

# KING PREMPEH AND THE GOLDEN STOOL

By J. A. ROGERS

(Continued from page four)

der its present state should come and enjoy the protection of Her Majesty, the Queen and Empress of India, I may say is a matter of very serious consideration, and I am happy to say that we have arrived at the conclusion that my kingdom of Ashanti will never commit itself to any such policy.

"Ashanti must remain independent; as of old and at the same time friendly with all white men. I do not write this with a boastful spirit but in the clear sense of its meaning.

"Ashanti is an independent kingdom and is always with the white man. I thank Her Majesty's Government for the good wishes entered

for Ashanti; I appreciate to the fullest its kindness."

The British thereupon replied that Ashanti had not lived up to the treaty of 1817; that it had not paid the indemnity nor kept the road open. Further to win moral support England accused the Ashantis of the rite of human sacrifice.

This accusation of human sacrifice has been raised against all West African peoples. The fact is those "sacrificed" were criminals and captives. The death penalty was inflicted for minor offenses; as in England and the United States of a century ago, men were hanged for theft and counterfeiting.

Might not a West African who saw a criminal being shot, guillotined, or electrocuted after a religious ceremony, ask in naivete what was the difference between his land and those of the Christians?

### Killed to Terrorize

Further the object of killing captives and criminals was protection through terror, as in civilized lands. The story of human sacrifice, according to Sir Francis Fuller and others, who have lived in Ashanti, has been greatly exaggerated. Many of the more unbiased white writ-

ers also say that the claims against Prempeh were unjustified.

Finally the British with a large army marched on Coomassie. The Ashantis, also menaced by the Fantis, allowed the enemy to come on without resistance.

King Prempeh received Governor Maxwell, and Colonel Scott, commander of the expedition and his staff in his palace. General Baden-Powell, hero of the Boer War, and founder of the Boy Scout movement, who took part in the expedition, describes the scene as follows:

"And there sits Prempeh, looking very bored as three scarletclad dwarfs dance before him amid the dense crowd of sword-bearers, court-criers, fly-catchers, and other officials. He looks a regal figure on a lofty throne with a huge velvet umbrella standing over him, upon his head a black and gold tiara and on his neck and arms large golden beads and nuggets of gold."

Prempeh, anxious to preserve the independence of his kingdom, offered to pay a huge indemnity. "I am willing to pay," he said, "and beg His Majesty's Government to take a first installment. It is usual for a man before meals to take something to sharpen his appetite. If the governor takes an installment that will

sharpen his; he will look the keener after the remainder."

But this offer availed nothing. The English had come all that way for nothing less than the whole of Prempeh's kingdom. The governor demanded absolute submission and ordered Prempeh to be on the parade ground at six o'clock to make a formal surrender.

Prempeh and his court did not arrive until eight and when he came the governor and Colonel Scott, and his aide were seated on a platform. The chiefs, were made to come one by one, and lay down their swords. Then, the governor, determined to humble Ashanti pride to the lowest, ordered the king and his mother to kiss the feet of himself and Colonel Scott.

### Pride Humbled

An English war-correspondent described the ensuing scene as follows:

"The king thereupon arose and taking off his crown and his slippers as bid, came forward to the platform with the queen-mother whose prettily formed feet were always bare. Together they slowly approached and bending down clasped with their hands and partly embraced the legs and booted feet of the governor. Then not without some natural dig-

nity they quietly returned to their seats."

At the sight of this supreme indignity to mother and son whose lightest word once might have meant life or death, King Prempeh's subjects stood as if turned to stone.

A heavy fine was placed on Prempeh, and he, his father, mother, and uncles were made prisoners, pending payment. All were imprisoned in Elmina Castle on the same territory for which white men had been paying rent to Ashanti kings for more than two hundred years.

Later King Prempeh was taken to Sierra Leone, and from thence to the Seychelles Islands off the east coast of Africa where he still lives a captive.

But the British were yet to pay dearly for the humiliation of the black monarch. Why, it may be asked, had the powerful Ashanti army surrendered without even throwing a spear?

And that brings us to the highly romantic, but none the less true story of the Golden Stool.

(To be continued)

(Next week follows "The Quest of the Golden Stool," an independent story in itself. Yet it explains in a fascinating manner, the enchanting Golden Stool.)

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## The Paris Pepper-Pot

(Continued from page five)

the yellowish-green path of the river winding its way under a long succession of bridges.

In the distance are the two gray minarets of the Cathedral of the Sacre Coeur poised on the cliffs of Montmartre; the faded gilt of the Invalides with Napoleon's tomb; the Arch of Triumph rising like an artificial mountain, with the tomb of the Unknown Soldier underneath; the dome of the Pantheon, where the great dead are buried; and many other historic buildings. The whole picture lies in a heart-shaped hollow edged with wooded hills.

Not far from Notre Dame is the Cluny Museum, an old palace which was built on the ruins of an old Roman palace and bath. It is filled with art treasures and curios, one of which is so singular that our modesty will not permit us to describe it.

When you come to Paris you'll have to see it for yourself for it is so strange that you won't believe it on hearsay. Suffice it to say that it is known as the Chastity Belt. The brave knights of old would put it on their wives before they left for war, lock it and take the key with them.

Another famous building is the Louvre. Once it was the palace of the Louises now it is an art museum. It is perhaps the largest building on earth, and its art treasures are worth hundreds of millions. One picture alone, the famous Mona Lisa, is worth five million dollars. There is also the original of the Venus de Milo, the Greek lady minus the arms, as well as the Statue of Victory. No art treasures out-rank these three in importance.

This building like Notre Dame has had many narrow escapes from destruction. In 1793, the mob entered and destroyed much of its treasures, and again in 1839, when Alexander Dumas succeeded in saving many valuable documents. Another palace nearby was levelled to the ground by the mob in 1871. This was the Tuilleries. On its site is now a very beautiful garden.

Nearby this garden is the statue of Gambetta, famed patriot. In its place once stood a guillotine that lopped off thousands of heads during the revolution.

Passing through the Tuilleries Garden we come to the Place de la Concorde, a magnificent square, several acres in extent, with splendid fountains and statues. In the centre is an immense obelisk brought from Egypt.

Where the obelisk now is, once stood another guillotine that chopped off the heads of more than 3,000 persons in five months.

Among the number were, Louis XVI, his beautiful queen, Marie Antoinette, and one of the most charming women of all time, the exquisite Madame Roland. "Oh, Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name," were her last words—words that have become immortal. That revolution taught the rulers of the world a lesson. The excesses committed are unequalled in history.

The guillotine still works in France. The French people hold that it is surer and more humane than hanging or electrocution.

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