

ed in unaccustomed places.

The advent of Mrs. Page at the Silver Brick hotel naturally made a sensation. An assemblage of not less than fifty gentlemen of leisure crowded about the entrance, each more intent than the others on getting a look at the arrivals, and especially at this one arrival—whose age, looks, name, business and intentions in coming to Luckydog were discussed with great freedom. Sam Rice was closely questioned, but proved reticent and non-committal. The landlord was besieged with inquiries—the landlady, too—and all without anybody being made much the wiser. There was the way-bill, and there was the lady herself; put that and that together and make what you could of it.

Mrs. Dolly Page did not seem discomposed in the least by the evident interest she inspired. With her black curls smoothly brushed, her black robes immaculately neat, with a pretty color in her round cheeks, and a quietly absorbed expression in her whole bearing, she endured the concentrated gaze of fifty pairs of eyes during the whole of dinner without so much as one awkward movement, or the dropping of a fork or teaspoon. So it was plain that the curious would have to await Mrs. Page's own time for developments.

But developments did not seem likely to come overwhelmingly. Mrs. Page made a fast friend of the landlady of the Silver Brick by means of little household arts peculiarly her own, and before a fortnight was gone had become as indispensable to all the boarders as she was to Mrs. Shaughnessy herself. If she had a history, she kept it carefully from curious ears. Mrs. Shaughnessy was evidently satisfied and quite challenged criticism of her favorite. Indeed, there was nothing to criticise. It was generally understood that she was a widow, who had to get on in the world as best she could, and thus the public sympathy was secured and an embargo laid upon gossip. To be sure, there were certain men in Luckydog, of a class which has its representatives everywhere, who regarded all unappropriated women, and especially pretty women, very much as a hunter regards game, and the more difficult to approach, the more exciting the chase. But these moral Nimrods had not half the chance with self-possessed Mrs. Dolly Page that they would have had with a different style of woman. The grosser sort got a sudden 'conge'; and with the more refined sportsmen she coquetted just enough to show them that two could play at a game of "make-believe," and then sent them off with a lofty scorn edifying to behold—to the mingled admiration and amusement of Mrs. Shaughnessy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Oriental Religions.

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

The Asiatic presents a striking contrast to the European and the American. He is "a brown man". Yet the white races and communities of Europe and America have derived their religions from the brown Asiatic. The Asiatic's idea of government is that of a single, irresponsible, absolute despot. The thought of a popular representative government based on law never entered his head. A writer in the Contemporary review some years ago said:

"The Asiatic from the days of Saul and earlier has preferred that his ruler should be absolute, and there is not and never has been a brown community in which the ruler had not the right to inflict death on a private person at his discretion. . . Asiatic rulers are not overthrown for despotism, and the reason is that their subjects like it, that it strikes and soothes their imaginations; that they think autocracy, wielded by an individual who can fit his decision to each individual case, the perfection of beneficial energy and a reflex of the government of the most high. Unless the law is divine, they dislike law as an instrument of government, and prefer a flexible and movable human will, which can be turned by prayers, threats and conciliations in money."

As has been said, the chief religions of the world are of Asiatic origin, viz., Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. Of course the primitive Asiatics of Arabia, Persia, Judea and India who were the evolvers of the above religions, had no correct scientific knowledge, no idea whatever of the limitless universe of modern science. Their terrestrial knowledge even only included a portion of the continent of Asia. The sky, according to their primitive notions, was a mere aerial roofing of the earth, and not an outlet into infinite space, starred with innumerable suns and worlds. They made the sky the abode of a celestial despot with a court of angels, his ministers and servitors. In other words, the theism of all the chief religions is the rule of an Oriental despot reigning in the heavens.

In the New Testament the theism, which prevails even at present among the white races of the West, is called "the kingdom of the heavens", as if there were a personal deity reigning in the heavens overhead! Our theologies being of Asiatic origin, are all infected with the Asiatic idea that the universe is governed by a personal celestial despot. The New Testament is a thoroughly Asiatic book, as much so as the Arabian Nights. The same superstitious notions which are spoken of in the New Testament

are still prevalent all over Asia, for the Asiatic morally and mentally is a fixture, a stationary man, and not only morally and mentally, but socially and in matters of government.

He reached a certain stage of development two or three thousand years ago, and there he "sticks" to the present day. He still believes in demoniacal possession as he did in the days of the so-called savior; that is, he believes there are bad spirits or demons, the subjects of Satan, who take possession of the bodies of human beings as opportunity occurs and infest them with disease and madness. The Asiatic believes that Satan holds divided sway with God, and that the powers of light and darkness are engaged in a constant warfare for the souls of men.

As Prof. Huxley says, the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles and the Apocalypse assert the existence of the devil and his demons and hell as plainly as they do that of God.

Disease in the New Testament is regarded as the result of the demoniacal possession of the sick man. And it is largely so regarded all over Asia today. Asia now, as it was thousands of years ago, is overrun by fanatical religious tramps called dervishes, santons, yogeas, etc., who are unutterably filthy beggars, but who are everywhere treated with reverence.

In the third chapter of the first gospel one of these Oriental religious tramps and enthusiasts is introduced under the name of John the Baptist. He might have been a wandering Buddhist saint. He is represented as roaming the desert shouting to all who might be within earshot to repent because "the kingdom of the heavens," whatever that might have been, was at hand. Then follows a regular Oriental myth or fairy tale of the Arabian Nights sort, descriptive of the baptism of Jesus by this wandering santon in the Jordan, while the heavens open and a dove hovers above the scene and a supernatural voice is heard vouching for the divine sonship of Jesus. The New Testament, like the Arabian Nights and all other Asiatic writings, is full of supernatural occurrences and the performances of supernatural agencies. Travelers in the East to this day, no matter how rational or modern they may be in their ideas and convictions, say that the everywhere prevailing superstitions are so constantly insisted upon, that they can not escape a certain infection for the time being. The question is how much longer the supernaturalisms, theologies and mythologies of Asia, which originated among the primitive Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Arabians and Jews (an Arabian tribe), thousands of years ago, are to be preached in these modern days of positive knowledge and re-

ality. How much longer will the rational Norse and Germanic nations, which are the leaders of modern civilization, condescend to tolerate these worn-out and exploded Orientalisms and Asiaticisms?

The primitive Greeks, who were the first rational, modern people, understood Asia and the groveling Asiatic mind, so servile and unmanly and superstitious in its tendencies, thoroughly. Hence they opposed with all their might, and successfully, the attempts of several Asiatic despots to overrun and subjugate Europe. But later on Europe became fearfully infected with Asiatic superstition, and both Europe and America remain so to this day. But the rational, scientific, democratic civilization of today is bound to disencumber itself of this Oriental rubbish, which constitutes the chief obstacle to progress.

### I Can't Learn Easily.

Many a young person becomes discouraged because he thinks some other person learns more easily than he does. Those who learn most easily often make the least of life. Remember the reply of the Spartan mother when she gave her son a sword and commanded him to go into the battle and be brave and do valiantly. He looked at the sword and said:

"Mother, this sword is too short."

The mother replied:

"My son, add a step to it."

So, kind reader, if you feel that your ability is a little short, add energy to it. A little ability with energy is far better than great ability without energy.

You have talent enough if you will use it. The future holds success for you if you will pay the price.

### Rural Minister's Blessing.

Down in the rural district it happened, when the Mean Man invited the preacher to dinner. The mean man had plenty of money, but he didn't spend it on his table, which on that occasion showed but scant fare.

"Parson," said the Mean Man, "times air hard an' groceries high; but such as it is, you're welcome. Will you ax a blessing?"

"I will," said the parson; "fold your hands." And then he said:

"Lord, make us thankful for what we are about to receive—for these greens without bacon, this bread without salt, this coffee without sugar; and, after we have received it, give thy servant strength to get home in time for dinner."—  
[Atlanta Constitution.]

Woodworkers, don't forget to send an order for a set of the Forstner Auger Bits. Price, \$2.60 by mail. See ad.