

Election Bonfires

THOUSANDS of years ago, when barbarian man lived in a more precarious way than now and knew nothing of the teachings of science, he peopled the earth, sea and sky with demons who were able and willing to do him harm. They would prevent the discovery of game, they would bring destructive storms and droughts, they would keep the fish from his net, they would bring diseases upon himself or his cattle. What could he do to prevent their anger and secure their good will? His first thought, naturally, was that of bribery. He would give the god something to be let alone, something more if the god would show actual favor. How he hit upon the device of burning his offerings to the gods, who never deigned to appear in person to accept his gifts, cannot certainly be said, but there are a number of possible explanations. The most probable is that the utter destruction of the article offered implied giving it a spiritual quality like the soul of the dead. Numerous articles of food or use were burned or buried with the distinguished dead for use on their long journey, showing a belief that the most material things had a spiritual replica. In other cases there was a belief

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that the meat went up to the god in the form of smoke, that the god smelled a sweet savor and was vastly pleased with the gift and the giver. Possibly at first the sacrifice by fire was to some terrible fire-god only and afterward spread to other deities. At any rate, it was always the favored mode of sacrifice.

The hunter, when he had made his kill, would express his gratitude by giving the god a little of the meat. The herdsman, when he slaughtered, would make an offering in like manner. Then, upon any occasion of special undertaking, rejoicing or danger, there would be sacrifice offered, an animal being slaughtered for the purpose. But even then those undertaking the sacrifice thought that the god might well spare them a little of the meat and gradually it came about that when solemn sacrifice was offered the makers took all the best cuts and the gods got what was left. Finally, a few bones and perhaps a little fat and the entrails constituted the

meal served up to the gods. The rest went to the devout worshippers.

This liberality of the faithful in bestowing bones upon the gods while eating the meat themselves could not fail to attract the attention of the irreverent, who have had their existence in every age, and the sacrificial fires were named bone-fires when out of hearing of the priests.

After the introduction of Christianity sacrifices fell into disuse, but the features which gave them popularity still survived. The political barbecue, with its ox sacrificed, roasted and eaten, is a lineal descendant of the old sacrificial feast. At certain seasons in Ireland, Scotland and a few places in England even to the present day fires are lit in commemoration of the ancient sacrificial fires lit with great ceremony at those very seasons. Now the only relics of the ancient customs are to be found only in the fire itself at the same season as of old; in the fact that everybody engaged in keeping

up the custom understands that it is essential that there should be a bone in the fire, though they do not know why; and, finally, in the name which they give, that is, bon-fire. It is the bone-fire, neither more nor less, of the days of ancient sacrifice.

Victory over enemies, in those early days, was always followed by sacrifice and to this day the tendency to thus celebrate remains. The sacrificial gift no longer is cast into the flames, but still the victors gather round the fire as did their ancestors thousands of years ago; and the name bonfire still remains. In New York and perhaps other cities the custom has degenerated into a nuisance, in which there is no thought of celebration of victory. The small boys simply think that election night is the time to start bonfires. So, without a mention of politics, these little rascals work together, appropriating and stealing boxes, barrels, etc., and as soon as the sun has set on election night thousands of fires are lighted, the asphalt pavements are damaged to the extent of thousands of dollars and the fire department is kept busy looking after buildings endangered or actually burning. Such is the perversion of custom which ignorance brings.

Barbarism's Last Stand

Written expressly for this Magazine

THOSE readers of this magazine who went to school in the 'seventies may remember the classification of peoples into the sweeping categories of civilized, half-civilized and savage. In the first category were placed all people of European race, wherever found. In the second were placed all Asiatic and North African people, while the negro population of Africa, the American Indians with a few exceptions, and a majority of the Malay race were roundly set down as savage.

Profound indeed has been the change which thirty years have wrought. The old classification no longer can be considered. Barbarism is being swept from the face of the earth. In another thirty years every land will be civilized in the sense that was understood thirty years ago. The savage races, instead of undergoing the slow process of semi-civilization, pass at once to civilization. For a time, of course, there are grotesque lapses among the newly civilized, which is not surprising when we consider how large a streak of primal savagery we ourselves possess.

In America the Indian problem has been settled finally and forever. The Indians have accepted the inevitable, settled down to the occupations of civilized life and by intermarriage with the more numerous race are fast losing their identity as a people. In Central and South America and in Mexico the Indian blood predominates in the mixed race which is destined to remain in permanent control of those lands.

In Central Africa the naturally peaceful disposition of the negro race has enabled European civilization to penetrate without any of the sanguinary wars which marked the conquest of America. The railroad, the steamboat and the school are now found where a few years ago the maps marked the territory of the unexplored.

Japan, of course, is the classic example of a nation abandoning an old, fantastic, artificial and non-progressive civilization

for the living, progressive civilization of those lands which have frankly accepted the necessity for continuous change. China, since the Boxer rebellion of a few years ago, when some of the conceit was taken out of the ruling officials, has been taking active steps to save herself by a like opening of doors and minds. It has been promised definitely that a constitutional form of government will be adopted within a few years. Persia has forced upon an unwilling ruler a constitution, but like the Russian Czar, he is trying in every way to cheat his people and render null a concession rendered in a moment of peril and fright. Turkey has obtained free government by a revolution and in a few years more will have a far more civilized administration than Russia, which long has been considered one of the family of civilized nations. Wherever freedom of religion, speech and education goes the self-interest of the intelligent leads to the adoption of the best features of civilization; and barbarism and ignorance speedily decline.

One spot where barbarism is making its last stand is the kingdom of Morocco, where there has been a successful though not fully consummated revolution, not, as elsewhere, against ancient wrongs, but against a ruler suspected of having a leaning toward civilization. Three years ago it seemed that Morocco speedily would gain civilization through peaceful penetration on the part of the French; but the unexpected action of Germany, actuated by jealousy at a move in expansion which she could not share, gave the Mahometan fanatics the needed encouragement and from that day to this Morocco has been engaged in war and steeped in misery. In time civilization will triumph here as elsewhere; but meantime, it is interesting to take a look at the country where barbarism is making its last stand.

The ancient name of Mauretania was applied to the present Morocco and a part of Algeria, the country to the eastward being known as Numida. The native

population, stretching westward from Egypt to the Atlantic, between the Great Desert and the Mediterranean, was a dark but not black people, one of the branches of what is generally called the Caucasian race.

These people, where they have preserved a measure of racial integrity, are called Berbers. From this name came the general designation Barbary States. They are a naturally peaceful people and ever have been the prey of the conqueror. They were conquered by the Carthaginians, the Romans and the Vandals in turn, always being despoiled and enslaved. Yet through it all the Berber has survived, though never having anywhere a shadow of national existence.

In the year 747 the Mahometan Arabs conquered the wretched country and the Arab commander, Akba, arriving at the west coast, rode his horse into the waves and bombastically exclaimed: "God of Mahomet, Thou beholdest that but for the elements which arrest me, I would have proceeded in search of unknown nations, whom I would have forced to adore Thy name."

The Arab conquerors had no difficulty in imposing their language and religion upon the Mauretians or Moors and a fusion of the two races rapidly took place. From these mixed people came the Moors, who cut so large a figure in the history of Spain. During the time of their ascendancy in Spain these Moors arrived at a considerable state of civilization and learning, but with their fall a period of stagnation and decay set in and the Moors are now a degraded people, living under a government which is a villainous compound of tyranny and anarchy. For centuries Morocco, like the other Barbary States, maintained piracy and the enslavement of Christians and it was not until 1822 that this finally ceased.

Under the wretched native government the country amounts to little in a com-

mercial way, but there was once a time when the Barbary States were the granary of Europe. Once the country was well wooded, but the forests have been wastefully destroyed, with resultant damage to the soil. Whole tracts have been turned to desert, to remain such until civilization undertakes irrigation and reforestation in an extensive way. The population is supposed to be not far from five millions. They have no national spirit whatever, being divided into innumerable tribes and clans who hate each other and who are united only in their hatred of the infidel. It was this hatred to which the rebel sultan-to-be was able successfully to appeal in his warfare against the sultan who, at the moment of writing, still clings to his tottering throne. There is a sprinkling of negroes and many of the Moors have an infusion of negro blood.

The productions are those of a sub-tropical country, where everything is done in an extremely primitive way. There is no agricultural machinery and but few wheeled vehicles are to be seen. Foreign machines are considered as forerunners of opposition to the sacred religion of the prophet and work goes on in the old toilsome, profitless way. Not more than a hundredth part of the soil is cultivated and of this it is the custom to allow each field to lie fallow two years after one year of cultivation.

The Arabs are more or less nomadic in their habits, but the Berbers are inclined to live in houses. They inhabit, for the most part, the hilly country. The women are unveiled; and in other respects they are lax in following Mahometan customs. When the time comes, as come it will, that the French authority is paramount in Morocco the Berbers doubtless will learn rapidly and at last become a civilized people. Meantime, under the leadership of Arab fanatics in this corner of Africa, barbarism is making its last stand.

"Mr. Katzenlieb" on Receiverships

Written expressly for this Magazine

IHAF hear that this was the age of electricity, of steam, of combinations and of several other things already," remarked Mr. Katzenlieb, as he laid down the daily paper. "That was all wrong. It was the age of receiverships. There was going to be a council upon the affairs of Turkey and the great powers a little was going to make themselves the receivers yet of the assets by Turkey and the rest of that crowd. They was going to preserve the peace by Turkey. When they was through, there will not only be peace by Turkey, but everybody will haf a piece of Turkey. That was the European way of observing Thanksgiving Day. That was an American holiday yet, but Americans was not the only people who haf an appetite for Turkey. This was not the first time that Turkey was in the receiver's hands a little. There was one time, thirty years

ago, when the Czar and the Sultan make a war and haf a lot of men killed and then the great powers make Bismarck the receiver by the affairs of Turkey. The great powers sit themselves down to consider a little and when they get up they was greater powers already. They was receivers and they haf received.

"Now there was a little Turkey that was overlooked at that time and the receivers was called in once more. When they get through this time, maybe they leaf the platter und some bones, no?"

"That was the way by receivers. They was there to receive. That was their business. Their motto was not that it 'was more blessed to gif than to receive.' Their motto was that 'findings was keepings, already yet. Their next principle, when they haf any principles, was that 'sharity begins at home.' When they haf no principles there was not much difference by

the results once. The debtor was lifing by allowances. The creditors were lifing by hope a little and the receivers was lifing by the fat of the land.

"The creditor was hafing the satisfaction that the debtor was not lifing by the creditor's moneys. The receiver was entitled to his pay for gifing him that satisfaction. The debtor was allowed to life und keep out by the chail and what more was he wanting? The earth, a little? Und the receiver goes on receiving."

"At last the affairs by the debtor was wound up. It was different by a clock. When a clock was wound up it goes, but when a business was wound up it stops going. The reason was that the feller who winds up the clock takes away the key and leafs the works, while the feller who winds up a business leafs the key and takes the whole works.

"There was a receiver by a street railway company yet, who has put up a notice by the cars that a man who will receive a ride and not pay a nickel was a dod-gasted tief, or words to that effect already. But he say that it was all right for a receiver to get two nickels for one ride because he need the money. That was not tiefing, he say; it was receiving. What was the use of being a tief when you can be a receiver already yet?"

"I haf hear that the reformers was going to put all the trusts by the hands of receivers a little. Of course, the reformers was going to name the receivers. Ach! The receiving that will be done! Und when the receivers haf received all the assets by the trusts, they will be ready to receive all the moneys of everybody else. Iss it or iss it not?"