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CRUSHED BY FRANCE.

DAHOMEY'S CRUEL POWER IS AT LAST ENDED.

A King Whose Deeds Rival Those of the Historic Nero—Women Trained as Torturers and Murderers—The Executioner's Past Is One of Honor.

In Darkest Africa.

FRANCE has succeeded in giving the bloodthirsty king of Dahomey a dose of his own medicine that will forever dispossess of his power and his kingdom. Unlike the English, who are ready to make war on small fry of every description, France hesitated a long time before engaging in the present conflict with King Behanzin, and only after its representatives at Porto Novo had suffered innumerable insults from the Dahomeyans savage did the home government decide to go to war. In June the French Chamber of Deputies voted \$700,000 for the equipment of a force sufficiently large to give this black bully a thrashing which would inspire respect for France and impress him with his own insignificance. Accordingly the European and other governments were notified that the slave coast was under blockade to prevent the importation of slaves and cotton. It might be noted here that France without doubt will call upon the German Government to explain some serious infringements on the laws governing neutral powers. The French claim that King Behanzin, besides the 2,000 rifles allowed him by treaty, has almost an equal number of Winchester and



THE KING OF DAHOMEY.

other repeating rifles that have been furnished him by German traders. It is known that he has a large supply of ammunition and that it was landed in Dahomey from two German ships.

The "vile despot," says the Chicago Herald, was caused by King Behanzin's stupid conceit and over-estimation of his power. He is a splendid illustration of the old saw "little learning is a dangerous thing." He is fairly well educated for a savage, having spent his earlier years in Paris and there been taught to read and speak French. Since his return to his native jungles his vanity has assumed wonderful proportions. He imagined himself able to dictate his own terms to France and utterly disregarded his former agreements to respect the French protectorate at Porto Novo. When the representatives of France sent messengers to Abomey to expostulate with him, asking that he desist from sending his amazons on the slave-carrying raids into French territory, he had the audacity to cut off the heads of the messengers and return them in a basket by a Dahomeyan warrior, together with an insulting letter in which the French governor was told that Behanzin of Dahomey would sweep the French forces and their followers into the sea should he so choose, and, furthermore, that the raids would be continued at his pleasure. It was this note, which was sent to Paris, that caused France to make up its mind that it was time to assert its supremacy and teach this insolent petty tyrant a lesson which he would never forget.

Where It Is a Pleasure to Kill an Torture.

The inhabitants of Dahomey are certainly unique enough in their manners and customs to warrant the profound interest of the anthropologist, but the chief interest the world takes in them now is confined to the topic that they will not be allowed much longer to practice the awful enormities for which they have become famous. To kill and torture is to them the keenest pleasure. The office of executioner is a post of honor to which only the richest of the land dare aspire, and, as a matter of course, the wealthier the executioner the better the opportunity for satisfying his brutal instincts. There is no doubt whatever that France will crush the kingdom of Dahomey, whether it be now or in the early future, but the chances are that France may yet have some very serious obstacles to overcome. While all their brutal instincts the Dahomeyans neglect none above the ordinary intelligence of the common African black. He will fight until he falls and so will his sisters, for the amazons, or women warriors of Dahomey, are world-famous. Besides being warriors, the inhabitants of this kingdom are the best disciplined of the African tribes and proudly proclaim themselves "veterans of the world," this from having had innumerable conflicts with France, England and other nations. As their king insist on success in battle or death to the survivors in case of defeat, the Dahomey warriors never confess defeat, but fight while they have breath left in them. Shortly

honor of having organized the first band of these ferocious creatures belongs to Agajah, the fourth king of Dahomey. Under the present king the amazons have attained their highest degree of efficiency in discipline and numbers and in the most cruel savagery. The members of this unsexed army of virgins are as conceitedly vain of their ability to torture and cut the heads off their victims as their more civilized "strong-minded" sisters are of their "manly" qualities.

ure to blame for the detestation with which the inhabitants regard them. Referring to a particularly obnoxious missionary name, Bernaskos, the King of Dahomey said to a messenger sent to intercede for the many people set aside for sacrifice: "You say that your people abhor the thought of men being sacrificed; that their religion teaches them that this is a crime. Now, we have a 'God man' at Whydah, and does he set an example to my people such as I would wish them to follow? Does he



AMAZONS GOING TO BATTLE.

How Woman Soldiers Are Made. The recruiting of the amazons army is simple. The king issues a decree summoning every subject to present his daughters, above a certain age, at court upon an appointed day. Then he selects the most promising of the "best families" and creates them officers, while the lower orders are made soldiers. The children of slave parents become the slaves of the amazons within the palace, and the remainder are returned to their parents. Of the selected many are given to deserving soldiers as wives, and every three years a similar consideration of the daughters of the land is made, while all the children of amazons women are amazons from birth. The amazons are divided into three brigades, known as the King's company, the right and left wings. Each of these has a peculiar hand-dress by which the different brigades can be distinguished. The King's brigade, sometimes called the King's company or center, wear their hair shaved off in a turban and bound with narrow fillets, with alligators of colored cloth sewn on them. The right wing have their heads shaved, leaving only a solitary tuft or two, while the left wing wear their hair loose, which gives them a peculiarly savage aspect.

Each of the three brigades is divided into four classes—the agbara, veterans of the army, the bravest and strongest of the corps, only called into action on important occasions like the present. They wear blue tunics with white crossbelts, and their fillets are of curious shape. Their standards are of the most ferocious description, representing an

not drink till he talks foolishness? Does he not make my people drunk? Amay! I want none of your 'God people.'

King Behanzin has revived the customs of human sacrifice with all the insatiable bloodthirstiness of his grandfather, Gelete. A Frenchman says that a few months ago he was led through the Ness temple, where he counted over twenty men suspended by their ankles and knees to the crossbeam of a huge gallows; all were stark naked and had

been mutilated in a horrible manner out of respect to the memory of the King's wives. One morning while he was in captivity four wretches were killed because the King had had a bad dream. The Frenchman was present at the butchery so that he might be impressed with the King's power. The four men

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were led out before the King, who sat in a chair of state embellished with skulls and jaw bones from human sacrifices. A body of amazons drew up behind the victims; the executioner was a perfect giant in stature. Armed with a large, crooked knife made for such occasions, he had a large, wooden trough placed near him; this he pushed with his foot before the first victim, then, bending the man forward, he deliberately cut his throat, letting the blood run into the wooden dish. He then cut the life out of the fourth man, who had completed a score an arm. This performance was repeated with three of the victims. The fourth must have suffered terribly. He was struck four times without severing the vertebral column. The butcher then put the bloody knife in his mouth, and seizing the ears of the wretched being, wrenched the head from side to side, trying to screw it off, and finally having dislocated it, deliberately slashed away the flesh that still connected the head with the trunk.

A large enclosure called the sun is the place where the headless corpses of the victims are dragged; there were hundreds of human skeletons bleaching in the sun and an equal number of freshly slaughtered victims. Such is life in Dahomey.

Many of the laws of the country are mere caprices of the King. Here are some specimens:

One is allowed to build a hut more than four tiers high.

No one is allowed to marry without first submitting his intended to the King, who, if he pleases, keeps her for himself and enlists her in the amazons guard.

No Dahomey woman is allowed to leave the country.

No subject must wear shoes or ride in public.

No goods landed at Whydah can be reshipped.

Such are a few of the laws regulating the welfare of Dahomey. The whole civilized world will certainly be thankful to France for wiping out of existence both the King and his amazons.

What SWALLOWED JONAH? Perhaps It Was a White Shark Instead of a Whale.

There is no argument valid upon a premise of inherent impossibility. It used to be concluded beyond question that there were no black swans, because it is impossible to conceive a black swan. But one harmless and unconscious black swan from the antipodes put all the ingenious thinkers to rout. Hume argued from his conception of a true induction that the major premise must include all possible cases. This he thought conclusive against a great deal of popular belief. But what test have we of the possible? It is harder to believe that we have explored and classified the whole field of knowledge, than that a ravenous fish—with no higher and no lower thought in its meager brain than a plentiful dinner—should have swallowed and then disgorged a man. Besides, we are not without evidence that such piscine conduct is at least possible. Jonah was sailing in the Mediterranean—right along its whole length—from Joppa, in Palestine, to Tarshish, in Spain; and it is in this very sea that even at the present day a huge fish, the white shark, is found. And not only this, but the bones of a much larger species, now extinct. For the word used in the Bible is a gen-

itive term for a large fish, and it includes in various writers sharks, tunnies, whales, dolphins, and seals. This white shark attains such a size that it has been known to weigh four tons and a half. One that was exhibited last century over Europe weighed nearly two tons, and very nearly re-enacted the part of Jonah's fish. A British war vessel was sailing in the Mediterranean when a man fell overboard. A huge shark instantly rose and the unlucky seaman disappeared within its mouth. The captain fired a gun at it from the deck, and as the shot struck upon its back it cast the man out again and he was rescued by his companions. They forthwith harpooned the fish, dried him, and presented him to his intended victim.

We were all at dinner when there came a thud and the ship stopped. We had been moving very slowly, and the shock stopped us, but not with enough of a jerk to spill the water in the glasses or tip anything over. A number of people screamed and began running around. Somebody looked out of a port hole, and then told me to come on deck and see the other vessel sink.

"It was a magnificent sight. The vessel had all sails set. When we reached the upper deck all the men had been rescued, so we could appreciate the sight. The beautiful thing acted as if living. It leaned from one side and then to the other, rocking like a creature in pain, and then slowly righted itself, and, trembling like an aspen, began to slip out of sight.

There was not a sound on the Saale except the 'hush-hush-hush' of a little escaping steam. Slowly, and yet, oh, so swiftly, the vessel sank into the water, which was blue as sapphires and dimpled as if smiling. The shipwrecked sailors removed their caps and saluted, then remained uncovered until the last bit of mast and rigging had disappeared, and not a ripple on the surface of the water betrayed their loss.

It was only four and a half minutes from the time of the collision until the last thread of sail had disappeared, yet it seemed very long. It brought tears to the eyes of men as well as women to see that beautiful ship slip out of sight as it did.

"But after it was all over, and the Saale began to move again, the greater number of us went back to the saloon and demolished the Gefrones. All lives were saved—except that of a dog—so why mourn. Of course if the Tortoiseshell had hit us amidships the great probability is that everybody on both vessels would have died. But then, the Tortoiseshell didn't hit us amidships and nobody died."—New York Sun.

Life in China. The singular conditions of life at Amoy, the metropolis of the great Chinese province of Fukien, have been the theme of an interesting report of the United States Consul at that city, Mr. Bedloe. Amoy, which is a city of about a million people, and the center of a densely populated region, is perhaps the cheapest place in the world. Workingmen live and support large families on fifteen cents a day, and are said to be as happy as workingmen anywhere.

The identification of cattle upon the great Western plains, where tens of thousands of long-horned beasts roam throughout the year, unfenced and unherded, would present a serious aspect were it not for branding. Only by that means is it possible, in a country where stock-raising is carried on so extensively, that fencing the ranges is almost out of the question, for owners to keep any knowledge of their possessions. No more rigid system of identification exists anywhere, and the owner of a steer is almost as certain of his property when the animal has strayed a hundred miles away as if the home-ranch corral inclosed him. It is not uncommon for a Western Kansas cattleman to receive notice from a friend in Nebraska or Wyoming, saying that one of his cattle has strayed from home, and is in his vicinity, the friend having looked up the animal's brand in the herd book.

A PATHETIC EPISODE.

How Two Brothers Died on a Western Railroad.

"I have seen a great many killed," said Burke McMahon, at the Southern. "I was with old Pap Thomas at Chickamauga when his corps stood like rock for the flower of the Confederacy to beat and break upon, and with Grant when he hurled his columns at the impregnable heights of Vicksburg. I have seen commanding officers torn to pieces by the roofers, who apply the roof-boards, moldings, etc., and then the timbers put on the metal covering. After a careful inspection the car is taken by the outside painters, and is entered at the same time by the inside finishers, who put in and finish the nice inside wood-work, which is of the best kinds of lumber, such as oak, ash, cherry, mahogany, or vermillion. The piping for heating and for lighting is set in before the seats are placed in position. The inside finish, too, conceals the electric wires which may be called for in the specifications. Cars are lighted by oil, gas or electricity. If by gas, it is carried in condensed form in tanks underneath the car, and is conducted to lamps by suitable piping. Electric lights are derived from storage batteries and from dynamos run in a baggage car, by steam from the engine.

When the inside wood work is all in place, and some of this finish comprises exquisite carvings, the inside painters go over the entire interior wood work, making the car ready for the trimmers, who place the bronze or plated trimmings upon doors, sash, blinds, and walls. The upholstering, draperies, seat-coverings, carpets, etc., which have all been previously prepared, are now put in, and when the finishing touches are added by the equipment department the car is ready for delivery to its purchaser, to whom it is sometimes sent by special messenger. Parties for whom cars are building generally keep an inspector at the shops to see that all work and materials are in accordance with plans and specifications. All work in the construction department is carefully subdivided, many different gangs of men having their allotted tasks, which they perform with surprising quickness and dexterity. Most of this passenger car work is paid for by piece wages. These car works have the capacity for turning out twelve new passenger cars a week.

Small boys earn a few copper coins by marching in religious processions, at funerals, wakes, exorcisms, weddings, and other ceremonies.

At eight years of age a boy begins his life-calling, which usually is about as follows: One and a half pounds of rice, costing three cents; one ounce of meat, one ounce of fish, two ounces of shell-fish, one cent altogether; one pound of cabbage or other vegetable, one cent; fuel, salt and oil, one cent; total, six cents.

This is much better fare than many European laborers enjoy. In what little time the Amoy workingman can find from his toll, he flies kites, plays shuttlecock, and indulges in mild practical jokes on his friends. He goes to bed early, and worries about nothing.

The wife and children of the Chinese family gather driftwood, edible sea-moss, shell-fish, mushrooms and dead branches.

Some of the things they pick up they barter for rice and vegetables. Sometimes a woman and her children provide in this way all the food of the family.

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