

Stamping Out the "Flagellante" Sect in Philippines

THE old custom of bodily punishment to do penance for sins committed is practiced in but few countries of the world today. There are a few sects of "Flagellantes" in Old and New Mexico and parts of South America. In justice to the United States government, the missionaries and American teachers in the Philippine Islands, it should be noted that the practice is dying out in the Philippines. Enlightenment and education will eventually stamp out completely such a relic of superstition and ignorance.

Each year, during holy week, Manila residents who have sufficient curiosity are permitted to see a religious observance which savors of the middle ages. The principals on these occasions are known as "Flagellantes," or "Penitents," and their operations are generally confined to isolated sections of outlying barrios. These fanatics en-

the ceremony is at Navotas, in the province of Rizal, about fifteen miles from Manila. This town is picturesquely situated at the confluence of the Navotas river and Manila bay, and it is along the shores of the latter that the early morning visitor may witness the strange performance. Two days—Holy Thursday and Good Friday—are devoted to its observance.

Holy Thursday the penitent dresses, or rather undresses, for the occasion. Each man strips himself to the waist and with the aid of friends binds himself securely with ropes, chains or vines, so that he is left loose enough about the legs to permit slow walking. A crown of thorns is then placed on the head and a long veil covers the face. The veil seems to be used for the purpose of concealing the facial evidences of suffering as the ceremony

United States Government, Missionaries and Teachers Are Aiding in Ridding Islands of Fanatics—An Odd Custom Centuries Old Still in Vogue in Certain Sections—Religious Observances Savor of the Middle Ages—"Penitents" Endeavor to Imitate the Sufferings of Christ—Origin of the Custom Seems Shrouded in Mystery as Far as the Philippine Sect Is Concerned—Ceremony at Navotas, in the Province of Rizal, About Fifteen Miles From Manila—Two Days, Holy Thursday and Good Friday, Devoted to Observance—How the Fanatics Punish Themselves.



STRIPPED TO THE WAIST, WEARING A CROWN OF THORNS AND BOUND WITH ROPES AND A ROUGH VEIL CLOTH.



KNEELING FOR PUNISHMENT.



KNEELING AT THE PRAYER HOUSE.

and a perceptible improvement in morals, the reconciliation of enemies and generous gifts of alms attested the sincerity of their penance.

"In Italy the enthusiasm soon cooled, but beyond the Alps it broke out afresh, and in 1261 large bodies of flagellantes marched through Bavaria, Saxony, the upper Rhine country, Austria, Bohemia and Poland. They marched two or three abreast, with body bared above the waist and face veiled. They were preceded by flags or crosses, and flagellated themselves twice a day for thirty-three days, in memory of the terrible plague which, in 1347-49, ran through Europe, carrying off 80,000 people in Florence, 100,000 in Venice, 1,200,000 in Germany, not to mention other cities and lands. While many gave full sway to their passions, and some sat down in despair, others gave themselves up to self-inflicted flagellations, in the hope of appeasing the divine anger, and with the purpose of

preparing for the end of the world, which they regarded as being near at hand. On the 14th of April, 1349, the first flagellant fraternity appeared in Magdeburg. This was quickly followed by others in Wurzburg, Speier and Strassburg.

"They were regarded with awe on all sides, and the movement spread throughout all Germany, and extended to Denmark and England. Women were also found in the ranks. There was a regular organization and condition of membership. The candidate had to have the permission of his wife, promise obedience, have at least four shillings and four pence to defray expenses, as begging was prohibited, etc. When they came to towns, the bands marched in regular military order, singing hymns.

"At the time of flagellation they selected a square or churchyard, or field. Taking off their shoes and stockings and forming a circle, they girded themselves with aprons and laid down flat on the ground. The particular position of each of the flagellantes was determined by the number of his chief sin. (They fell on their back, side or belly, according to the nature of their sin.) Thurling the leader, then stepping over each one, touched them with the whip, and bade them rise. As each was touched, they followed after the leader, and imitated him. Once all on their feet, the flagellation began. The brethren went two by two around the whole circle, striking their backs till the blood trickled down from the wounds.

"The whip consisted of three thongs, each with four iron teeth. During the flagellation a hymn was sung. After all had gone around the circle, the whole body fell again on the ground, beating upon their breasts. The brethren then arising they flagellated themselves a second time. While the brethren

were putting on their clothes a collection was taken up among the audience.

"The scene was concluded by the reading of a letter from Christ, which an angel brought to earth and which commended the pilgrimages of the flagellantes. The fraternities never

endeavor to imitate the sufferings of Christ, and the accompanying photographs are fairly indicative of the excesses to which faith, unrestrained by reason, may bring one.

So far as it is within the province of the layman to investigate, there is a notable lack of literature or local tradition relative to the origin of these observances of the "Penitentes."

proceeds. After the penitent is thus equipped and has selected a companion to accompany him he is ready to suffer.

Aside from the fact that he possesses a strong arm and is doubtless a friend of the companion, the penitent has considerable confidence, the writer is unable to give any information relative to the qualifications governing the selection of the companion. Most of the punishment of Holy Thursday is inflicted by the companion. The ceremony on that day is confined chiefly to walking along the beach, alternately praying, jumping high in the air and landing face downward in the sand and receiving rough treatment at the hands of the companion. The penitent is accompanied by the man who accompanies him.

After bathing, the penitent usually goes to church for a session of prayer or joins the religious procession, after which he generally winds up the occasion by attending the cockpit and betting on his favorite rooster.

It is on Good Friday that the spectacular show and the real suffering take place. At daybreak the penitent arises from his bed of sand and is prepared for the finish. His back, bruised and sore from the treatment received on the previous day, is lacerated with a knife or broken glass until the blood runs down his body. The regalia worn the day before is donned and he is given a rope at the end of which are tied six or eight pieces of bamboo about six inches long, similar to a cat-o-nine-tails. With this flail the fanatic begins to beat his back, first from one side and then the other.

"The movement was at its height in the fourteenth century. They made their first appearance again in Italy. A mighty impetus was given by the terrible plague which, in 1347-49, ran through Europe, carrying off 80,000 people in Florence, 100,000 in Venice, 1,200,000 in Germany, not to mention other cities and lands. While many gave full sway to their passions, and some sat down in despair, others gave themselves up to self-inflicted flagellations, in the hope of appeasing the divine anger, and with the purpose of

carried longer than a single day in a town. They gained great popularity, and it was considered an honor to entertain them.

"The feeling, however, underwent a complete change. The flagellantes began to be a burden to the people. Nine thousand passed through Strassburg in three months. The clergy inveighed against their assumption. The arrival of a band at Avignon was finally the occasion for Clement VI to issue a bull (October 20, 1349) forbidding their pilgrimages and commanding the authorities in church and state to suppress them. This was efficacious, and only now and then did the enthusiasm break out again. The trial of a flagellant in Anhalt, 1517, is the last vestige of the movement in Germany.

During the Spanish regime there were great numbers of "Penitentes" in all of the Christian settlements of the Philippines. The infliction of self-punishment was permitted on the streets and in the churches. But after a while many local governments prohibited it entirely and the church disclaimed any connection with the sect known as "Penitentes."

One of the best opportunities to see

This treatment consists of frequent applications of a strap, rope or stick while the penitent lies prostrate, face downward, in prayer. These applications are accompanied by swift kicks, and the punishment may be applied at any time except when the penitent impress the visitor before a "prayer house." The prayer houses are nipa shacks erected at intervals along the beach.

The native guide explained the etiquette of the game, from which the writer inferred that it is not considered polite or good form for the penitent's companion to beat or kick him when he stops before a prayer house to meditate upon his sins.

The penitent may be walking along slowly and suddenly jump in the air and come down to the ground doubled up like a jack-knife. There is no doubt that considerable suffering is experienced, as it is said he takes neither food nor water during the period of

This is continued about five hours, when the muscles of the back are a mass of bruised and bleeding flesh. At intervals of five or ten minutes and always when the reading of the passion is heard, the companion applies a leather thong, rope or stick to the leg and body of the penitent. At times an instrument shaped like a hairbrush, in which are embedded many sharp pieces of broken glass, is used. It is applied to the penitent as he lies on the ground, face downward, arms outstretched, in the image of the cross.

The ceremony of Good Friday ends about 11 o'clock in the morning, when the penitent wades out in the sea and takes a salt water plunge. This of itself must be rather painful, considering the condition of the penitent's flesh.

As few books of reference contain anything relating to the origin of the custom, the following, copied from an ecclesiastical encyclopedia of a Manila minister, may be of interest as illustrating that these fanatics in other lands at other times:

"Flagellantes (flagellantes), Brothers of the Cross, cruciferes, cross bearers (cruciferi), Brothers in White (so called because of their dress) and independent (because they had broken with the hierarchy) are the names of morbid fanatics from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. The prelude to the flagellant pilgrimages was the preaching of Anthony of Padua, who, in 1210, the men composing went about in large bodies singing and scouring themselves.

"The fraternities which appeared at the end of the fourteenth century, in Italy, France and Spain were of a different character, but likewise pleaded a divine command. Christ and Mary appeared to a peasant and revealed that the destruction of the world could only be averted on condition of a flagellant pilgrimage. In 1398 large bands appeared in Genoa, clad in long white garments which covered the head, and had only two holes for the eyes. Priests and bishops joined them. Henry IV, in 1409, executed, and the fanaticism disappeared.

"The council of Constance took the matter under discussion (and Gerson wrote a tract against them, 'Contra Sectam Flagellantium'). Flagellant fraternities existed in France in the sixteenth century, were used by Henry III, and suppressed by Henry IV, in 1609, after a procession of Flagellantes passed through the streets of Lisbon."

ALL SWEDEN AWAITS THE END OF WAR FOR RECONCILIATION OF ROYAL COUPLE

ASIDE from all questions of humanity, increased commerce and the like, Sweden is deeply interested in the probable end of the European war, for with the end of the war will come an end of the estrangement which has existed between Prince Wilhelm of Sweden and his beautiful Russian wife, Princess Marie Paulovna.

The United States minister, Ira Nelson Morris, is also interested in the reconciliation of the royal couple. His part in this romantic drama there will be more later.

Towering high over the actors and actresses is the huge white palace of Prince Lennart—a magnificent structure situated in the Royal Deer Park, which is the north bank of the Norrstrom, Sweden's famous river. It is the cen-

Expected That Termination of Struggle Will See End of Estrangement of Prince Wilhelm and His Beautiful Russian Wife, Princess Marie Paulovna — The United States Minister Also Interested in the Event—A Peculiar Story of a Royal Mix-Up—The Palace of Young Prince Lennart, Where the Representative of Uncle Sam Makes His Home—How the War Has Changed the Usual Run of Events, and What Is Predicted for the Future.

place, like the palace he now occupies are rarities in Sweden, and it was only by unusual good luck that he had obtained his home at all.

That is the situation today. In Stockholm a thin, rather sad-faced young man awaits the end of the war. With him is a chubby, happy-faced boy who plays with a young lion and is not afraid. These are Prince Wilhelm and Prince Lennart. The father, the little son and the lion cub have become great chums. But they are awaiting the return of the princess and life resumed in the little prince's



PRINCESS MARIA PAULOVNA, MOTHER OF PRINCE LENNART, DIVORCED WIFE OF PRINCE WILHELM OF SWEDEN. SHE IS THE DAUGHTER OF GRAND DUKE PAUL NICHOLAJEVITCH OF PETROGRAD, RUSSIA.

It is given out that her family was objectionable to the royal household. Her own determination to live a life of excitement, regardless of the opinions of others, brought her into disapproval to the forebears of those who were near the throne.

It was said that the princess possesses a

It took a world-shaking cataclysm to divide the Princess Marie from her youthful love of play. Great clouds appeared on the horizon. The impossible became real. Nations stared incredulously. Then came the crash—the European war had begun.

Those who know say that the change in Princess Marie from the very moment when Russia was threatened with war was astounding. The light-colored princess, who had been the woman of responsibilities. Soon after the war began she offered her services to the Swedish court, and in a moment, with the Russian troops and in charge of a hospital.

If her complete change in ideals astonished those who knew her in Russia, it must have paralyzed the Swedish court. Here was a butterfly princess, remade overnight into a self-sacrificing woman, facing the hideous realities of war, scorning the comfort and ease of other years, and displaying a courage that would hardly be expected in one whose whole life time she had spent in idleness. One kind of courage enables an individual to take a horse over a five-barred gate. Another kind of courage enables a woman to minister to the needs of a writhing, moaning soldier. They are different kinds of courage, but both are equally heroic.

Evidently the royal house of Sweden was profoundly impressed by the change which had come over Princess Marie, for within a short time certain friends of Princess and Prince Wilhelm went to her and urged a reconciliation. The princess was willing. Evidently the desire to return to her family was strong. But greater things have held her.

"If I return," she is reported to have said, "but only after Russia is at peace."

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trial figure in this queer international tangle.

This is the story:

When she was seventeen years old the beautiful Princess Marie was married to Prince Wilhelm, who, so goes report, was, and is, a quiet, domestic sort of man, who is not overmuch given to the frivolities of life. There seems to have been some ante-nuptial debate between the royal houses prior to the marriage.

Princess Marie's father, the Grand Duke Paul Nicholajevitch, was a typical Russian aristocrat and stood high in the court of the czar. His young daughter had been brought up in the magnificent, almost barbaric, splendor of Petrograd court life.

Any one who has read of the imperial court of Russia knows that it is not comparable with other courts in the western world. Its wonderful luxury,

of the ridiculous that is extraordinarily keen, and that she did not hesitate to use this weapon at the expense of certain social personages who were displeased as a result. All of this did not aid matters. Finally one day the break came. The princess departed for Paris, where she met her father, and held a long conference. Possibly she told him of her growing dislike for the Swedish court. It may have been that she was urged to give up her residence in Sweden and return to her native country. These are conjectures. But the fact remains that as a result of this conference the princess departed with her father for Petrograd.

First, however, she decided her magnificent Swedish palace to Prince Lennart. Through all the storms of domestic life in Sweden her love for her little son remained the same. What a woman, a woman talented in many ways, a woman whose fascinating charms brought men to her feet, she quickly tired of the quiet atmosphere.

There are many stories. For exam-



PRINCE WILHELM OF SWEDEN AND HIS SON, PRINCE LENNART.

arrations to land troops at Lungkow, China, while protesting against any infringement of her neutrality, recognizing the loss of the situation by offering to declare a war zone, as was done in regard to the Russo-Japanese war.

These limitations did not suit Japan, who let it be understood that she would take what action she deemed to be necessary to insure the success of the military operations. China contented herself by formally protesting when the Japanese military authorities laid a line of light railway for the transportation of stores and munitions to the front and committed other acts which were considered justified by military necessity. While the Chinese government placed its formal protest on record it went no further and allowed Japan to develop her plans unmolested as far as China was concerned.

The British troops who took part in the investment of Kiaochow landed within the leased territory, but their debarkation was only rendered possible by the preliminary occupation of the locality by the Japanese forces which had crossed from Lungkow. The occupation of the Shantung railway as far west as Weishien elicited another protest from China, but Japan again claimed that her action was dictated by military necessity, and eventually occupied the whole length of the line to Tsinanfu.

The Chinese government was faced with the position that to take action would be fatal, while to take no action might cause serious discontent among the people of Shantung in particular and afford an opportunity for revolt to those elements of the Chinese public which are always on the lookout for an opportunity to fish in troubled waters. By protest which never went to extremes China justified herself in the eyes of the world and reassured the better elements among her own people.

It was not long after the unconditional surrender of Kiaochow that the question of the future disposition, or, to be strictly correct, the outlook for an action taken part in the military reduction of the fortress, her arrangement with her government, and not before, this event came Baron Kato's statement in the imperial diet recently, which has caused much apprehension in the Japanese quarters and which is admitted by those who are friendly to Japan to be ambiguous as to what her intentions in China now are.

plotted and not overcourteously treated. A British officer had clambered aboard and had bawled all manner of orders. What was the great and powerful government of these United States going to do about this?

Travelers were being swindled by companies who issued checks. The rate of exchange was extortionately high. Could not some complaint be made to the State Department whereby these companies would be compelled to announce publicly that these checks were not worth their face value in foreign countries?

Baggage had been seized. Was there no reparation? How about getting back

Some of the Japanese newspapers have taken the fine point that Japan's undertaking to return the territory under German control was a peace offering. Papers such as the Japan Times and the China Weekly Advertiser, both of which enjoy a semi-official status, have pointed out that it would be disgraceful to Japan to attempt to evade her obligations on a point that might appeal to a fourth-rate police court solicitor, but to no one else.

Not content with letting the ultimatum itself proclaim the correctness of Japan's motives, the prime minister, Count Okuma, telegraphed a message to the American people reaffirming that Japan had no ulterior motive, no desire of securing more territory and no thought of depriving China or other peoples of anything which they now possess.

Japan voluntarily gave assurances to the world that she would not take advantage of the situation created by the war to occupy permanently any portion of Chinese territory, though the terms of her alliance with Great Britain rendered any such pledge superfluous. She decided not to surrender Kiaochow without a struggle. The purely military operations are well known, but some questions became involved. One arose immediately. Japan made prop-