

WAS IT CAESAR'S?

BARGE IN THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE BEING BROUGHT UP.

It is a Gallant Ship of Prodigious Size With Costly Ornaments—Part of It That Is in the Sand Is Well Preserved. But That Portion Which Lies in the Mud Is Very Rotten—Many Attempts Have Been Made to Raise It Formerly But Never With Success—Legends Connected With It.

Rome, Dec. 30.—For some time past a series of explorations have been carried on at the bottom of Lake Nemi, an extinct crater in the Alban hills, about fifteen miles from Rome. The place is most picturesque and a small village with a tall medieval tower and red and yellow roofs regards its reflection in the limpid waters of the lake far below. The posts have made Nemi their own and the painters have striven to depict its marvelous greens and its gorgeous blues as a mere record of beauty or to make it the background for some classical story.

GALLERY OF TIBERIUS. It is here, in the depths of these clear, soft waters, that archaeological researches seek to discover all that is left of the great ship or galley that sunk beneath the waves seventeen or eighteen centuries ago. What has already been brought to light in these last few weeks justifies the hope that what is still to come will be very satisfactory and most important.

The well-known commentator Lantini, who has no admirably popularized the dry-as-dust accounts of Roman antiquities, and whose books are as well known in the United States as they are in England or in Rome, visits Lake Nemi from time to time to note the progress of the discoveries. A few days ago he discovered the lost ship of the Nemi before the Academy of St. Luke, and will deliver a lecture on the same to the British and American archaeological societies of Rome at the beginning of the season. Commentator Bernabei, who came to the Nemi with the Museum at the Villa Papa Giulio, has described the ship and its findings to the academicians of the Linceo or Lynceus as they are quality termed—and others less prominent in the hall have had their say regarding what has come forth from the waters of Lake Nemi.

The object of the labors now in progress on the southern shore of the lake is to lift from the bottom of the lake a ship—or as much of it as can be lifted—of the Roman period, where it lies half-buried in the mud and sand and where it has lain for many centuries. The fact that it is a Roman vessel accounts for the interest in it that is felt universally, and this interest leads people in many countries to follow eagerly the reports of the successive discoveries made.

STORY OF ITS SUBMERSION.

The story that a Roman ship lay submerged in Lake Nemi is by no means a recent story. It has been known to exist there for at least four centuries, and several attempts have been made to raise it, but without success. The first is that mentioned by Biondo Flavio di Forli, who, in his work, "Italia Illustrata," describes the attempt made in 1455 by order of Cardinal Prospero Colonna, who employed for the purpose the well-known architect Leon Battista Alberti—some almost as great as that of Leonardo da Vinci in the annals of art and science. From the fragments recovered by him it was seen that the vessel was built of bronze, was pitched and covered with lead, and strengthened inside by iron hoops fixed in a web of cement, the whole being covered with a coating of bitumen and pounded bricks. Enormous copper nails were also brought up as bright as the day they were made. Some massive leaden pipes were also brought to light which were inscribed with the name of Tiberius Caesar Augustus, and which had evidently served supplying the vessel with water for the fountains on board of it.

DISCOVERIES AND DOUBTS.

It is unnecessary to relate in detail the discoveries made at later periods. Progress to March in 1856 made other attempts, and in 1870, after that year, when the sun was shining brightly over the lake, beheld the ship lying beneath the water not far from the shore, and made a series of measurements which go far beyond the actual facts.

In 1872 Signor Fusconi made an attempt to lift the sunken ship by means of a species of screw. His elaborate efforts were comparatively unfruitful, as the chief objects brought up were a number of tiles edged with metal, inscribed with the name of Tiberius Caesar, and a number of beautiful bronze nails.

Opinions vary regarding the actual nature of what "lies at the very bottom below." Some writers have asserted that there is but one boat there; others hold that there are two. Some describe it as of one time a floating villa; others as a barge or galley. The name of the Roman emperor for whom it was made is also matter of dispute. The general opinion attributes it to the Emperor Tiberius—an opinion borne out by former discoveries. But it has also been attributed to Caligula and to Trajan. Indeed, Nibby, with some other writers, considers it was constructed under Julius Caesar.

A STRANGE LEGEND.

The dwellers along the banks of the little lake, "the nymph and satyr of the chestnut alleys," have thrown the poetry of their vivid imaginations around the story of this lost ship and have woven a round and a strangely picturesque legend.

This legend, in its brightest form, relates that once upon a time, in the misty ages of the past, a king lived here with his one only child, the fair Princess Diana. She was a noted huntress and went daily to the chase attended by a group of girls, spirits kindred to her own.

One day the fortunes of the chase separated her from her companions and, after wandering about tired and hungry, she saw at a distance a youth engaged in whistling, imitating the birds of the forest, especially the nightingale, whose rippling notes he had caught exactly. He was handsome as a dream and wore a strawberry garb. He gave her the princess a basket filled with strawberries and a pretty bunch of cyclamens, which abound in these woods. It may be noted here that Nemi is noted for the favor of its wild strawberries.

Next day the princess separated again from her companions of the chase, but now it was by design and not by accident. She again met the peasant youth with the strawberries and the cyclamens. The wandering away of the princess from her companions became as much a habit with her as meeting with the handsome young man who whistled like a nightingale. These two became fond lovers. The king was informed of the matter and the hunting was stopped, and the princess was relegated to a sort of mild imprisonment.

THE LOVERS' RETREAT.

A great barge or boat was moored near the land, and when the days were warm she sought the coolness of this retreat. The barge, according to the legend, was an enchanted island, drifted to the shore by a well-guarded draught. It was a retreat just suited for lovers and had a sort of resemblance of that dream of Claude Melnotte

as a fitting residence for his bride, Pauline.

Love laughs at locksmiths and overpasses great obstacles. On a wide, low-spreading plane tree that hung over the water the strawberry youth with the nightingale notes walked along the spreading branch and dropped down into the barge. He saw Diana and he was happy.

One evening every one was overcome with the hot sirocco wind. A storm arose. The princess and the strawberry youth had been on the barge. The barge broke from her moorings. She sprung a leak, and began gradually to settle down in the water. The storm raged, and the terrible elements were only broken by the flashes of vivid lightning which illuminated the scene for a brief moment. When the morning broke the lake was smooth and tranquil, but to hear the shrill cry of the nightingale.

"DIANA'S MIRROR."

This is the popular union and blending by the peasants of Nemi of a mythological fable and an imperial legend of ancient Rome. Diana, the princess fond of hunting, in the legends of mythology, the goddess of the chase, to whom a famous temple was dedicated on the shores of Lake Nemi, which has been called from this fact, "Diana's Mirror." And that with a link of love, a distorted version of Diana's affection for the young shepherd Endymion, and associate both with the sunken barge, and with the incident of the elements of the legend of the lost ship in the Lake of Nemi.

Since October, when the new search was begun, a diver has been going down frequently. The place fixed upon for these explorations was that marked out by popular tradition. Here a series of very beautiful bronzes have been found. Their admirably workmanship and design are justly believed to mark them out as works belonging to the most flourishing period of Roman art.

RECENT FINDINGS.

The most recent explorations give reason to believe that it really is a barge which lies here. Beside it the gangway has been found formed of two great beams. Commentator Bernabei tells us that the framework of the keel has been found, and it covered with the original planking; between the ribs and external woodwork are placed sheets of lead, and a woven tissue dipped in a resinous material. The ribs and the beams of the decks are furnished with large heads of bronzes in the shape of the finest workmanship. Tiles of marble and thin slabs of porphyry and other stones of value compose the pavement.

The ship was connected with the shore by a passage-way or bridge built upon strong piles driven into the lake, furnished with a pavement similar to that already mentioned, and ornamented with bronze heads of animals. The whole ship lies buried in three diverse strata. The lowest point being in sand, is considered to be in a good state of preservation; the middle of the ship lies in mud and slime and the timbers are rotted to a certain degree; the upper part, which is water, has been cut, and is seriously damaged by the various attempts made in the last four centuries to bring up this sunken ship.

THE SHIP'S SIZE.

Commentator Bernabei also declares that the ship is 65 metres long by 12 wide; that is, about 212 feet in length by about 40 feet in width. The work of exploring it, and, indeed, of breaking it up on account of the immense difficulty and expense of obtaining it in one entire piece, goes on slowly but regularly. The people from the neighboring villages gather on the shore to wonder at the strange work of the diver, and they wait with curious expectation his return from the bottom of the lake. By this means, as slow as it is, it is expected that the mystery of this lost ship of Rome will be finally revealed.

The hull or mooring rings of bronze which have already been brought up, are grand specimens of antique art. One, a lion's head projecting from the end of the beam, is excellent. The mane is erect in tufts as if the beast were in anger or agony. In the open, growling mouth the mooring ring is attached.

A similar sort of object was seen in the old-fashioned door knockers, but the grand specimen is that of the lion's head. The artist who modeled this figure knew his lions well, and especially when they were aroused, and their features expressed their rage. The whole head is astonishingly life-like. A photograph of the head would show what it is difficult to describe in words.

Another similar ring is held in the mouth of a wolf, which is carved with remarkable mastery. The hungry eagerness of the face is expressed with great power. The accuracy of the artist is seen in the modeling of the hair around the neck and throat of the wolf.

A MEDUSA HEAD.

The head of a medusa, with a face in which unutterable woe appears, is another of the strange things brought from this sunken ship. The expression of great pain and of hatred in the eyes. The hair is tufted or matted as if with agony, but the separate locks have not yet turned all into snakes. The eyeballs are marked out by deep indentations. The ends of the well-defined lips are turned slightly down. Although the face is most impressive, all features on the countenance of pain and unrest, and of failure in the mind of Medusa which is disagreeable and haunting. The bronze of which these objects are formed is of a very fine quality. Regarding their preservation it suffices to say that every line of them is as crisp and sharp as if they but left the surface the day before yesterday.

These old remnants of forgotten things that have passed out of the ken of mankind for many generations furnish the men of today with a great lesson in art and faithfulness, both in the representation of the object portrayed and honesty in the material of which they are formed. The men who wrought these works were true to nature in art and faithful to their task in the endurance of their materials.

LIKE BARBARA ACES CASE

Case Where Dejected Testimony May Have Been Perjured.

Philadelphia, Dec. 30.—The story of Charles Atkinson, who is in the New Jersey state prison under a ten years sentence on the false testimony of his step-daughter, Mary Miller, found ready sympathy in Camden, where Atkinson has a good many friends. Prosecutor of the Pleas Wilson H. Jenkins could not recall the case yesterday but he will look up the facts today, and if he finds basis for the girl's confession, he will do all in his power to see that tardy justice is done the unfortunate.

A county official who attended Atkinson's trial, in July, 1894, said yesterday "I knew that the girl was lying when I heard her testify against her step-father." Her story was palpably impossible, for she gave details of the assault that any one with common sense could see were contradictory in themselves. If Atkinson had been properly represented by a lawyer I don't believe he would have been convicted.

It has been learned that Atkinson's wife, mother of the girl, was ready to testify at the trial, but was not called to the stand. She returned yesterday Atkinson's statement that he was not at home on the day the assault was said to have been committed.

In an interview in the state prison, Atkinson, alluding to some question of the circumstances surrounding his incarceration, he said: "The trouble began by the girl abusing her mother, and I told her that I would see that she was punished at Trenton. She afterwards said: 'You had better look out for you-

do not go to Trenton yourself.' I did not know then what she meant, but the next morning I was arrested. My trial was a picnic affair. My arrest was made without any warning, and my wife secured John W. Wartman as my counsel. My trial was called the last day of the term of court, when there seemed to be some particular hurry in trying to conclude the case, which my lawyer allowed to go before the jury without examining any of my witnesses. He said he had an engagement the next day and could not attend court, so he only examined me and let the case go to the jury. I had thirteen witnesses in court, but none were called. Mrs. Atkinson, the girl's mother, was present for the purpose of testifying, but she was not allowed to take the stand, and I was convicted on the unsubstantiated testimony of Mamie.

"Mamie's story was that while she was at home I committed the crime. My wife and her sister brother were ready to testify that she was not at home on the day that she swore the assault occurred. The next day she cried and said that she was sorry that she had had me arrested. This she told my wife, and she said that the story was not true. She then expressed a desire to tell the truth, but finally refused, because she was told that she would be sent to the state prison for perjury. "Mamie was committed to the county jail and bailed out by a man who kept a saloon near the house, and in whose house the girl spent much of her time frequently staying there for weeks at a time. The girl was good natured and not bad-hearted, and, until she got to running around generally showed some affection for me. What she did was owing to bad influences which surrounded her. My wife and I get along well together, and it was through her that Mamie was induced to tell the truth. I wrote her a letter asking her to tell all she knew, and to free me, which she finally promised to do.

A dispatch from Trenton, last night states that Governor Werts is strongly impressed with Mary Miller's confession, and he and Judge Tallman will recommend that Atkinson be granted a full pardon. As soon as the court has granted a pardon to Atkinson the Camden grand jury will probably be called upon to prosecute her for perjury. It is the sentiment of the officials of the state prison that Miss Miller should be punished. Her step-father, when seen in his cell at the state prison, said he would not prosecute his wayward daughter when he is released, unless he is compelled to do so by the court. At the Girls' Industrial school it was learned that Ephraim Cook, one of the managers, was first told of the confession of Miss Miller yesterday.

This was about four months ago. It was also learned that none of the girls at the school were allowed to read the Barbara Ace story and that the confession of Miss Miller was a sensation of the officials long before that incident.

Rev. George C. Maddock, chaplain of the state prison, and of the board of managers of the Industrial school, has at different times interviewed both the girl and the father at the prison. He is much impressed with the girl's story and believes that she is simply anxious to right a wrong. He is convinced that the religious influence of the institution have influenced Miss Miller to tell the truth.

ALONG THE NORTH PLATE New Feeder to the Union Pacific is Projected in Nebraska.

Omaha, Neb., Dec. 28.—A new line of railroad, to run from North Platte in a northerly direction to the Wyoming line, along the North Platte valley is the subject of a conference today between W. F. Cody, Judge William Neville, Judge H. M. Grimes and Mayor O'Rourke of North Platte, M. A. Dougherty and John Brotherton of Ogallala, and Mr. Kerr of New York, and a committee of the Commercial club. The route, if built, will cross Lincoln, Kimball, Deuel, Kearney, and Grant counties and be a feeder for the Union Pacific, opening up a vast and successfully irrigated country to the trade of Omaha. The project interested the project and its friends confidently expect that buying right-of-way will begin in about six weeks. The ultimate destination of the road will be Grand Junction, Wyo.

All science rests on a basis of faith. For it assumes the permanence and uniformity of natural laws.—Tryon Edwards.

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

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