

PRACTICE OF OBEAHISM.

A Correspondent's Story of a Wonderful Plant Found in Hayti.

A correspondent writes from Hayti that the inhabitants of the mountains back of Aux Cayes and in the interior of the island, and a few residents of the town itself, still believe in Obeahism and practise its monstrous rites. They have their temples among the mountain fastnesses in impenetrable thickets which none but themselves would dare to enter. Part of their superstition is the eating of children, whom they steal wherever they can find them for the purpose of sacrifice. At each service in a temple the priest appoints a certain person to bring a child for sacrifice at the next meeting, and the person fears to disobey lest he should incur the wrath of Obe.

According to the correspondent, one of the modes of procuring children is for a woman to go to town ostensibly to sell something, and as soon as she sees a nice plump infant, she makes some excuse to touch it with her hand, on which has been rubbed the juice of a plant (known only to the Obeahs) that has the apparent effect of causing its death. When the child is buried the Obeahs, who keep watch of what is going on, dig it up, carry it to the mountains, and apply another plant which removes the stupor and restores the child to life and health. Some extraordinary stories are told of the operations of the Obeahs. A native negro of Aux Cayes, having lost a child in the manner described, was suspicious of the cause, and determined to guard the grave. Putting four armed men in ambush, he saw a party of Obeahs disinter the body at midnight and reanimate it with the plant. They were about to go off with it when the hidden men fired upon and killed several of the robbers, the grandmother of the child among them. The infant grew up, and is today a handsome young woman at Aux Cayes.

The wonderful plant, it is asserted, is often used for revenge. A man who hated another used it upon him; he seemed to die, and was buried. After three days his enemy disintered him, and the effect of the plant passing off, he regained consciousness and health, but was deprived of speech and reason, because his enemy was ignorant of the counteracting plant. The unhappy wretch was made a servant of his foe, and compelled to toil in the fields until an Obeah priest, who hated the master, produced the antidote, and rendered the man whole again. These stories are very interesting, if true; but they need corroboration.—N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.

The Way a Diamond Is Cut.

If a stone has to be cut it is placed in a matrix of lead attached to a ferrule, which, on cooling, holds the stone tight. Another stone is placed in a like manner in another ferrule, and one diamond is ground against the other, the tools being held by the workmen over a small oblong box, in which is placed a sieve, through which the invaluable diamond dust is sifted, to be used up as a paste in the process of polishing. Hour after hour the patient craftsman rubs diamond against diamond, now moistening their heated surfaces, now heating the matrix and turning another angle to the top, which in its turn becomes a perfect facet. When the required number of facets are put on the stone is passed on to the polisher.

Now steam power comes into play. Every polisher sits before a disc revolving on a steel spindle tipped with lignum vite, at a rate of seventy-five miles an hour, and resting on its smooth surface are three or four clips; each holds a ferrule, at the end of which is the matrix, in which the diamond has again been embedded. By an adjusting screw the facet, which is being polished, rests at a certain angle on the lubricated disc, and every few minutes each one is lifted off and examined, in order to see whether it is "nearly done," or "how it is getting on."—Pall Mall Gazette.

A Bicycle for the River's Surface.

Lying just above the East Hartford bridge the other day was a new craft that attracted the attention of all who passed. Its base is a very light catamaran with side boats about six inches broad. Near the center is a frame, and in the center of the frame are two seats. The rear seat is like that of a bicycle, and has at a proper distance regular bicycle cranks. Between the cranks are two beveled gears, and to the second is attached a long shaft, terminating in a bright brass propeller wheel about twenty inches in diameter. This wheel can be raised or lowered to suit the depth of water. In front of the bicycle seat is an iron standard with a handle bar like that of a bicycle, and attached to the rudder. The front seat is not attached to the machinery, and is simply for a passenger. The little craft runs very easily, and with no great exertion can be made to go fully twice as fast as an ordinary light rowboat.—Hartford Courant.

Grant and Meade at Spottsylvania.

The battery I served with was firing three-inch percussion bolts at the Confederate line and doing no harm. One of my comrades spoke to me across the gun, saying: "Grant and Meade are over there," nodding his head to indicate the direction in which I was to look. I turned my head and saw Grant and Meade sitting side by side on the ground under a large tree. Both of them were watching the fight which was going on in the pasture field.

We ceased firing and sat on the ground around the guns watching our general, and the preparations that were being made for another charge for a fresh slaughter. Grant had a cigar in his mouth. His face was immovable and expressionless. His eyes lacked luster. He sat quietly and watched the scene as though he was an uninterested spectator. Meade was nervous, and his hand constantly sought his face, which it stroked. Staff officers rode furiously up and down the hill carrying orders and information.—Frank Wilkeson in New York Star.

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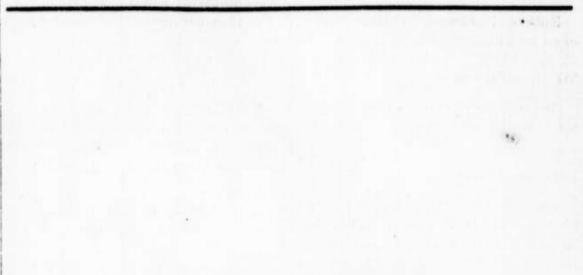
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