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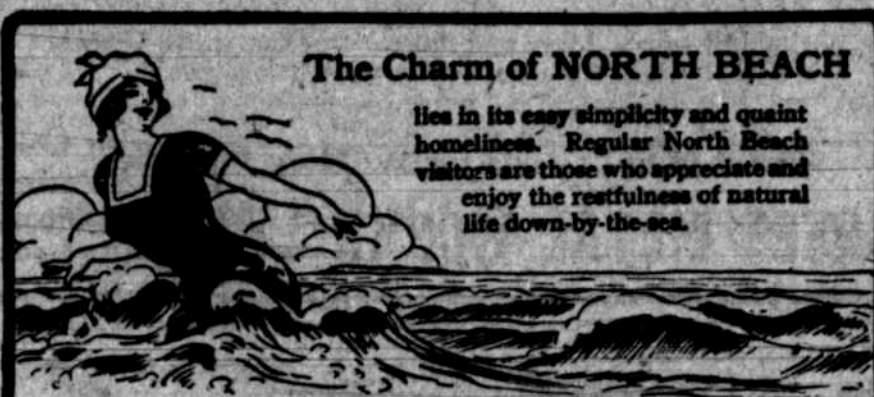
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CUSTOMS IN LIBERIA

A Land Where Mothers Teach Their Young to Bite and Slay.

An amusing incident is related by Amanda Smith in her experience as a missionary in Liberia. In attempting to gather the little children together for a day school she made a chart of a few of the letters of the alphabet and hung it upon a tree. Needing a pointer, she picked up a stick and, approaching the chart to teach, was surprised to see all her children running away pell-mell. They knew nothing about the use of the pointer, but believed that the stick meant a beating.

"A stick is put into children's hands here almost as soon as they can crawl, and they are taught to beat instead of to pat. The mother is pleased when her babe learns to slap her and bite her, and she continues the battle for his sake. This means no disrespect. He is learning to be a warrior—is learning to be brave. At times I have been bitten hard by these warlike little ones because they misunderstood my European ways. But no child ever attempted to bite me a second time. My reception of his act was so different from that of his parents that he didn't care to continue the battle."

"Fear often prevents a ready response to our efforts to carry on school work among these children," she continues. "In one village it took three years to persuade the people to let their children come to school. 'No,' they said, 'our children must not learn the white man's art. If they know such things they will be taken for soldiers by the government.'"

"Again, superstition holds the children back. If a boy or girl who comes to school gets sick or dies the whole school breaks up. 'Is not that proof enough that our gods are angry?' the parents ask. Then the missionary must win the children back again."

"Very interesting are the schools under native teachers. Often lacking the proper supplies, pupils have to write their lessons on fresh banana leaves with a whittled stick to take the place of pen and penholder and the juice of a wild tomato plant for ink. Banana leaves shrivel up in a day, and the lessons cannot be preserved unless they are constantly rewritten. A bench serves as both seat and table. When the pupils write their lessons they kneel on the ground and use the bench for a desk."—New York Evening Sun.

Queer Story of a Battleship.

Graft in Russia is on such a naively vast scale that it becomes grotesque.

The Russian representative of a foreign shipbuilding concern told of a battleship which he personally designed for the Russian government in 1905. The plans were accepted, the steel contracted for, an army of workmen assembled at Odessa and, in the course of time it was reported that the battleship was ready for launching. The governor of the province personally broke a champagne bottle over her bow, and a month later she put to sea on her trial trip. Then news came that the battleship had sunk somewhere in the Black sea. Some one was suspicious. An investigation was ordered, and it developed that the battleship had never been built at all. —Metropolitan Magazine.

A Wonderful Bore.

The most wonderful boring apparatus in the world is possessed by the great ichneumon fly. It is composed of three black filaments, all extremely fragile, no larger or stiffer than a horsehair, and about five inches long. These fit together with grooves and glide easily along their entire length. The three when fitted together are no larger in diameter than a small needle and so flexible that a slight breath of air will bend them. Yet with this remarkable instrument its owner can bore three or four inches into the hardest wood. This tool is possessed only by the female and is her ovipositor, or egg laying apparatus. Boring which takes hours to accomplish is for the purpose of laying one egg.

The President's Oath.

The oath of office taken by the incoming president of the United States is the shortest and the simplest required of any ruler on earth. It is prescribed by the constitution and is as follows:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and, to the best of my ability, protect, preserve and defend the constitution of the United States."

True.

"Don't be afraid of a great name, my boy."

"Why not?"

"Because in this life you will find that the unknown, quiet chap who is doing his best every minute to succeed is a harder man to beat than the famous, overconfident fellow, who is only half trying."—Detroit Free Press.

Starting a Scrap.

Mrs. Scraggington (in the midst of her reading)—Here is an account of a woman turning on the gas while her husband was asleep and asphyxiating him. Mr. Scraggington—Very considerate of her, I'm sure. Some wives wake their husbands up and then talk them to death.—Puck.

Made Both Ends Meet.

Flatbush.—Times are not what they used to be. Bensonhurst.—Why not? "Because when I was a kid I used to put my toe in my mouth, but, believe me, I can't make both ends meet now."—Yonkers Statesman.

God rewards good deeds done here below—rewards them here.—Leasing

OUR ABUSED FEET

Many Ills Come From Wearing the Wrong Kind of Shoes.

THEN, TOO, WE SHOULD TOE IN

That is the Natural Way to Walk or Run, as it Puts the Strain Where it Belongs, While Toeing Out Impairs the Bones and Breeds Trouble.

Corns, ingrowing nails, crooked toes, bunions, spreading feet, arch trouble, aching feet are all caused by toeing out while walking. It is not natural for those who start with normal feet to toe out.

It is natural to toe in, not far in, but just inside of a line straight ahead. All children toe in, nearly all youths toe in. Some people toe in all their lives, but they are few. All barefooted people toe in. All moccasined Indians toe in. No one can run without toeing in. No speed can be made without doing so. By toeing in the spring of the foot comes from all the small bones of the front part of the foot. When one toes out he is trying to walk on the inner side of the foot.

Why does toeing out cause trouble? Because the strain upon the foot in walking is greater than it should be. It inclines the first two bones of the big toe toward the smaller toes by degrees, until the spring finally comes from the inner side of the big toe and its second joint. This undue strain on the second joint is constantly pulling it inward and away from the smaller bones. As the strain continues the tissues and ligaments that bind the bones in the forefoot together stretch and give way, and finally it becomes separated somewhat and bulges out into what is called a bunion. A bunion is a partial dislocation.

At this stage of impairment the bones connecting with the smaller toes across the ball of the foot settle down, and what is called the transverse arch is impaired. There are two arches in the foot—a longitudinal arch, with which every one is familiar, and the transverse arch across the ball of the foot from side to side. It is the transverse arch that is first affected, and it is at this stage of foot trouble that most people begin to complain and look for help.

Why did those who toe out do so in the first place when it is natural to toe in? The real reason was because they wore shoes. Barefooted people do not toe out, so the shoe is the cause. Shoes are habitually too short and too narrow across the end of the toes, and the long, pointed toe of the shoe helps to prevent toeing naturally. The big toe is strong and monopolizes the limited space; the small toes, being weaker, are crushed in narrow quarters until their natural symmetry is gone. They are crowded backward by a shoe too short until the ends are curled under and their nails point toward the ground instead of straight ahead. The first two joints of the third and fourth toes are forced upward, and the third joint is pushed down farther and farther as the tissues supporting it become more and more stretched by the pressure from above and the forced spreading of the bones of the foot.

The third bone of the third toe at this stage stands almost straight up and down in the shoe. The result is a corn on top and pain in the foot from the pressure and sometimes a corn or thickening on the bottom of the foot just under the third joint of the third toe. At this stage there are ingrowing nails, due to the sideways pressure of the shoe, that also are painful, so the sufferer begins to toe out to prevent the pressure pain that would occur from the sore and otherwise impaired small toes if he toed in as he should.

The most sensible covering ever made for the feet is the moccasin of the American Indian, worn without a stocking. Sandals also are good. The sneakers of children and tennis shoes with pliable rubber soles are next best.

Shoes should be so constructed that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to toe out. A line drawn through the length of the big toe of a normal foot backward will strike the heel near the inner edge. Shoes should not compress the toes to alter this line in children. However, the toes may have been pressed out of shape, the shoes of adults when made of leather with an unyielding sole should extend straight forward well past the end of the big toe and outward past the third toe and then slope backward past the little toe to the outer ball of the foot. In a shoe so shaped the wearer will find it difficult to toe out; the big toe will have its share of room. The sole should be flat, both from side to side and from end to end, so the arch has room to settle down as required with each step to furnish the necessary spring. The heel may be made snug and provision made for a snug fit across the instep to prevent the heel from slipping. There should be no lift on the heel except just enough to raise it level with the sole, and this lift should be of rubber.

The right kind of a shoe will be a queer looking thing as we now see things, for in place of the offending pointed toe it will look more like the blade of a paddle. It will not be stiff and unyielding. It will be from three to five inches across the ball of the foot. Fashion is whimsical, and such a shoe when it becomes regular may be considered beautiful.—Dr. Arthur R. Reynolds in American Magazine.

The only thing many a man has done in the past is to dream of the future.—New York Times.

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