

WITCH-FINDING IN INDIA.

The Ordeal by Water Among the Tribes of Central Asia.

The ordeal by water is universal among the barbarian non-Aryan tribes of Central India, from the Bheels of the west country to the wild men in the almost unexplored jungles of Buster and the far east, toward the Bay of Bengal.

In the case from which this account is taken, the woman failed in the test, and was consequently swung to and fro, roped up to a tree, with a bandage of red pepper on her eyes; but it is obvious that this kind of ordeal, like almost all primitive ordeals, is contrived so as to depend for its effect much upon the manner in which it is conducted.

Another ordeal is by heat, as, for instance, the picking of a coin out of burning oil. But the question extraordinary is by swinging on a sacred tree, or by flogging with switches of a particular wood. Swinging before an idol, with a hook through the muscles of the back, is the well-known rite by which a Hindoo devotes himself to the god, and flogging with rods from a sacred tree manifestly adds superhuman virtue to the ordinary effect of a vigorous laying on.

A good many years ago there was an old man practicing as a physician near Sringeri, in the Himalayas, who was notorious as a sorcerer, inasmuch that his reputation of having devoured many persons under the form of a tiger cost him most of his teeth, which were extracted by the rajah who then held that country, so as to render him less formidable during his constant metamorphoses.

The Horse-Shoe Superstition.

The origin of the horseshoe superstition has never been satisfactorily explained. Among the theories offered that contained in the following is among the possibilities. The horseshoe of old was held to be of special service against attacks of evil spirits. The virtues may have been assigned perhaps by the rule of contraries, from its being a thing incompatible with the cloven foot of the Evil One; or from the rude resemblance which the horseshoe has to the rays of glory which in ancient pictures were made to surround the heads of saints and angels; or, finally, from some notion of its purity, acquired through passing through the fire. This latter supposition receives some countenance from method resorted to for the cure of horses that had become vicious, or afflicted by any distemper which village farriery did not understand; such disease was invariably attributed to witchcraft, and the mode of cure seems to imply the belief that the imperfect purification by fire of the shoe which the animal wore, had afforded an inlet to malevolent influences.

of removing the spell under which the animal suffered. Sailors are, for the most part, careful to have a horseshoe nailed to the mizenmast, or somewhere on the deck near midships, for the protection of the vessel. The Chinese have their tombs built in the shape of the horseshoe, which custom is very curious, as it may be fairly regarded as a branch of the superstition long prevalent among ourselves.

Mingled Too Much.

"My son," he said, as he laid his hand on the head of his eldest born, "you have now arrived at manhood's age, and it is time you mingled with the world of business. Here are \$20,000. Go out and make your start in life, and lay the foundation for a competence." The son bowed his humble head and skipped with the cash. He was just in time to bot on the Presidential election, and when the result had been announced he went home to his father, and said: "Father, I have mingled with the whirl."

Not Acquainted with Cashiers.

"Pa, I read in a paper that another bank has closed its doors. What does that mean?" asked an Austin boy of his father. "It means, my son, that the cashier has run off with all the money."

Dynamite in Europe.

Dynamite, in fact, has put a tremendous power in the hands of individuals, and has reinforced all revolutionary and seditious tendencies enormously, making mere folly and fanaticism seriously dangerous, and in raising the natural bent of all lawless movements to gather strength as they go on. And while a philosophy which discerns the fatality of international quarrels has become widely diffused, the international preparations for future fighting (at least in Europe) have never been so extensive; so that governments engaged largely in elaborating machinery for wholesale slaughter find it difficult to present the usual front desirable to the people who uphold the right of private warfare.

Not Afraid of "Shakes."

"My husband and I are going straight through to San Francisco," said a middle-aged lady to a chance acquaintance on a train in car. "We mean to make our home there in the future." "San Francisco?" ejaculated the other. "I wouldn't live in San Francisco for anything. I think it is a perfectly awful place to live. You don't know what a nuisance you are going to have a terrible earthquake. My husband wanted me to go there, but I wouldn't do a step. Aren't you afraid?" "Not in the least." "Why, it makes me shudder to think of it, and I don't see how you can be so calm when you are going where you are likely to have your house shaken down over your head." "My dear madame," replied the middle-aged lady, with a smile, "if you had lived twenty years in the acute swamps of Michigan, as I have, you wouldn't be afraid of any of the little one-horse snakes they have out in California."

Learning Wisdom.

A Peasant who had Seven Daughters wearing out sole leather for him went to the Cave of a Wise Old Man, and brought his Advice as to how to bring them up.

"Marry them off as soon as possible, as you can then prevent House-keeping and go Boarding among them."

After a few months the father returned to the Cave and his wife had such a home-coming Expression that the Wise Man cried out:

"Ah, you must follow my Advice to learn Wisdom!"

"The Trouble is that I did follow it, but instead of having seven places to board around at I have seven sons-in-law to board on me."

Moral—However, the Peasant had the Wisdom.

Puzzling to Naturalists.

Milne-Edwards, the naturalist, is giving in Paris an interesting exhibition of submarine plants and animals found during his exploration of the Mediterranean. He took soundings to the depth of 19,687 feet, and brought up some of the most remarkable organisms ever seen. They are said to have puzzled the most accomplished naturalists, some of them being of such a nature as to make it difficult to classify them either as belonging to a botanical or zoological species. The dredging was on a large scale, samples of rock weighing over 200 pounds being sometimes brought up.

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