

The Cause of Many of the Iron Chancellor's Troubles.

Although But Little Known to the Outside World the Princess is a Power Among German Nobles—Her Antipathy for the Emperor.

Bismarck's sorrows are crowding hard upon him. These last years of his life are not happy ones.

What few people know is that Princess Bismarck is in reality responsible for many of his misfortunes. The outside world is almost unconscious that she exists, for she keeps in the background, but when she does speak she is likely to show little of that diplomacy which has made her husband famous.

The occasion will be well remembered—indeed it can never be forgotten—by those who were privileged to be the guests of the princess at his official farewell reception. There were present several members of the cabinet (among them poor Von Bötticher, who had been forced to act all along as a buffer between emperor and chancellor and who not seldom got abused on both sides), the whole staff of the foreign office and a large number of dignitaries of state.

Bismarck was unusually silent and apparently in a mood of grief rather than resentment. The princess, on the other hand, was almost beside herself with rage. She exclaimed in a loud voice: "It was I who advised my husband to bear no longer with the emperor's petty interferences in matters which he does not understand. But to accept my husband's resignation was an act of infamy which the knave shall repay to me. He shall recall my husband on his knees. To dare to treat Germany's greatest man like that! Woe upon him!"

The word translated for want of better interpretation with knave was "Bube," the most offensive term in the German language if applied in the sense of anger to a man, and the threat against the emperor was conveyed by the following words: "Das soll mir der Bube büssen."

There was a moment of awful silence and then followed a stampede led by the ministers, who rushed out of the palace as if a pestilence were upon them, and in an incredibly short time the Bismarck family found themselves alone in the brilliantly lighted saloons. I do not believe anybody has dared to repeat the princess' dreadful words of import to the emperor, though, no doubt, the fact of something very shocking having been said by the princess was probably reported to his majesty. When people talk of the mere possibility of a reconciliation between the emperor and Bismarck they are ignorant of the conditions under which they parted.

Many men have, after all, been more unfortunate than Bismarck. He has been well paid; no statesman ever better. He has been raised from the obscurity of a Pomeranian "Krautjunker" with an incumbered estate and only enough worldly possessions to give him a bare living to the dignity of a prince of the empire and the duke of Lauenburg, endowed with a magnificent estate in the Sachsenwald, the ancestral estate of Schonhausen, purchased for him by the nation, and the estate of Varzin, clear of mortgages. To put it in plain figures, Prince Bismarck enjoys now a competency closely estimated at fifty thousand pounds a year, and, better than all, he is still the idol of a large part of Germany's population.

INATTENTIVE HOUSE MEMBERS.

A New York Congressman Thinks Their Writing Desks Should Be Taken Away.

"There is but one way in which this can be made a decent legislative body," said a member from New York to a Washington Post reporter as he surveyed the house and heard one man speaking while one hundred and sixty-six others chewed gum or rustled papers, "and that way is to take from the members their desks. They should be given no opportunity to write while legislative business is on tap. If placed upon straight, hard benches with nothing to do save talk or listen they would know more of what is going on. Long, long ago the English realized this fact. In the house of commons there is never disturbance of any kind unless an extremely heated and factional debate is on. Everybody in the chamber hears what the man who has the right of way is saying. If the members wish to write or read the newspapers or swap yarns that used to be funny many years ago they go into a room provided for that purpose. I am not such of an Anglomaniac myself. In fact, I think that cockney immigration ought to be permanently barred. But there are things other than trousers that we might copy from England and be nothing the worse for it."

A Bright Lad.

There is one Belfast (Me.) youth who will make a general some day, if he properly develops his natural traits as they appear at present. He is but three years and eight months old, but showed engineering skill in getting out of a scrape last week that few big boys would have equalled. While at play in a camp with some other boys he was accidentally locked in, and his comrades all went off to school. Finding himself a prisoner, instead of sitting down and crying our young hero first built up the articles in the room until he could reach a window, which he promptly smashed. Next he threw out the various articles which he could lift until the pile outside was within safe dropping distance from the window, when he climbed out and dropped to the pile. He was nearly two hours doing the work, but says he wasn't going to take any chances of breaking his neck by jumping from that high window.

Much More Valuable Than the Bullocks Which Have Hitherto Been Employed. Although the camel proved unsatisfactory for use as a beast of burden in the mining regions of Nevada and Arizona, the animal is coming into favor and profitable use in mining countries in other parts of the world. It seems probable to the Mining Industry that in South Africa the camel will take the place of the horse for most uses, as the camel is not injured by the insects which prove fatal to the horse and the bullocks, nor is it attacked by the diseases that destroy other beasts of burden. The Germans are already making great use of the camels in southwest Africa. They are found to be very valuable for making long journeys into arid interior regions of the country, as they are able to travel a whole week without water or food. In Australia the camel is fast taking the place of bullocks for use in the barren interior regions. It is stated that there are already opened up and in regular work in Australia five lines of camel traffic, and that on these lines over two thousand camels are in daily use. Camels are found to be so useful that the number employed will be increased as rapidly as possible. With bullock teams only about ten miles a day can be made, but it is found that the camel will travel eighty-four miles in eight hours, carrying a load of three hundred pounds. In the interior of Australia are over one million square miles of almost unknown desert, and it is on the great inland plains that it is intended to utilize the camel trains, as by their use the various oases of civilization may be more directly connected than by the old bullock routes. On the arid plains and among the mud flats and braided lakes the camel finds plenty of coarse grass and thorny shrubs on which to subsist. It is claimed that work can be found in Australia for one million camels.

SPOILED BY A CORPSE.

How a French Peasant Failed to Enjoy the Carnival.

Mardi Gras was spent in woeful fashion by a peasant who had come up from a village near Melun to Paris for a day to witness carnival merrymaking on the boulevard, says the London Telegraph. He was lunching in a wine shop and recruiting his strength with a view to a whole afternoon of sight-seeing, when a workman entered the restaurant where he was seated and asked to be conducted to a hospital, as he had suddenly been taken ill.

At the landlord's suggestion the peasant generously offered the sick man a place in the cab he had hired, with the intention of seeing the fete as thoroughly and comfortably as possible. His errand of mercy would, he thought, take him at most half an hour, but during the journey the workman became worse and died. At the hospital the unlucky peasant was kept waiting an hour, and finally told that it was impossible to take in a corpse. He drove off with his lugubrious charge to the nearest police station. Here he again met with refusal, and was dispatched off to the police commissariat of the Belleville quarter.

It was six o'clock before the unfortunate countryman could get rid of his melancholy burden, and he had then just time enough left to get to his train at the Lyons railway station. He had not as much as caught a glimpse of the masks and confetti he had come all the way from his native village to see.

OUR FORESTS.

Statistics Disprove the Rumors That They Are Disappearing.

According to some facts and figures presented by Henry Gannett in a recent issue in the New York Sun there is to-day nearly if not quite as great an area of woodland in the United States as when the white man set foot on our shore. There are not so many square miles of merchantable timber now as then, but the territory occupied by growing trees is about as extensive as it was four hundred years ago, and these trees will in time grow to a size suitable for the production of lumber. Some of Mr. Gannett's statements are quite inconsistent with the general belief that American forests are giving out. He says, for instance, that only about two hundred and seventy thousand square miles or less than one-tenth the area of the country, is artificially cleared land, while to offset this loss there has in recent years been great extension of wooded land in the prairie states as well as in some of the natural tree-growing states. A table is published showing the total area and the wooded area of each state, the figures having been obtained from reports of the census and agricultural departments, from official surveys and in a few cases from careful estimates. As a grand result it is shown that the wooded area in the United States, excluding Alaska, is nearly one million one hundred and thirteen thousand one square miles.

Beecher's Favorite Story.

A correspondent of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat relates what he declares was Henry Ward Beecher's favorite story, which he never tired of telling. It may have been told before. It was the story of a traveling man who went to church one Sunday and fell asleep during the services. After the preacher finished his discourse he requested all those who wished to go to heaven to please stand up, and all arose but the traveling man. An old lady in sitting down accidentally brushed up against the traveling man and woke him up. Just then the preacher said: "All those that wish to go to hell please stand up," and the traveling man, scarcely awake and not knowing what the audience was doing, stood up. He looked around in a half-dazed way and saw no one else but the minister standing, but he finally said: "Parson, I don't know what you are voting on, but you and I seem to be in a hopeless minority."

Evidence of Subterranean Convolutions Among the Mountains of Pennsylvania. The curious phenomenon formerly exciting the wonder of people living in the vicinity of Thick Head and Sand mountains, south of Tusseyville, Center county, Pa., which has not been noticed for five years, has made its presence known again. For twelve years, at irregular intervals, the dwellers in that part of Center county had been disturbed by loud and mysterious noises which came from the ground between the two mountains named. In the spring of 1888 these noises were heard daily, with increased volume, for a week. The noises, according to the Chicago Herald, were sometimes like the rumble of distant thunder and then like the deadened crash of thunder heard in the air close by. On the seventh day of this protracted disturbance beneath these two mountains a resident of Tusseyville was climbing Thick Head mountain, when the rumbling began in the mountain opposite. At first it was deep and low, and it increased in violence until it became as the tumult of a mass of rock rolling down a mountain side. The person who heard the sounds said that they convinced him that they were caused by a subterranean avalanche, as it began at the very top of the mountain, increasing in violence and speed as it went down, and terminating in a terrible crash at the bottom.

After that day the Thick Head noises ceased, and were not heard again until a week ago, when they began just as they had terminated in a similar subterranean land or rock slide, except that this time the hidden avalanche occurred somewhere in the depth of Thick Head mountain, instead of in Sand mountain. In Potter county, Pa., between Koutelet and Burtville, is a hill in which rumblings of the same nature are heard at irregular intervals. This elevation is called Thunder hill, and it rises from the south bank of the Allegheny river. The noises that occur in this hill sometimes make the earth tremble for a long distance around, and they have been heard for a mile away. The theory of local savants is that a strong vein of natural gas underlies the hill, and that when the great retort is disturbed by some underground convulsion it rises in its might and tumbles rocks and things around in the confines of the hill until everything hums. Still no one has confidence enough in this theory to hand out the money that is being asked for to send a drill down into the alleged gas cauldron, let out its treasure and make everybody in that bailiwick rich.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

No Trace of Wreckage in the Deepest of the Ocean's Depths.

An extraordinary circumstance that has been noticed with interest and that always creates surprise when first learned is the entire absence of foreign matter in the deepest part of the ocean's floor. Of all the vessels lost in mid-ocean; of all the human beings that have been drowned; of all the marine animals that have perished; of all the clay, sand and gravel let fall by dissolving leeches; of all the various substances drifted from every shore by shifting currents, no trace remains, but in their place water from one thousand to twenty-five hundred fathoms in depth covers the uniform deposit of thick, bluish, tenacious slime called globigerina ooze, says the Cosmopolitan Magazine.

A bit of this under a powerful lens is declared to be a revelation of beauty not readily forgotten. The ooze is composed almost entirely of the finest, most delicately beautiful shells imaginable. At depths greater than twenty-five hundred fathoms the bottom of the sea consists mainly of product arising from exposure, for almost insensible periods, to the chemical action of sea water, of pumice and other volcanic matters.

This finally results in the formation of red clay deposits that are considered characteristic of the profoundest depths of the ocean. Carbonate of lime, which in the form of shells of foraminifera makes up so large a part of the globigerina ooze, is here almost entirely absent. Soda water is very nearly a universal solvent, and before any shell, large or small, reaches the bottom of these tremendous abysses it is chemically eaten up, liberally dissolved—a result which the enormous pressure of the water must materially hasten.

At one thousand fathoms the weight of the water pressure on all sides of an object immersed to that depth is very nearly one ton to the square inch, or more than one hundred times that sustained at the sea level, and at the greatest depth the pressure is so increased that it would seem nothing could withstand it; in fact, heavy metal cylinders let down with the sounding apparatus are sometimes, on being drawn up again to the surface, found bent and collapsed; strongly-made glass vessels which the metal inclosed are shattered into fragments.

EVERY SEVEN YEARS.

A Curious Belief in regard to Physical Regeneration.

It is surprising how many people believe that the entire body of a man is renewed every seven years exactly, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. This used to be taught in books, and, although not orthodox now, is still accepted as gospel by many. To show its inaccuracy one has only to hit a nail on his finger hard enough, for in that case the injured object will come off and be replaced by an entirely new nail.

If this process occupied seven years such an accident would be a very tiresome affair, but, as any mechanic will tell you, it occupies a few weeks. The growth is more rapid in summer than winter, but never taking more than four months. So far as the nails are concerned, then, the renewal process is repeated about twenty-one times during the regular seven years, and the theory is thus destroyed, even if no other proof of its fallacy were forthcoming.

An Exciting Sport Which is Pursued in Darkness. Mr. Kirk Munroe describes in the Cosmopolitan a canoe trip in company with two young Seminole Indians, Micochee and Kowika, who were engaged in their regular occupation of hunting alligators for their hides. The canoe was a dugout, made by Micochee himself out of a huge cypress log. The trio made camp late in the afternoon, and after awhile Mr. Munroe discovered what he had not before suspected—that the hunting was to be done at night.

Darkness had hardly fallen before the bellowing of alligators was heard—a sound much like the roar of an angry bull. Micochee stepped with evident satisfaction. "Allapatta plenty, Mico catch 'em, Uneh!"

We had killed five of the monsters when we turned our prow up stream. Micochee waded his push pole from the stern, Kowika sat in the middle of the canoe, while I, with jack light on my head and rifle in hand, occupied the position of honor in the bow.

The alligators had ceased their mutterings and I had begun to think that we had killed or frightened them all. Just then I was startled by a slight motion on the bank but a few yards away. At the same instant two coils of fire glimmered through the blackness. What could they be? I was about to speak, when a sharp "hiss" from behind told me that the moment for action had come. Taking a hasty aim at one of the lurid coils, I fired.

VETERANS PASSING AWAY.

In Forty Years There Will Be Few Survivors of the Civil War.

Interesting in connection with the department encampment is the report of the medical director, Dr. J. R. Hayes, in part as follows, says the Washington Post:

"Our annual death rate equals 2.75 per cent. of the whole number in the Grand Army Republic in this department. This is equivalent to death rate of twenty-seven in a thousand, a larger death rate than usually pertains to any given number of people. Our band of nearly 4,000 is being rapidly mustered out, and if we apply the simple rules of arithmetic, and provided that we recruit no more, in the year 1929 not one of our 4,000 would be alive to tell the story of the past.

"We are dying faster than any other class of our population, because out of the 4,000 in our organization more than one-half are daily suffering from loss of limbs, from wounds, injuries and disabilities contracted during the war. Results of prison-life and the exposure and deprivation incident thereto now cause more suffering than the bullet. Loss of a limb shortens the life, but the rheumatism and scurvy contracted in prison also yearly call for their premature victims. Premature aging of all the organs, diminished vital resistance to all disturbing causes, and more especially diseases of the heart, now so alarmingly present with many surviving comrades, are mainly due to the rheumatism and scurvy of prison life.

"I have never seen a survivor from the prison at Andersonville, Ga., that did not have disease of heart in some form or other. So, taking our little band of 4,000 to-day, in about forty years all who have lost limbs or been seriously wounded or suffered the hardships and horrors of prison life will have passed away."

HIS MOTHER'S BIBLE.

The Book on Which President Cleveland Took the Oath of Office.

Among the relics stored away in the clerk's office of the supreme court of the United States, writes a Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Times, is a handsome morocco-covered Bible of large octavo size. It is the Bible that was purchased eight years ago to administer the oath of office to President Cleveland at his inauguration on March 4. It had been the invariable custom before the inauguration of Mr. Cleveland to purchase a Bible for use at the inauguration ceremony and to present this interesting memento afterward to some member of the president's family. Following this custom, the clerk purchased a Bible to use in the inauguration of President Cleveland, but Mr. Cleveland notified the committee of arrangements of the senate that he wished to take the oath on the Bible given to him by his mother when, as a young man, he started out in the world to make his fortune. The committee naturally respected this sentiment of the president-elect and so Mr. Cleveland took the oath on his mother's Bible. It was a small book, morocco bound and gilt-edged. So far as is known here, Mr. Cleveland still has the book, and in the belief that it will be used at the coming ceremony the clerk of the supreme court has not purchased a Bible to be used on that occasion. It was planned four years ago to use the Bible purchased in 1883 at the ceremony of 1889; but after considering the matter the clerk determined to purchase another Bible for Mr. Harrison.

Engineering Skill.

Speaking of the remarkable feats of marine engineers, the Marine Journal recalls the achievement of Richard Peck, who at one time had charge of the single engine of the old City of Vera Cruz coming up from Havana. South of Hatteras the piston rod went to smash, breaking into three pieces. But Peck, after twenty-four hours of continuous labor, actually mended that piston so that it was strong and true enough to do its part with the rest of the machinery, and he brought his ship into New York harbor steaming six knots. This was a deed which, in the opinion of the Boston Journal, quite eclipses even the recent notable performance of Engineer Tomlinson, of the Umbria.

High-priced Food. A recent visitor in San Francisco gives the Call a graphic account of the prices current for ordinary commodities on the upper Yukon river.

According to the Call, just returned from that country, where, he says, there were over one hundred men working during the last summer season, gold from the river bars and nuggets, the majority of them will winter in that country, and he has but one thing to show after a season of hard work.

"I'll tell you, I am glad to get so civilized again," he said. "It is plentiful; in fact it is an ordinary thing for a man to wash out from a day to sixty dollars a day, but a man gets all that to live anyway compared in that country, and he has but one thing to show after a season of hard work."

When I left that country a trader had a small stock of goods was making money up the river from some of the trading points in a canoe. In the canoe had several of them loaded with goods. He was assisted in his journey by half a dozen Indians.

Well, when he left, after selling out his goods, he had about all the gold and silver the miners had washed out in four months of steady work.

A man short of provisions, and had no money to buy more and other game that we will largely parted with all we had to get some civilized supplies.

Well, this trader—his name was Erasmus—sold the several sacks of spuds and with him at the rate of from thirty to fifty cents per potato.

The flour sold for twenty dollars a sack, and we were just glad enough to get the dollars a pound for the very best quality of tea he had with him.

He had several sides of bacon in his canoe, which he disposed of at about one dollar a slice. A few sacks of the dried bean brought one dollar a sack.

He had been out of tobacco for nearly two months, and had drawn but little since out of pipefuls of dried leaves and stems. When this fellow appeared to us, we gave him our hearts' desire for and gave him ounces of gold for pipefuls of tobacco. An ounce of gold brings sixteen dollars in Alaska and nineteen dollars at the mint here.

"We bought a hundredweight of onions, for which we were assessed six ounces of gold.

"I tell you what, we poured out the dust upon that fellow Lamons, and he had to take it. I don't think I would like to take the contract to pack it from here to the city hall.

"You must not think from this appalling price list that we were starving to death. We had plenty of game and fish, but that kind of grub falls on the appetite."

The "boys," however, appear to have made money on the Yukon river bars. Mr. Miles states that all of them have "stacks," and he came down to Victoria with several of them who had "cleaned up" from twelve thousand dollars to twenty-eight thousand dollars apiece.

TERRE DONNE'S SALAMMDO.

Wonderful Snake Charming by an Old Negro—Voodoo Woman in Louisiana.

Avowed negress of great repute as a "voodoo," or witch doctor, among the negroes of this section, writes a correspondent from Terre Bonne, La., according to the Chicago Times, attracting much attention, not only from those of her own color, but from the more intelligent portion of the community, and the way in which she does this is to apparently swallow a number of small snakes of a variety unknown in this section. They are of a dusky color, nearly black, pided with a dull green about the fat head, and of a dirty white in the belly. These reptiles remain secreted about old Nance's cabin until she gives a peculiar whistling call, when they will come to her, wriggling in great haste over the floor, up her dress, and run into her open mouth, hissing hideously. They disappear and remain hidden sometimes for minutes. She asserts that they are concocted in her stomach until she recalls them, when they will come pouring out to writhe about her scraggy neck and coil in her bosom.

Where the snakes really go when they vanish in her mouth is a mystery and has puzzled all the physicians about, many having come from New Orleans to witness the phenomenon. Some really believe that the snakes do go down into the stomach, while others are convinced the witch is simply playing some sleight-of-hand trick on them, but if the latter is the case it is so cleverly done that there is no detecting the performance.

The witch presents a most extraordinary and hideous appearance sitting with the snakes darting their fat heads in and out of her toothless mouth, with their little bead-like eyes snapping as if in fury all about their mistress. As nearly as they can be counted there are six or seven of these reptiles, though old Nance says there are many more, but they are all so much of a size and color that they cannot be identified. They are probably of a harmless nature, though old Nance declares they are highly poisonous and no one wishes to experiment with them.

Epsy Old Nance People.

Maine is noted for her hair and spry old people. Epsy, of Garsden, in Lewiston, eighty-five years old, is an active rider and driver of fast horses, of which his stables contain twenty-three fine animals. Mrs. Jonathan Dow, of Deer Isle, eighty years old, has knitted forty pairs of stockings and woven two hundred yards of rag carpeting and one hundred yards of cloth during the past season in old moments snatched from her general housework and the care of a flock of hens. Mrs. Joanna Barker, of West Trenton, eighty-seven years old, has just finished a waistcoat which she cut and made without the use of shears. Mr. Robbins, also of Deer Isle, is seventy-six, and last year, besides doing much repairing to sledges, he made all the woodwork for sleighs, one jigger, a double-seated sleigh and a horse sled.

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