

Abdul Hamid, former Sultan of Turkey, is keeping a diary. Abdul, it will be remembered, was provided with a fine palace at the time of his dethronement and permitted to take his wives with him into retirement. The exact number of Abdul's wives has never been authoritatively stated. It is variously estimated that there are between forty and one hundred of them. With even forty wives an ordinary man would hardly find time to keep a diary. Nevertheless, Abdul is keeping one, and it is being published in a German paper.

In a recent installment of his diary he made the statement that he had been studying the faces of western women—women of western Europe and America. He was not pleased with them. He found the faces of these women indicative of too much intellectuality and character to suit him. He could imagine that the husbands of such women must have a tough time.

To the mind of the Oriental, beauty consists largely of fat. The favorite of the harem is a rotund lady whose facial features are barely discernible. It is not surprising, therefore, that Abdul Hamid is disposed to pity the husbands of women whose faces indicate that they are intelligent, thoughtful and perhaps sometimes even aggressive. We thank him for his sympathy, but we hope he will not be unduly worried on our behalf. Husbands of western women will manage to get along in spite of their disposition to develop character and to think. It might be said, just to reassure Abdul Hamid, that some of the women whom he views with alarm do not think as much as he thinks they think.

Several years ago John Morley strongly advocated the intelligent use of good newspapers in schoolrooms, colleges and libraries. The idea is becoming popular. In the better schools of journalism current news and current editorial discussion, as well as literary and dramatic reviews, are now regularly used. In high schools progressive principals and superintendents are finding the same practice stimulating and profitable.

It is recognized more and more that pupils of a certain age dislike dry and pedantic dissection of classics, while responding to the appeal of power and beauty in literature. It is also recognized that pupils are interested in the men, things and developments that their parents and older relatives and friends discuss and read about in newspapers and magazines. Wherever possible current news and opinions should be treated in schoolrooms as illustrative or interpretative of certain principles—moral, social, historical.

We teach civics, politics, economics and sociology in our secondary schools and colleges. Illustrations drawn from actual life are significant and illuminating. What the case system is in the teaching of law the use of fair and accurate newspapers, weeklies and magazines should be in the teaching of civics and politics. In libraries properly selected newspapers and magazines are in great demand. It is a legitimate demand that should be encouraged. We cannot know too much about our own time and our own problems, and to bring all knowledge to bear on current things, to show the relations between past and present, is to promote true culture as well as sound progress in practical affairs.

NERVOUS SHOULD WALK.

Prescribed for the Person Bordering on Hysteria.

Many women, because they are tired at night, think that they do not need physical training, that they have already taken too much; but this is a mistaken idea. Housework, says a writer in the Woman's World, tends to make women nervous and irritable unless they obtain diversion in the form of exercise or healthful recreation. When women are nervous or bordering on hysteria and feel like crying or screaming, a little well chosen exercise followed by a cool bath will improve these conditions, and, if persisted in, will eventually cure them.

Any woman who has a moderate degree of health can walk. If she will rise an hour earlier in the morning and walk, with the body erect, chest strongly expanded, swinging the arms at the side of the body as a man does, and take great deep breaths, she will have no occasion to complain of nerves, even if her daily duties are confining. If it is out of the question to take this hour's walk in the morning, take it in the evening after dinner. You may not have as much sleep, but it is refreshing and will more than compensate for the time expended.

Practice makes the miser perfect in his specialty.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDY

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, MARCH 16.

Lesson XI.—The Test of Abraham's Faith, Gen. 22. 1-19. Golden text, Hos. 6. 6.

Following the account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the biblical narrative (Gen. 19. 39-38) records the birth of sons to the daughters of Lot, Moab, ancestor of the Moabites, and Ben-ammi, "father of the children of Ammon." Chapter 20 contains the account of Abram's sojourn in the land of Gerar to the south, and his dealings with Abimelech, upon whom he practiced the same deceit with regard to Sarah, his wife, as earlier he had practiced on the king of Egypt (compare Gen. 12. 10-20). The birth of Isaac and the casting out of Hagar and her son, Ishmael, together with Abraham's covenant with Abimelech at Beersheba, reported in chapter 21, prepare the way for the account of the great test of Abraham's faith and loyalty to Jehovah.

Verse 1. After these things—The longer sojourn of Abraham in the land of the Philistines, reported in the preceding chapter. God did prove Abraham—Putting him to a severe test of obedience and faith. And said—Verse 3 would seem to imply a dream or night vision. 2. Thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest—After the rejection of Ishmael, Isaac alone remained to Abraham, and the emphasis upon their relationship to each other as father and only son is intended to indicate in advance the severity of the demand about to be made.

The land of Moriah—The name later given to the hill on which the temple at Jerusalem was built. The Septuagint, or earliest Greek version of the Old Testament, however, substitutes the adjective "lofty" (mountain) for the proper noun "Moriah" in this passage, while the Vulgate, the earliest Latin translation, has the noun "vision." This would seem to indicate that the proper noun itself was inserted later. Following either the Septuagint or the Vulgate reading, the two oldest which have been preserved to us, the command was simply to proceed into the mountainous country, probably to the north, and to offer a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which Jehovah himself was to designate.

3. Rise early in the morning—Suggesting, as already indicated, that the communication from Jehovah was received in a dream or vision. Two of his young men—Servants. Clave the wood—Or, as we would say, split the wood.

4. On the third day... the place afar off—The place selected must, therefore, have been three days' journey from Beersheba. The exact distance would vary with circumstances. If we are to think of the vicinity of Jerusalem, it may be estimated that the journey from Beersheba would, after Oriental fashion, have occupied from seven to twenty hours' continuous traveling, a distance which might be conveniently divided into three days.

5. We will worship, and come again—Doubtless Abraham still cherished the faint hope that in some way his son might be spared or restored to him. 6. Took in his hand the fire—The method by which the ancient Israelites secured fire is nowhere explained, though a reference in the Book of Maccabees speaks of "firing stones and taking fire out of them" (2 Maccabees 10. 3), from which it may be inferred that fire was obtained by striking stones together. Here, however, it seems that Abraham had carried the burning embers with him, keeping the fire burning all the way.

7. Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?—The boy was quick to observe that while all the accessories of the sacrifice had been carefully provided, the offering itself had apparently been overlooked. 8. God will provide—Hebrew, God will see for himself, or, as we would say, "see to the matter himself." Here, as in verse 5, there is a suggestion of hope to which the father was still clinging.

9. The place which God had told him of—No name is mentioned, for the reason that it was this event which gave to the place its name. Compare verse 14.

Bound Isaac his son—There is no suggestion of resistance on the part of the boy. The custom of human sacrifice was doubtless not unfamiliar to him, since surrounding peoples commonly practiced it at this time. The underlying idea of such sacrifices was the surrender of that which was of highest value to the deity. Under the later kings, especially Ahab and Manasseh, the custom still existed in parts of Judah (compare 2 Kings 16. 3; 21. 6; 23. 10; Jer. 7. 31; 19. 5; Ezek. 16. 20; 23. 37; Isa. 57. 5). The Deuteronomic law, however, strenuously forbade the practice (Deut. 12. 31; 18. 10), while the prophets also strongly condemned it (Mic. 6. 7).

11. And the angel of Jehovah called unto him—Abraham recognizes the voice, whether audible or heard only in the inmost recesses of his soul, as the voice of divine command. It is made clear to him that while the absolute trust and obedience involved in such a sacrifice is desired of God, yet God does not require the sacrifice itself.

12. Lay not thy hand upon the lad—The sacredness of human life receives a new and great emphasis in this command. 13. Abraham lifted up his eyes—

For a time he had been altogether absorbed in his own trying experience and struggle. Now that the probation was ended and the strain of suspense and fear over, his eyes saw what they had not seen before, a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. Offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son—And with double gratitude for the preservation of the child's life.

IN THE POLAR REGIONS. Captain Mikkelsen Spent Two Years on the Ice in Solitude.

Captain Einar Mikkelsen, the intrepid explorer, who was lost in the Polar Regions for 28 months, with one companion, has been describing the terrible experiences they underwent. Captain Mikkelsen set out to find the records left by Erichsen, another explorer, who, with two companions, died of starvation and cold in exploring the north-east coast of Greenland. How the captain and his companion were lost arose in this manner. They left their ship to cross the wilderness of ice and snow till they came to the point where the Erichsen party perished. Having obtained the lost records, they retraced their steps, and, after suffering terrible privations, returned to the place from whence they had set out. To their horror they found that the ship had been wrecked and the crew gone. Captain Mikkelsen tells of his sensations on making this discovery: "Well, there we were in a hut by the shore. Our ship was gone, and we couldn't get away; the quicksilver froze in the thermometer. "One day as I was breaking up some roots for fuel, I heard a knocking at the door of the hut. I

opened the door, wondering who the caller could be—it was a huge bear! "I shut the door and bolted it, and Iversen put his back against it. The bear knocked again. "Why didn't we shoot it? Because the oil in our guns was frozen hard, and we couldn't get a cartridge in. But, all the while, I was warming a gun, while Iversen stuck to his post by the door, and at last I managed to get a cartridge in—just in time. The bear died. "I had two books, Adam Bede and Shakespeare. I read Adam Bede over and over again; I know it by heart. "Shakespeare was a great companion, but a little white fox ran away with Shakespeare. I suppose our greasy, oily fingers gave the book a meaty flavor. The fox became quite tame, and we made a great pet of him. He was just like a dog. "It is the terrible monotony that is the most awful thing about the Arctic region—the monotony and the constant dread of death. No man wants to die; I do not want to die. "We were rescued at last by a Norwegian ship which had seen our signal. The Norwegians who landed said we looked wild and terrible, 'like mink oxen.' And we, who had been alone on the ice for more than two years, could scarcely realize after our long solitude that there could be so many people in the world."



Captain Einar Mikkelsen.

proceeding from a half-open door. Cautiously approaching on tiptoe, I peered in. Opposite me, eagerly engaged in examining the contents of an iron box, was an old woman. She was kneeling down by the side of a deep hole, and the light from the candle she had set beside her, falling on her face, revealed a countenance which for sheer devilry would have been difficult to match. I could not see what was in the box, but from the clinking sound she made as she passed her fingers through its contents I judged it was full of coins. After amusing herself in this way for some seconds, she carefully closed the lid, placed the box in the hole, covered the latter with a flagstone, and cemented the crevices. That done, she gave a low chuckle of satisfaction, and, picking up the candle, advanced to where I was standing. In mortal agony lest she should perceive me, I shrank back. Out she came—out into the black, narrow passage, and, gliding past, her pale, sinister eyes fixed smilingly at the gloom ahead of her, ascended the staircase. At the top she paused; there was the sound of a violent scuffle, a chorus of awful blood-curdling screams, the rush of several heavy bodies through the air, a couple of terrific thuds at my feet—and all was still. That was enough for one night's vigil. I lost no time in getting to my bedroom, where I remained with the lights "full on" till morning. My doctor friend was greatly interested when I related to him what had occurred. "You must be far more clairvoyant than any of us," he said. "We have never seen anything, only heard such noises as you have described—scrapping and screaming. I will have the cellar excavated at once."

He did so in my presence, and under one of the flagstones we discovered an iron box. Imagine our astonishment when on opening it, we saw 50 golden sovereigns and two sets of false teeth.

At my suggestion, he buried the teeth in a churchyard, and gave the sovereigns to a local charity. From that time the hauntings ceased. A year or so later he wrote to me, saying: "After endless enquiries, I have at last ascertained that this house was once occupied by two old ladies' reputed to be misers. They were frequently heard quarrelling, and were found one day at the foot of the kitchen staircase with their necks broken." I underwent rather a different experience to this in a house in one of the London suburbs. Hearing that the place was supposed to be haunted, I pretended I wanted to look over it with the idea of renting it, and with this plea obtained the keys from the agent. I entered the premises after sunset, and, armed only with a candle, was proceeding to make an examination of the place when an icy current of air blew out the light, and I was left hopelessly stranded in the dark—in the intense dark, for the sky was heavily clouded, and there were signs neither of moon nor stars. To add to my predicament, I could not find any match-box.

SOME EXCITING ADVENTURES

WEIRD EXPERIENCES IN A HAUNTED HOUSE.

Days When Supernatural Stories Raised a Laugh Have Passed By.

Not so very long ago the mere mention of the word "ghosts" excited general ridicule; to-day it is otherwise. The numerous testimonies of reliable people to the effect that they had seen or heard phenomena unaccountable by natural causes at length led to an earnest and widespread desire to take the matter up and make a systematic investigation. Societies devoted to psychical research sprang up in various parts of the world, and, although no very "showy" work has been accomplished, a vast amount of evidence has been collected, which goes far to proving the actual existence of haunted houses and the occurrence of supernatural (styled by some "superphysical") manifestations. It is not, however, of the doings of research societies I am going to write, but of my own experiences. The publication of my book, "Some Haunted Houses of England and Wales," by Mr. E. J. Nash, some years ago led to a large number of people writing to me to know if I would investigate.

Inexplicable Happenings

at their houses, and the work so interested me that I eventually set aside for it a certain portion of each year.

One of my most exciting recent experiences was at a house in a Southern watering place, owned by an old schoolfellow of mine, whom I will call Dr. B. At his earnest request I spent a Twelfth Night with him. "I won't tell you what form the hauntings take," he said, "I want you to find out for yourself, and then we will compare notes." The house was the last one in a fine old crescent, that in all probability had been erected about the beginning of the nineteenth century. It had the deep and rather gloomy basements, long passages, and narrow staircases characteristic of that period. In the daytime it looked cheery enough, but directly the sun set and the evening shadows made their appearance it underwent an unpleasant metamorphosis. There is a peculiar something in the atmosphere of a haunted house that sooner or later betrays itself to me; in this instance it was most pronounced.

I at once set to work to locate it, and at length arrived at the conclusion that it was most in evidence on the top landing, back staircase, and in the basements, which spots I resolved would constitute my nocturnal beat. As arranged, directly the household had retired to bed I crept out of my room and, stealing softly across the thickly drugged floor, took up my position at the top of the stairs leading to the basement. Hour after hour passed in perfect silence without anything happening, and I had almost begun to despair of witnessing any phenomena when a sudden noise below me set my heart violently throbbing. It was the sound of some one scraping—scrape, scrape, scrape—on a hard, metallic surface. Impelled by a fascination I could not resist I crept gently down the wooden stairs, and, aiming for the direction of the noise, perceived

A Blush White Light

proceeding from a half-open door. Cautiously approaching on tiptoe, I peered in. Opposite me, eagerly engaged in examining the contents of an iron box, was an old woman. She was kneeling down by the side of a deep hole, and the light from the candle she had set beside her, falling on her face, revealed a countenance which for sheer devilry would have been difficult to match. I could not see what was in the box, but from the clinking sound she made as she passed her fingers through its contents I judged it was full of coins. After amusing herself in this way for some seconds, she carefully closed the lid, placed the box in the hole, covered the latter with a flagstone, and cemented the crevices. That done, she gave a low chuckle of satisfaction, and, picking up the candle, advanced to where I was standing. In mortal agony lest she should perceive me, I shrank back. Out she came—out into the black, narrow passage, and, gliding past, her pale, sinister eyes fixed smilingly at the gloom ahead of her, ascended the staircase. At the top she paused; there was the sound of a violent scuffle, a chorus of awful blood-curdling screams, the rush of several heavy bodies through the air, a couple of terrific thuds at my feet—and all was still. That was enough for one night's vigil. I lost no time in getting to my bedroom, where I remained with the lights "full on" till morning. My doctor friend was greatly interested when I related to him what had occurred. "You must be far more clairvoyant than any of us," he said. "We have never seen anything, only heard such noises as you have described—scrapping and screaming. I will have the cellar excavated at once."

A RIFLE RETURNED.

Remarkable Find by Captain Batreau in Africa.

While Mr. Frederic Martyn was serving in Africa with the French Foreign Legion there came under his notice an incident that he records in "Life in the Legion." The Legion had advanced against the Dahomeyan army, and was in pursuit of the black warriors. A Dahomeyan warrior was killed in the act of leveling his gun at Captain Batreau of the Legion from behind a cotton-tree. As he fell, his rifle clattered down at the officer's very feet. Captain Batreau saw that it was an old Chassepot, and picked it up out of curiosity. Suddenly he became very much interested. He examined it carefully, and at last exclaimed, with a gasp of astonishment: "Well, that is a miracle! Here is the very rifle I used in 1870 during the war with Germany! See that hole in the butt! That was made by a Prussian bullet at Saint-Privat. I could tell the gun from among a million by that mark alone; but here's my number stamped on it as well, which is evidence enough for anybody. Who would have thought it possible that I should pick up in Africa, as a captain, a rifle that I used in France as a sergeant twenty-two years ago! It is incredible."

Entitled to Rebate. Doctor (to patient)—You've had a pretty close call. It's only your strong constitution that pulled you through. Patient—Well, doctor, remember that when you make out your bill,

SHOULD BE RESOURCEFUL

Selfishness Is the Root From Which the Black Blooms of Social Sins Come

Every one shall be salted with fire. Have salt in yourselves. —Mark ix. 49-50.

There are two kinds of lives, those who help and those that, all the time, need help. In business we see creators and dependents; in literature, originals and quotations; in social life, suns and satellites; in all life, the healthy and parasites. Religion also has its exhibits of ministerial nurses and ecclesiastical infants. It sometimes looks as if only a minority in any realm have salt in themselves. One fraction in each sphere must furnish preservative for the integer.

Resourcefulness costs. Every one is salted with fire. If hand or foot or eye are triggers to trap, get rid of them and gain something better than to hold on to everything and forfeit the best. There must be fire, either that of discipline or of punishment. Pain is an element in education, or else it is the fruit of folly in despising it. Suffer in winning, or suffer more in losing.

How many a student becomes a scholar by privations in school! Many a poor man has become wealthy by enduring the pinches of economy. There is no attainment that does not rest on some pain. There is less hardship in the fire salt of suffering in order to become scholarly, forehanded, or good than in the salty fire of ignorance, poverty, and wickedness.

Toil of Preparation.

It is painful to learn the consolations of heaven, but not so agonizing as comfortless sorrow. The toil of preparation is severe, but not so distressing as chance lost because of unreadiness to seize it. It is wearisome to live truly, but not so full of anguish as to reap the fruit of one's sins. Every soul is sure to be salted. If the fires of training are spurned, the flames of consequence use us as fuel. Socially we must have resourcefulness. Three great sins Jesus called attention to in the context—ambitions at the expense of others; the wish for a monopoly of privilege, and indifference to the welfare of others. The social world reeks with these crimes. The true

NEWS OF THE MIDDLE WEST

BETWEEN ONTARIO AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Items From Provinces Where Many Ontario Boys and Girls Are "Making Good."

A Hollanders' Club has been organized in Edmonton. The C.P.R. shops are not to be removed from Revelstoke. The Rational Sunday League people are about to form a branch in Calgary.

J. A. Glasgow has received the position of town policeman in the town of Olds. Brandon is to have a municipal line known as the Brandon Rural Radial Railway.

Water tanks, hose and force pumps are to be purchased by the town of Irricana. The cooks and waiters of Calgary have organized a union with fifty members.

The Great West Lumber Company has 450 men employed in camps west of Olds, Alberta. The P. Burns Company plant at Calgary, recently burned, is to be rebuilt on a greater scale.

Prince Albert is to have a professional baseball team this summer in the Western Canada League. Fourteen Edmonton families are in trouble because they cut their Christmas trees in Rat Creek Park. Lethbridge Council lately refused to permit Sunday band concerts in the moving picture show houses on the collection basis.

There were 1,000 deaths from all causes in the city of Calgary during the year just passed. Of these 393 were of children under five.

The directors of the Edmonton Fair are now facing the question of putting in pari-mutuel machines at the track to replace the bookmaker. The country about Cardston has been having some of the worst storms ever. Big ranches were forced to suspend feeding till the blizzards stopped.

The Medical Officer of Health of Calgary says the death rate of 32 per 1,000 in typhoid cases is far too high. There were 70 deaths in 310 cases.

Forty miles of steel have been laid on the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway. The end of steel is now twenty miles beyond Morinville.

Fact and Fancy.

Violins are now aged with X-rays. Gossip has a hundred tongues and no heart. A ship's life is 25 years. Don't think that because you cast reflections people will deem you brilliant.

Strawberries are so called from the custom of placing straw over their roots to shade them, to preserve their moisture, and to prevent evaporation. In Chill, during the winter or hot season, the shops are closed all afternoon, and remain open till midnight.

Imagination is what keeps the doctors busy.

BRICK PAVEMENTS.

1,000 Miles in Cleveland, Ohio, and Surrounding Country.

There is probably no place on the continent where more attention has been paid to the improvement of country roads or where the benefits accruing from such a policy, have been so striking as in the county of Cuyahoga, Ohio, in which the city of Cleveland is situated.

The highways radiating out from the city, and other main roads, have been paved with brick, which will endure the heaviest motor-driven traffic for from 50 to 100 years.

A thousand miles of brick pavement has been laid in the city and county combined, and 110 miles of rural brick roads will be added this year, while 43 miles of brick paving has also been contracted for in the city.

The good roads policy has had many beneficial results, both for the farmers and the city population, and the value of farm lands has increased in some cases from \$75 to \$200 per acre during the last ten years.

The three County Commissioners who manage the road building, are Messrs. William F. Erick, Harry Vail and John G. Fisher. Mr. Erick says that the large expenditure on rural roads has really not cost the county anything.

The increased revenue from the boosted land values has counterbalanced all the expense of paying for the road work. City and county real estate ten years ago totaled \$171,000,000 in value. To-day it has risen to \$605,000,000, an increase of \$434,000,000. Farm lands in the country ten years ago were worth \$29,000,000, but now are worth \$101,000,000, showing an increase of \$72,000,000.

The growth of the public markets in Cleveland is one of the beneficial results of the good roads movement, and it is one of the very best ways to fight the increased cost of living, for it brings the producer and consumer together to a much greater extent. Easy transportation has encouraged the production of market truck, and turned a good part of the county into a vast garden. Country life has become popular with city people of means, who can motor in to the city easily and quickly, and the farm for pleasure and the benefits of the country life. This has been an important factor in raising the value of farm property.

Good brick roads cost the county \$1,000 a mile for each foot of width. Stone curbing with an expansion joint is used to protect the edge of the pavement. Usually one half of the road is paved, the right hand half for the heavier-loaded traffic that is bound toward town. The other half of the road is graded and can be used in dry weather.

The method of construction is to lay a solid concrete base and impose a two inch sand-cushion for the brick. A grout filter united the brick into one solid substance.

Bill—"Why did you break your engagement with that school teacher?" Jack—"If I failed to show up at her house every evening she expected me to bring a written excuse signed by my mother."