

Coming Stories by  
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# The Advocate

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ILLUSTRATED FEATURE SECTION—May 28, 1932

BLUE RIBBON FICTION IS FOUND EVERY WEEK IN  
THE FEATURE SECTION

## "Pansies" in Timbuctoo's Harem



The French Augustinian Monk, Pere Dupuis-Yakouba, white, who quit his robes to become the greatest living authority on native languages and customs in French West Africa.



A young Quere cannibal mother in the village of Mon Po. They are described by the author as the handsomest and finest among Ivory Coast tribes.



The Yatanga Naba, hereditary spiritual ruler of the Mossi tribes. It is said that if he ever looks upon the face of his cousin, the Moro Naba, temporal ruler, one of them will die.



Salama, the beloved and estimable native wife of Pere Dupuis-Yakouba, first lady of Timbuctoo, who bore him thirty sons and daughters.

The only ruler in the world with a harem, composed of pansies is located in the heart of Africa, according to William and Sadie Seabrook explorers and authors just back from a tour of the dark continent.

Seabrook is returning to Timbuctoo, accompanied by Miss Marjorie Worthington, young American novelist, who will write of the customs of the African people.

This strange spectacle which according to the explorers outdoes all the drags they have ever witnessed in Harlem and the perverted orgies of lower Paris dives, was witnessed in Timbuctoo, where the Moro Naba king of all the Mossi, the last black potentate of West Central Africa, rules.

Describing their visit to the palace of the king, the Seabrooks relate in their book titled, "Jungle Ways" (Harcourt-Brace) how they interviewed the ruler.

"The Moro Naba," they write, "black as ink, with heavy tattooed jowls and almost as wide at the girth as he was tall, sat among his male concubines, cloaked in robes of purple velvet elaborately embroidered in gold, with velvet boots also gold-embroidered and a gold-encrusted skull cap.

"He lived in luxury on generous French appointments, in the Moorish-looking palace on the edge of Ouagadougou, finer than the governor's, and was allowed to keep all the gilded and savage state of the Moro Naba, who had ruled before him—on condition, naturally, that he would 'co-operate' with his French advisers in matters which were economic or political.

### Pansy Harem

"The most extraordinary of these traditional survivals was the male Harem posturing there, flung round on the throne's platform at his feet. It is the only harem of its special kind, I think, which exists openly

anywhere in the world today.

"They were black youths ranging in age from around 16 to 21, whose hair had been let to grow long, arranged fantastically in female fashion, whose eyes were painted, whose gestures were effeminate, and who conducted themselves exactly as would the slaves of a female seraglio. From time to time, with hand on cheek, they would fawn against the feet of the Moro Naba, looking impudently with their made-up eyes to Katie and me the while. Some of them were rather beautiful in their perverse, hermaphroditic way.

### How It Started

"The tradition of this custom in the royal family dates from the early 17th century, when one of the great warrior Moro Nabas was gone six months to the wars against the Moslems, who had come down from the north, in a rapidly moving cavalry campaign, where neither wife nor women could follow.

"He had however, among his personal attendants, a devoted young boy slave who was his body servant. This boy cooked for him, helped him dress, mended his clothes, in fact performed every domestic service that a woman had performed for him at home.

"So one day the Moro Naba said to himself: 'He already does everything for me a woman can do, except one thing—why not that also?' And according to history, every succeeding Moro Naba, in unbroken royal line from that time on has had male youths in his harem."

### Deserted Priesthood

A lesson in the workings of amalgamation was cited by the Seabrooks when they pointed out that with 39 white males in Timbuctoo there were only four white females. Mulatto children run rampant.

One of the most outstanding individuals of Timbuctoo is Pere Yakouba, who went to Africa a generation ago as one of the missionary monks. He quit the robes of the Augustinian Feres Blanco (the White Father) to adopt the native way of living.

Long ago he forsook the priesthood and adopted the native way of life. Yet he has become the greatest offi-

cial political adviser and authority on native languages and customs in the history of Franco-African colonization.

Now he is 68, and his black wife, Salama, a big motherly woman surrounded by children and grandchildren, is the first lady of Timbuctoo. She has twenty-four children living.

Seabrook describes Pere Yakouba as the rarest of all white men in the fact that he was a happy one. He was fond of rare French wines and the good wives of both Seabrook and Pere had a problem keeping them sober. It is believed that the well stocked wine cellar is one of the things that is 'ring Seabrook' back to Timbuctoo.

## ENGLISH

### Words Often Misused

Do not say, "All sorts of pictures." Say "All kinds of pictures."

### Words Often Misspelled

Feat (a notable act); Feet (plural of foot); Oppressive; two p's and two s's. Mistate; two s's.

### Words Often Mispronounced

Agile. Pronounce: ajil, a as in "at," l as in "ill" (not as in "file"), accent first syllable.

### Synonyms

Axi'm, adage, m-xim, proverb.

### Word Study

INFRACTION; breach, especially of the law or obligation; violation.

### As the Crow Flies

It is commonly believed that the crow flies in a straight line, hence the phrase "as the crow flies," meaning in a straight line from starting point to the object or place of destination irrespective of buildings, rivers, roads, hills or other obstacles which might make the distance greater if a person were to travel it on foot or by vehicle. The saying, however, is not based on actual fact, for the crow does not usually fly forward in a straight line.

## Christianity Afraid to Cross the Color Line

PHILADELPHIA—The Rev. Marshall Shepard, pastor of the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church here declares that the Communists have virtually made a religion out of communism and that "the weakness of organized Christianity in America is nowhere revealed more clearly than in its attitudes and dealings with the race and color situation."

This statement appears in a chapter of the recently published book, "Seeing Ourselves through Russia," in which the pastor contributes the chapter headed, "Is Religion Played Out?"

The Rev. Mr. Shepard, a leader of the Baptist Ministers' Conference of Philadelphia and Vicinity, after analyzing the Soviet attitude toward religion and giving credit to Russian missionary zeal in the propagation of communist doctrine, assails the church in America for its straddling of the color issue.

"Many of the larger denominations divided over the issue of human slavery in the period before the Civil War," he points out. "And even now, after these many years we are still confronted with a Northern church and a Southern church, a white church and a black church. All these may be found within single denominational groups."

"Ministers who dare to do more than utter pious attitude platitudes in regard to the evils of such divisions are not infrequently expelled from their pulpits. Even in some of our northern cities, ministers have been forced to vacate their pulpits because they proposed to admit non-white persons into the fellowship of their churches."

"Organized Christianity in America has not enough moral courage and spiritual power to cross the color line without a condensation which at first insults then attempts to bless."

same fate that was meted out to any priest of the state-controlled Russian Orthodox Church who opposed the cruel Czarist autocracy."

The pastor goes on to say: "The reality of our belief in a Supreme Being may be questioned in view of our indifference to certain social evils which deny the moral and ethical implications of such a high belief. Should not faith in God make it incumbent upon a man to do something about color and race discrimination, about child labor, about the lynching and harrying of human beings?"

He concludes by asking whether such conditions have resulted because the forces of religion have spent themselves.

## BEAUTY HINTS

### MAKE A COMPLEXION COCKTAIL WITH MIXED POWDERS

It wasn't so many years ago that we had only three shades of powder to choose from—namely: white, flesh, and rachel. Now look at the display counters. A shade for every complexion, and if you cannot find your particular kind, then take a spoonful here and a spoonful there, shake it up well, and you will have a powder cocktail. Now the powder mixers have gone further. They are bringing out shades for more than many complexions. They're matching the frock color as well as the complexion. Expert mixers here and there who give you a look or two and then proceed to dip an experienced finger into the jar, the one here, the one at the end of the long row, then they'll add a tint of the jar the color of your dress, then note the ensemble.

Now it is proposed that, in the march of beauty events, time will show established lines of color for nails, and women will like the variety. They will not be so high hat about the bright red tips that now hand change back to them. They'll have their own color taste.