able to see what sort of food this Olympian partakes of. You'll be treated courteously by the bowing waiter. You may wish to tip him—however that doesn't count. The question is, What can you get to eat?

"Many of the men who come here for lunch," said the waiter quoted above, "take a bowl of soup and a cup of chocolate or coffee. Now, for luncheon, we serve half portions of soup for 15 cents. A man can get a plate of soup, which includes bread and butter, and a cup of chocolate or coffee, which costs 15 cents, and feel pretty well satisfied. There's no reason why a business man should eat more for luncheon. And here's an interesting thing:

"I've been here a good many years, and I've watched people. Do you know the most successful business men are those who take light lunches? It's true. The fellows who buy crabs, roast turkey and chicken, steaks and vegetables and put away big meals become sluggish. They get fat—physically and mentally.

SMALL EATERS ARE ALERT

But the little old man who takes a plate of soup, his coffee or beer, his sandwich or little portion of fish, still keep young and alert and outdistance the big eater who is one-third his age. I tell you I've seen it.

"Suppose you are actually hungry at lunch; you think you need a little meat. Well, you may feel like spending 50 cents. Now, in most places you can get a nice small tenderloin steak for 45 cents. You would of course, want something to drink, and as drinks cost 15 cents, whether milk, coffee or beer, you'd probably run over your limit.

tious. What can you get?

"Well, lima beans are very nourishing, and satisfy one's hunger. You can get a plate of lima beans for 15 cents. For 10 or 15 cents you can get potatoes, done in many ways. It strikes me as very peculiar that the people in America seem to think you can get potatoes only mashed or fried.

"Now, people, comparatively, eat rice. A 10-cent plate of rice ought to make a lunch for a man who is not a gourmand. We'll pass over mushrooms, asparagus and new vegetables, which are always expensive in the early season. But buttered beets, potato croquettes, at 15 cents each, are also palatable.

"Why not the club sandwich. Here you have a nice lunch. You can get a club sandwich in any of the big restaurants at from 30 to 40 cents.

SOME SATISFIED WITH SANDWICHES

"Many men are satisfied with a chicken and lettuce sandwich, which you can get for a quarter. Another sandwich, which is most delicious, and which costs 30 cents, is of chicken, lettuce and minced green pepper.

"If you are not ravenously hungry, why not take a cup of tea, 10 cents, and buttered toast, for 15 cents? Here you have a nice light luncheon. Or, you can get an order of milk toast for 20 cents or a quarter. I know men who almost invariably take milk toast for their lunch.

"A man willing to spend 50 cents for lunch can get quite a variety of dishes in the finest restaurants. He can get some fish—and here many men go wrong. Instead of ordering the fish that are in season and getting fresher and cheaper food, he will order those that are imported or preserved, paying more and getting a less palatable article. Almost any time you can get good fish for 40 cents.

"You might wish a small order of stewed chicken on the special list, or ribs of beef. With the beef you'll get browned potatoes. And you'll have quite a hearty lunch before you.

"For 40 cents you can get many cold dishes—sliced pigs' feet with jelly, which is delicious, or sliced meats.

"Maybe you'll be satisfied with some dessert for lunch. Why not get a piece of pie and a cup of coffee, or ice cream and milk if it is summer, or fruit in season with toast or rolls? You can get a nice plate of fruit for 25 or 30 cents, or pie for 25 cents. It's better if you don't eat too much in the middle of the day. Get your big meal at night."

So, if you have a hankering for dining in the gilded and softly carpeted dining rooms of the fine hotels and restaurants, all you will have to do will be to scan the menus. Of course, the prices differ in various cities and various hotels. But if you're careful, and don't eat too much, you needn't go broke on 50 cents. And you ought to get a pretty good "dish" for a quarter.