

STUFFING THE KING

A Dusky Kongo Monarch Who Fairly Revealed in Roast Pig.

HE WAS KIND TO HIS WIVES.

Anything on the Menu That Didn't Tempt His Dainty Taste Was Passed to Them, but When His Favorite Dish Came on It Was All His Very Own.

During his residence in the Kongo town of San Salvador John H. Weeks had many strange experiences, which he relates in his book, "Among the Primitive Bakongo," but one of the most entertaining pictures that he draws of the strange habits and customs of the people depicts the king, whose naive and childish guilelessness is in strong contrast to the characteristics of his European contemporaries.

Occasionally, says Mr. Weeks, he invited him to dinner, and the piece de resistance was a sucking pig, which in those days we could buy for a shilling's worth of cloth or beads. Although his house was 400 yards away, he always came in his state hammock, carried by six of his headmen. Fortunately the headmen were strong and in the prime of life; otherwise the king's weight would have taxed them too much.

The hammock was of native cotton, grown, dyed and woven in a neighboring village. It was covered with red cloth adorned with tassels and bells, and a canopy was arranged to shield the rider from the sun. As there were no clocks in the palace, we asked our guest to come at sunset, and no sooner was the sun below the horizon than we heard the shouts of the people as they accompanied the king's hammock to the station.

As he got nearer we could hear the tinkling of the ferret bells on the hammock. The hurried, heavy breathing of the hammock carriers and their short, sharp sentences of direction to one another. They were not at all sorry to lower the hammock at our door, where we stood ready to receive and welcome him, who, although black, had come in the most kindly manner he knew and was certainly very dignified in most of his ways and words.

The boys quickly put the dinner on the table, and the king eyed every dish hungrily. I said to him one day when I was visiting him in his courtyard and we were both in a joking mood, "Do you know what the poorer class of English boys do when they are invited to a feast?"

"No," he said. And as he saw me hesitate he asked, "Well, what do they do?"

"Why, they eat very little all day," I replied, "so as to have plenty of room for the feast."

The old man rolled with laughter, snapped his fingers, slapped his thighs, and tears came from his eyes as he said: "Why, white man, that is what I do, but I did not know that anybody else was quite enough to think of that. But, Mfumu Weekes, I am smarter than those white boys, for I don't eat anything all day when I am coming to take dinner with you at sunset. After that I could understand the hungry look in his eyes as he watched the dishes put on the table.

Native provisions of all kinds were very cheap, and by sacrificing one or two tins of preserved goods we were generally successful in working out a menu of six or seven single courses. Soup made of fowl and goat bones, with odd bits of meat and seasoning, a tin of fresh herrings baked or fried, a roast fowl, stewed goat, roast suckling pig and baked rice pudding with stewed papaws were our dishes. Our drinks were lime juice made from fresh limes and coffee grown in the district.

The king would squat on the ground, with a row of five or six favorite wives immediately behind him and the six headmen who carried the hammock standing against the wall. The king would take a few spoonfuls of soup and pass the rest down with a piece of bread to his waiting wives, who would quickly and quietly finish them.

The fish he would eat all up, because it came from the white man's country, while the wives pouted their disappointment. We would give him a liberal share of the fowl, but that was so common that after he had selected the best pieces the rest was finished by the expectant wives.

Goat came next, but was treated with as scant courtesy as that bestowed on the fowl, and meanwhile the old man would turn his eyes repeatedly toward the roasted pig.

When at last that was put before us we piled his plate with a liberal portion, which rapidly disappeared, while all the time his wives were making mouths in the semidarkness. He would grunt assent to more when we asked him, and again we would load his plate. It was the moment for which he had lived all the long hours of that day, for he had heard that the white man had bought a pig for dinner.

Farical Roles.

An American actor of versatile talents was asked recently what type or role is most difficult to play. "The farical," he answered. "To enact farce successfully one must play with deadly seriousness. Half the effect is gone once you begin to act your part lightly. The constant strain to maintain this mock seriousness is, of course, exhausting, since you have no outlet for your emotions."

Do not be like a shadow and follow your friends only when the sun shines. —Youth's Companion.

HIS FORMAL REPRIMAND.

It Was Not Exactly the Kind He Was Asked to Administer.

Dr. Simon Parvin, an English clergyman, was at times absurdly absent-minded. Once while he was visiting in the home of a very great lady who employed a large staff of servants, whom she kept under extremely rigid control, it chanced that two young footmen fell out about a pretty housemaid who had coquetted with both and so far forgot themselves as to engage in a fight. The old countess was indignant. Her first intention was to dismiss the culprits, but they were excellent servants, and, moreover, the repentant maid tearfully interceded for them. The countess relented so far as to reduce the sentence to a formal reprimand before the other servants—a reprimand in the nature of a moral lecture to be duly administered by her distinguished guest. At her earliest request—she was herself confined to her room by gout—Dr. Parvin, a man of imposing presence and resonant voice, permitted himself to be escorted to the servants' hall. On his return she sent for him to come to her chamber to relate the result of his mission.

"A fine couple," said Dr. Parvin. "I should say, an excellent match."

"Match?" inquired the countess. "What match? Has the silly girl made up her mind between them, then? I vow, I thought she meant to flit them both, and serve the boobies right. Pray tell me, how did John and Thomas receive their reprimand?"

"John? Thomas? Reprimand?" echoed Dr. Parvin vaguely; then, with a sudden disarming flash of memory: "Dear me, I fear I have made a singular mistake! When I entered the room the younger servants were at the far end in a group, and the butler and housekeeper were together, quite near, immediately in front of me. In fact, standing side by side, and—in short, madam, I married them!"

He had, indeed; but, although astonished, they were fortunately not unwilling. They had, it happened, long been contemplating matrimony and were deterred only by fear of the countess' disapproval. Believing that she would not disapprove the act of her eminent guest, they had readily abetted Dr. Parvin in his error. The countess was angry, but her anger fell chiefly upon the absentminded divine. She gave him a piece of her mind that if he had been any one else—he would not easily have forgotten—Youth's Companion.

Two Ways of Studying Music.

Picture to yourself a little girl of seven or eight seated before that ponderous and portentous mass of iron, steel, wood, wires and hammers which we call a "pianoforte" (sixty pounds of tender, delicate humanity trying to express itself through a solid ton), her legs dangling uncomfortably in space, her little fingers trying painfully to find the right key and at the same time to keep in a correct position, struggling hard the while to relate together two strange things, a curious black dot on a page and an ivory key two feet below it, for neither of which she feels much affection. And then picture to yourself the same child at its mother's knee or with other children singing with joy and delight a beautiful song.—Thomas Whitney Surtees in Atlantic.

A Matter of Money.

A wealthy stockbroker who gave an imposing dinner, says the London Telegraph, dilated with much pride, but with mangled English, on the delicacies that he had provided. Everything in season and out of season, he declared, was at the disposal of his guests.

"I notice you have no aspirates," observed one of them quietly.

"No more I 'ave," replied the stockbroker, with crestfallen visage, "but if money can get 'em," he added, "I'll 'ave some of the best in the market next time you're 'ere."

Not to Be Pitted.

Pat (to Mike)—I got a letter from a friend.

Mike—Yes?

Pat—He says: "Every rib's gone. I've only one shoulder, and I expect my legs will be gone by the time you get this letter."

Mike—Poor fellow! Is he in a hospital in France?

Pat—No; he's in a butcher's shop.—Exchange.

Mexican Beauties.

The most beautiful women in the world are said by experienced and observant travelers to be the Indian women of the isthmus of Tehuantepec, which lies just north of Yucatan, in Mexico. They add to their picturesque attractiveness by wearing whatever fortune they may possess in the form of gold coins strung about the arms and neck.

The Very Ideal.

Mr. Wogges—I'm through with old man Bump. I told him we are going to name our baby after some great personage and asked him for a suggestion. Mrs. Wogges—What did he say? Mr. Wogges—He said, "Name it after ours."—Puck.

Settled.

"What profession do you think your boy Josh will choose?"

"Law," replied Farmer Cornsmeal.

"Josh kin talk louder an' longer when he's got the wrong side of an argument than anybody I ever heard."—Washington Star.

A wise man should have money in his head, but not in his heart.—Dean Swift.

PRIDE OF ANCESTRY.

Some Famous Personages to Whom It Meant Nothing.

The making famous of the expression "I am my own ancestor" is usually credited to Andoche Junot, for a time marshal of France. Junot had risen from the ranks and became the Duke of Abrantes and an important figure at Napoleon's newly formed court. One day a nobleman of the old regime asked him what was his ancestry. "Ah, sir," replied the spirited soldier, "I know nothing about it. I am my own ancestor." Probably he had never heard of the similar remark made by Tiberius about Curtius Rufus. "He seems to me to be descended from himself."

Napoleon's reply to the emperor of Austria was in a kindred vein. The Austrian when Napoleon became his prospective son-in-law would fain have traced the Bonaparte lineage to some petty prince of Treviso. "I am my own Rudolph of Hapsburg," said Napoleon. Under similar circumstance Napoleon silenced a genealogist. "Friend, my patent of nobility dates from Montenotte," his first great victory.

When Epichrates, the Athenian general, had it cast up in his face by a descendant of Harmodius that he was a shoemaker's son he calmly replied, "The nobility of my family begins with me; yours ends with you."

Almost the same words were used by Alexander Dumas when asked if he were not descended from an ape (covert sneer at his negro grandmother). "Very likely; my ancestry begins where yours ends."

Voltaire in his "Merope" says: "The first to become king was a successful soldier. He who serves well his country has no need of ancestry."

Shocked Her.

She was a peeress and fondly imagined that she looked the part as she entered the little chemist's shop in a remote village and asked for a rough washing glove. She believed in plenty of friction being good for the complexion.

The chemist brought out a boxful of washing gloves and showed her one or two.

"They're not rough enough," said her ladyship despairingly.

So the man rummaged carefully through the box. At last he held one out to her and exclaimed triumphantly:

"This is just the thing, ma'am. That'll get the dirt off nicely."—London Globe.

Concrete Disease.

Concrete disease, due to the extensive handling of concrete or cement, is one of the additions to human ills brought by modern industry. It is an itching eruption on exposed parts of the hands, arms and breast, sometimes affecting also the face, and arises from the action of the alkaline contents of the cement, especially on skin already softened by water. Rest for a few days, with the use of zinc ointment or a soothing liniment is sufficient to remove the trouble. It may be prevented by smearing with fat the skin likely to be affected and wearing suitable cloth gloves on the hands.—Exchange.

The Factory System.

The factory system began with the introduction of machinery. It is thoroughly modern, there being nothing at all like it in antiquity or even in the middle ages. It began with the invention of the loom by Arkwright, about 1775, and was at first wholly confined to the cotton manufacture. As mechanical invention and discovery advanced and other industries were born the factory system broadened out along with them until finally it was the dominating feature of the community.

Minute Jellyfish.

In the northern seas there exists an extremely minute jellyfish, termed Lizzia kolikeri, which are so transparent that a single individual can scarcely be seen in clear water and so small that a wineglass of water can contain 3,000 of them. Yet this jellyfish occurs in such numbers off the coast of Greenland that the sea is at times tinged brown by its presence.

Stevenson's Appearance.

Robert Louis Stevenson's personal appearance was such that few would have believed him a Scot that they not know it, and once his strange aspect got him into real trouble, the French imprisoning him in Paris on suspicion that he was a German spy.

Radium Rays.

The eminent English physicist, Thomson, explains the phenomenon giving radium its name as a gradual loss of some of the ions of its atomic systems, and thus is explained the evidence that its rays behave more like matter than like the waves of heat and light.

THE OLD TRUNDLE BED.

Once a Real Domestic Treasure, It Is Now Mainly a Memory.

There are still a few of us left who remember the trundle bed—but for which it would have been impossible to bring up the old-fashioned family of good proportions. Houses were small and families were large in those days, and providing beds was a problem. So it was solved by the trundle bed—a low structure that rolled beneath the "regular" bed—and which was trundled out at night and filled with children. There was no more inspiring picture than a trundle bed full of little pink children—and all trundle beds were generally full of them.

But the disorder of the room would run the modern housewife crazy. Clothes were dumped in piles upon the floor. Shoes were tossed into the corners. Stockings were mixed up generally and to be found all over the room, but some way an hour or so after the morning dressing everything disappeared, the trundle bed was not in sight and order came out of it all while "mother" was busy with other things than "straightening up the room."

It was a feather bed of course—big and thick and soft. You sank into its very bosom. No danger of a kid falling out; no more danger than there would be of a raisin falling out of a cake. For the children fitted into the feather bed for all the world like peas in a pod—a nestlike formation holding the tiny form. Besides, if you did fall out of a trundle bed you didn't have far to fall, only an inch or two, for he remembered the trundle bed was built low so it would roll under another bed.

But it was a glorious invention! A billowy, downy couch fit for the angels—and angels slept in them. The temperature didn't matter. In memory they were always comfortable. Warm in winter and cool in summer—they must have been—sweet and clean and fresh always. That's the way we recall them, anyway, so it is the way they must have been. The night had no terrors after one was tucked away in a trundle bed, and sleep came quickly to "knot up the raveled sleeve of care." The morning came instantly, it seemed, but you were refreshed and ready for the rough and tumble work or play that beckoned to you.—Dayton News.

Gypsies and Death.

The custom of placing the property of the dead in their graves has always been followed by the true Roman gypsies. It is due to some old tradition of ill luck attending the possession of an article whose former owner is gone, and much valuable property is buried in this belief. There is also a sentiment among gypsies against the possession of anything that has belonged to a dead person, because it serves to remind the living of the departed and inspire in them a dread of death. The custom of burying their property with gypsy dead dates from the earliest history of the Roman tribes.

Watering the Horse.

It is allowable when a horse is hot to let him have three or four swallows of cool water, but no more. The few swallows will help cool him, and another limited drink may be given every few minutes for four or five times, after which he may drink his fill without danger. In careless or inexperienced hands, however, the only safe way is to let the horse stand for half an hour or more with no water until he is fairly cooled off.

A Vicious Fish.

In South America there is a small fish that not only attacks its fellows of the sea and river, but is greatly dreaded by the natives, who during certain seasons have to ford the streams in which the caribis are found. Bathers are often attacked by them, the sharp, chisel shaped teeth taking a bit from the flesh wherever they attack. They are perfect scavengers, eating the animals that float down the river—dead or alive.

India's Sacred Fires.

The sacred fires of India have not all been extinguished. The most ancient which still exists was consecrated twelve centuries ago in commemoration of the voyage made by the Parsees when they emigrated from Persia to India. The fire is fed five times every two hours with sandalwood and other fragrant materials combined with very dry fuel.

The Deduction.

"There's a proverb that fits every man."

"What one fits me?"

"To whom God gives office he also gives brains."

"But I have no office."

"Well, don't you see how it fits?"—Cleveland Leader.

FAMOUS HORSEBACK RIDERS.

Men Who Won Fame in the Days of the Old Pony Express.

Buffalo Bill Cody, it is believed, holds the record for the longest horseback ride of which there is authentic record. He was one of that gallant band of four-score pony express riders in the straits. On one occasion young Cody—be didn't become Buffalo Bill until some years afterward—rode without rest for 322 miles.

When the pony express was started for the purpose of carrying mail from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento, Cal., a distance of 1,906 miles, it was planned that each rider should cover seven or eight miles in a day on three different horses.

It was soon found that twenty-five miles was too much for the horses for a regular unbroken gallop, and the distance was reduced to from ten to twelve miles. For that distance every horse was pushed to his limit.

The shortest time in which the entire distance of 1,906 miles was covered by pony express riders was made in March, 1861. They carried Lincoln's inaugural address to the Golden State in seven days and seventeen hours, an average speed of over ten and one-half miles an hour.

A rider named Haslam dashed off 120 miles in 8 hours and 10 minutes. Another pony expressman covered one ten mile stretch in 31 minutes, which is better than most of the Rocky Mountain railroad limited trains can do.

The news that Fort Sumter had been fired upon was flashed from St. Joe to Sacramento in eight days and four hours.

Jim Moore once rode 280 miles at an average speed of eighteen miles per hour. The horses were the best that could be obtained, and, as stated before, they made short runs of from ten to twelve miles.

No wonder that sometimes a letter had \$27 worth of stamps upon it when carried under such extraordinary conditions!—Philadelphia Ledger.

TOLD BY THREE FIGURES.

A Sum in Arithmetic That Would Take Many Lifetimes to Work Out.

What is the highest number that can be expressed with only three figures? Such is the question put by the Journal of the Astronomical Society of England. At first glance it would seem that the number was 999. But it is nothing of the sort; 999 is far away too small. What, then, is the number? 99—that is to say, the ninth power of the ninth power of 9.

To ascertain what this number actually is we must refer to a table of logarithms, for it would take several lifetimes to do the multiplication. The number contains 369,693,100 figures. To write it out we should have to fill 23 volumes of 800 pages each, with 14,000 figures to a page, and the number would be greater than that of all the atoms in creation.

Henri Coupin points out in La Nature that there are stars so distant that their light, traveling at 186,320 miles a second, takes a million years to reach the earth. Astronomers have taken this as a unit and called it a "million light year." The number of atoms in a sphere of platinum that had that radius would be 225, followed by 88 zeros. Now, a sphere that contained the number of atoms expressed by the ninth power of 9 would have to have a radius (in million light years) of 1,239, followed by 123,231,000 zeros. And yet this colossal number can be expressed by three figures.

Tame Silk.

There is more silk in the world than the silkworm ever knew. As a matter of fact, much of the "silk" which is worn is merely gun cotton in a new dress. It is merely cotton dissolved in a bath of nitric acid, kept water free by the strongest vitriol. The jelly-like result is then forced through very minute tubes, and the fine threads so produced are dropped into water and rendered innocuous by ammonium sulphide. This "tame silk" has a fine luster and has all the flexibility of the worms' work. In fact, so close is the resemblance that it needs an expert to distinguish them.—London Chronicle.

She Liked Gloom.

It is a matter for thankfulness that widows of this generation are more such than the dowager Countess of Buchan, who passed away in the year 1788.

On the death of her husband she dressed herself entirely in black crape, engaged two black servants to wait upon her, ate nothing but black puddings and drank for one whole year nothing but black cherry brandy. Yet she survived this gloomy diet twenty-one years before the grim reaper gathered her in.—T. P.'s London Weekly.

Diplomacy.

"It takes diplomacy to get on with a husband," said the woman who speaks her mind freely.

"I believe it does," replied Miss Cayenne. "As I understand it, diplomacy consists largely in seeming to be deceived whether you are or not."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Why She Took Him.

Parson—Do you, Liza, take Rastus for better or for worse? Bride—Well, if Ah got to tell the truth, pahson, Ah'm takin' him cause he's de fust man what eveh axed me.—Boston Transcript.

Unattainable Happiness.

"If I could get my wife everything she wants I'd be perfectly happy."

"Shucks! No man ever is as happy as that."—Detroit Free Press.

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