

PASSION PLAY REPRODUCED BY THE INDIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Spectacle, Equaling That at Oberammergau, Proves As Interesting Representation of World's Greatest Tragedy As Ever Is Witnessed—Arrangements Already in Hand for Production Near Vancouver in 1911.



CHRIST STRIPPED OF HIS RAIMENT.



CHRIST ON THE CROSS.



CHRIST NAILED TO THE CROSS.

BY HAROLD SANDE.
VANCOUVER, B. C., Aug. 20.—(Special.)—As wonderful as any Passion Play in Oberammergau is the representation of the world's greatest tragedy by British Columbia Indians. This is given every second year and arrangements are already well in hand for the 1911 performance near this city.

Tribesmen from many Coast sections of this rim of the British Empire already are actively rehearsing their parts, and next Summer on the Pacific Coast will be memorable for what will undoubtedly be the best of the extraordinary series of Passion Plays given by the aborigines of Canada's westernmost province. The production will take place at one of the little Roman Catholic missions that gleam white and peaceful at the feet of the spruce-clad mountains of the Coast Range. Priests who have spent their lives devoutly winning redskins from the ways of idolatry, who have put down dog-eating and devil-dancing, are now busy with the preliminary preparations for what will undoubtedly be one of the most eventful religious celebrations on the American Continent.

It is not long since I saw the passion tableaux in the little town of Chilliwack, a few miles from here. There near the banks of the majestic Fraser, which flows yellow and golden to the Gulf of Georgia, was given a solemn inspiring spectacle, impossible to be seen in any other part of King George's Empire or elsewhere on the American Continent. To the garden city of British Columbia, as they call Chilliwack, outspread at the foot of white-topped Mount Okean, came 3000 Indians. They included the remnants of 20 tribes, all that are left of the descendants of the army of redmen that owned the land previous to the appearance of the Spaniards and Captains Cook and Vancouver.

Pictures Do More Than Books.

This Passion Play of the West is vastly different from that given at the quaint old European village. The Roman Catholic fathers, indeed, state that it is a teaching of the gospel by means of tableaux representing the great passion.

"We teach the great central truths of Christian faith by a combination of the powers of the church and the

stage," said one open-minded missionary.

"The tableaux, or play, if you will have it so," remarked another father, "is intended to be an object lesson for the Indians, who look upon the production with greatest reverence. It is the quickest and most effective way in which to educate them in the various episodes of our Redeemer's passion. Our Indians are just like little children. It is easier to train them by the eye and personal interest than by the printed book."

Indians took part in 12 tableaux of the Passion of the Lord. It was at 3 P. M. on a sunny Summer day that the great festival commenced, a replica of which will be given next year. The fathers had held special services in the reservation for five days previously, bringing the Indians up to the proper state of mind for the solemn occasion. As the hour struck, the multitude of red men and women took places in the long procession which was to pass around each group. There were old patriarchs and wrinkled dames who saw the light before Queen Victoria came to the throne of Great Britain; there were young mothers with babies on their backs, their stolid husbands by their sides; young, dashing bucks and round-limbed, black-eyed maidens and hundreds of neatly dressed school children. No more marvelous procession ever marched on the Pacific Coast.

March Begins With Weird Chant.

Equally remarkable in their way were the decorations of the spacious grounds of the reservation. The choice of bunting was particularly noticeable. Of course, the Union Jack and the Canadian flag were conspicuous, but not more than the Stars and Stripes, while the great emblem of Ireland and the tricolor of France were distinctive adornments of a grand arch, festooned with evergreens from the nearby forest. At one end of the reservation is the permanent chapel; at the other end stood, a temporary altar, on the red, white and blue bunting of which was inscribed in letters of gold: "Gloria in Excelsis Deo." Before the procession started a reverend father addressed the Indians in Chinook, the language of barrier between whites and red on the Northern Pacific Coast. Some Indians from the interior did not understand this and for their benefit the address was translated in "Siato."

"As you pass each group represent-

ing the passion and death of our blessed Lord and Savior, remember your sins," said the father impressively.

To the sound of a weird chant the cortege began its march. An Indian called out to the spectators that the march was styled "The Way to the Cross," whether the procession led Thomas Michael, a well-known Indian of the Sechart tribe, led the way, carrying the heavy cross. Behind the up-lifted emblems of Christianity walked sisters in black and Mission girls in light-colored frocks. Then followed the representatives of the 20 tribes, each with the chief at the head, in tribal order.

The fathers walked between the lines and encouraged the chanting, which was kept up continuously for a couple of hours or more. During all this time the Sechart Indians and others who composed the 12 tableaux, had to remain posed while the great procession passed slowly from group to group. The Indians posed as if cut in stone for a period which no white can could emulate.

The first tableau showed St. Peter, St. James and St. John asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, with Jesus Christ praying. Next came the arrest of Jesus, with Judas and servants portrayed by Indians. Groups three, four and five depicted the judgment of Pilate, the scourging by his order and the crowning with thorns. Ecce Homo, Pontius Pilate showing Jesus to the people was next strikingly represented and then the procession passed on to view Christ falling under the burden of the heavy cross. His meeting with the Virgin Mary, His condoling of the women, and St. Veronica anointing his bleeding feet. Then came No. 11, stripping the clothes off Christ preparatory to his Crucifixion, the crucifixion itself, and finally, No. 12, the death of Our Lord.

The last picture was taken part in by all the Indians who had figured in the preceding 11. The figure on the cross was, of course, not human, but it looked truly life-like. The death was portrayed with wonderful skill. The cross was hollowed and contained machinery to operate a vessel of red fluid, which represented Christ's blood. Leading from this vessel were tubes, all controlled from the bottom. A string pulled at the foot of the cross caused the sweat of blood to appear on the forehead and then on the hands and feet. Finally

the Roman soldier plunged his sharp pointed spear into the side and the blood gushed forth.

Indians Kneel in Prayer.

All the Indians knelt while this scene was being enacted and Father Rhor gave an explanation in Chinook. He told in pathetic language of the dreadful agony endured and drew lessons from the greatest Passion of history. Many of the redmen wept copiously.

Chief Charlie, of the Sechart Indians, took the part of Christ; his cousin, Chief Joe, enacted Pontius Pilate; a chief of the Chilliwacks impersonated John, the well-beloved; and the other leading parts were taken by prominent tribesmen, most of whom will be seen again at the forthcoming representation.

TAFT'S ABLE WESTERN MAN

Senator Crane as a Politician and on What Constitutes a Politician.

Washington Letter to Brooklyn Eagle.

President Taft has picked a good man to find out for him what is going on in the West. Senator Crane, of Massachusetts, who has been chosen as the Taft envoy, is an expert in the business of sizing up political situations, of ascertaining what folks are thinking about and of feeling the public pulse generally.

Crane is to tour through the West, and report to the President what he thinks of things there, whether the insurgent movement is a flash in the pan, whether the tariff is satisfactory to the public, whether Cannon is looked upon as a wicked man, and just what is thought of the Taft Administration.

Crane made his reputation in the Senate as a professional "pulse-feeler." The Massachusetts man is not an orator, nor a statesman. He has never made a speech on the floor, and says frankly that he can't do it. Yet he is one of the busiest members of this body. He is a great mixer. He has a kindly, fraternizing disposition, is gentle and child, and never says a mean word about anybody.

Crane scarcely ever sits at his own desk. He slips about here and there in the Senate, chatting and gossiping with his associates. He is as likely to be found on the Democratic side as on the Republican side. He is not a great talker himself, yet he has a remarkable faculty for getting the other fellow talk. Crane can make a poll of the Senate quicker than any one else, and he will be mighty near the real situation, too.

Finding out how the Senators are to vote is his specialty. If Aldrich is worried about getting a good vote on the currency bill, or if Hale is doubtful about pulling an appropriation bill through, they ask Crane to find out what the situation is. All the Senators know that Crane is working for Aldrich and Hale, and they know how they stand. But they tell him just the same. They all like him, have confidence in his judgment and know that he can keep a secret better than the Sphinx.

Some of the Senators are inclined to poke a little fun at Crane. They think he works too hard taking a census of the thoughts of the Senate. The frequency with which the Massachusetts Senator vacillates between the White House and the Capitol during exciting legislative battles sometimes causes Senators to smile. It may be remarked that those who thus mildly scoff are not often called upon by the President to undertake confidential missions.

Senator Crane has his own ideas of what constitutes a politician. A friend once remarked to the Senator that a certain man, prominent in the Administration, was a great politician. Crane smiled.

"I don't regard that man as anything of a politician," he said. "In fact, I think he is a monumental failure as a politician. The idea of a politician is a man who is a mixer, a man who can harmonize warring factions, who can get persons to work together. He must be a good judge of human nature, and liberal-minded enough to concede the right of others to differ from him. He does not make an enemy of the man who does not think as he thinks, but acknowledges his privilege to think for himself, yet retains him as a friend."

It was only a trifle more than two years ago that Senator Crane was doing all he could to prevent the nomination of Taft for President. He headed the movement of the allies, and was the chief adviser of the backers of Foraker, Knox, Fairbanks, Shaw and the others who had Presidential booms. But when the booms of the allies collapsed Crane climbed on the Taft band wagon, extended a friendly hand to the big driver, and the two have been fast friends ever since.

Taft and Foraker never have made up their quarrel, thus illustrating the Crane definition of a successful politician. Foraker left the Senate embittered against Taft, and the latter has never cared to go to the trouble of placating his old enemy.

The trouble between Taft and Foraker, by the way, was responsible for the activity of Crane to beat Taft for the Presidential nomination. Crane and Foraker are fast friends. The former was sorely troubled because Taft was using his influence to beat Foraker for re-election as Senator. He went to Mr. Taft, who was then Secretary of War, and said that he would do all in his power to insure Taft's nomination if Taft would call off the war on Foraker and aid the latter's re-election. Taft refused, and the fight of the allies was continued to the last moment.

INFLATING PROCESS NEW
Hydrogenite in Capsules, Lighted, Produces Needed Gas.

PARIS, Aug. 20.—(Special.)—An interesting experiment relative to the inflation of balloons or airships has been carried out at the Park of the Aero Club.

A spherical balloon, of 200 cubic metres capacity, was inflated by a new process. A powder, called hydrogenite, packed in capsules, was used for the experiment. Each capsule, when lighted by a match, produces immediately eight cubic metres of hydrogen, with a lifting force of 1,150 grammes.

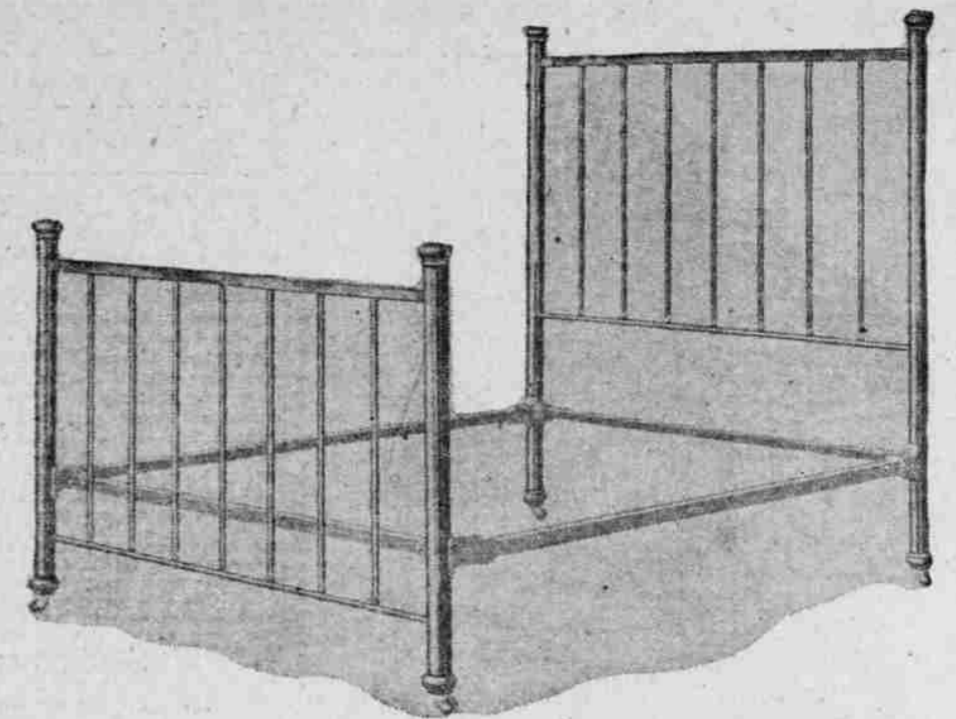
The apparatus required weighs about seventeen hundredweight, and the simplicity of the process, coupled with the fact that no water is required, makes it probable that it will be of considerable utility for airships in war conditions.

MOSHESH BASUTO UPHELD

Inquiry on Riot at South African Mine Leads to Boosts.

JOHANNESBURG, Aug. 20.—(Special.)—An interesting report on the circumstances attending a recent riot at the Premier mine, in which six natives were killed, has been presented by Mr. Innes, the magistrate appointed to inquire into the cause of the outbreak. In all, the mine gives employment to 12,500 blacks, including 2800 Moshehs, or British Basutos, and 8000 Transvaal Basutos. The chief interest of the inquiry, says the report, circles round the personality of the Moshehs Basuto, who is much appreciated by his employers on account of his physique and intelligence. He looks upon himself as the only black man in South Africa who has not accepted the domi-

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nation of the white man. Before his fellow-native laborers he adopts a domineering and masterful attitude, and carries a fine conceit of himself, which he takes no pains to conceal from his white or black associates in work.

The Transvaal Basuto, to whom the Moshehs have applied the objection-

able generic term of slave, looks upon the Moshehs Basuto as an interloper. Wherever the Moshehs are employed in large numbers with other native tribes, the latter invariably make common cause against the former, and the Premier mine is no exception to the rule. The trouble arose through the natives being given the option of turning out for an extra shift on account of a previous breakdown of the gear. It was apparently the readiness of the Transvaal Basutos to turn out which incensed the masterful Moshehs, who for some reason objected to work, and regarded the others as blacklegs.

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