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VOL. XXX. NO. 13. ELLICOTT CITY, MD., SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1899. SINGLE COPIES, 5 CENTS.

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A CITY HEWN IN SALT.

WONDROUS SIGHTS IN THE FAMOUS WIELICZKA MINES.

A Magnificent Ballroom, Chapels and Shrine and a Giant Chamber With a Natural Chandelier—Lakes of Deathlike Silence.

It would take at least three weeks to visit every portion of the marvelous salt city of Wieliczka, the center of the salt industry of Polish Austria. Men have worked in its hollows for centuries, leaving it as a legacy to posterity. Horses have been brought to life and died there without seeing the light of day. It is silent and dark, except when the voices of people echo through its countless tortuous halls and the candle of the guide or flash of the roman light discovers its massive and glittering wonders. It is a city hewn in salt.

The mines are under the direct control of the Austro-Hungarian minister of finance. Here the wonders spoken about may be seen as they have been seen by people for nearly 1,000 years. During that time the skilled hand of the laborer in the Wieliczka salt mines has been at work turning the depths of darkness into a realm of beauty. It has created ballrooms, chapels, altars, statues, restaurants, railways, chandeliers, staircases, pillars and thrones in the bowels of the earth, and the grandeur of these has excited the admiration of the world. The mines date back to 1044 and now have a length of over 2¾ miles.

Almost blinded by darkness and frightened by the eerie echo of his own footsteps, the visitor first enters some colossal chamber hollowed out by the laborer in the ordinary course of mining after a plan laid down by some master mind. He almost loses himself in the expanse of the Letow ballroom, which, with its mural decoration, illuminated galleries, stalwart pillars and shining chandeliers, is indeed a fit and welcome chamber for lovers of the dance. In its history, which dates back to 1750, when it was dedicated to Letowski, the chief of the mines at that time, it has witnessed many remarkable gatherings. These have taken place on royal visits or for the entertainment of distinguished guests. One end of the room is adorned with a colossal Austrian eagle and with transparencies painted on slabs of salt. In an alcove at the other end of the room stands a throne of green, the crystals of which flash a green and ruby red. It is on this that the emperor sits when he comes to the mines.

From the scene of gayety and splendor it is but a step to the home of quietude and prayer. Here, off one of the main passages, is the noted St. Anthony's chapel, the resort of thousands of the devout since it was hewn in 1698. The vestibule to this chapel contains a symmetrical archway, with figures at the sides. The interior is beautified by an altar showing the crucifixion, and on the steps of the altar are the forms of two kneeling monks. On the sides of the chapel may be seen smaller altars and statues of saints. Many times each year the priests of the district perform their pious duties in this simple chapel.

It is not at all strange that the religious feeling of olden times should be reflected in the chambers and passages through which we are now in imagination passing. Hard by St. Anthony's chapel the torch of the guide illuminates a magnificent shrine and archway hewn in one of the passages. Again, as we move along, we see figures of saints in attitude of prayer and a few minor rooms which we pass hurriedly through bear the names of martyrs. The queen's chapel, with its magnificent altar, carved with expert skill in solid salt, contains on one of its sides a view of Bethlehem. As we turn from it the beautiful chandelier in the chapel catches our eye and makes us marvel that such a delicate conception with so many pendant chains of white should have so long resisted the wear and tear of time. When illuminated, as it often is, the chandelier, with its myriad lights, is indeed beautiful to see.

The descent from the first to the second story is made on a long series of steps of solid salt. At the foot of this remarkable staircase the sightseer is fascinated by a beautiful sight. The giant chamber "Michalowice" lies before him—vast, fearsome and stupendous—finished in 1761, after 40 years of daily labor. Its measures 59 feet long, 92 feet broad and 118 feet high, the roof being supported by a wooden framework to avoid disaster. In the interior a salt chandelier of 300 lights gleams brilliantly on the rugged sides of this imposing room. When musicians play here, the volume of sound rolls and reverberates with deafening effect against the solid confines of the chamber, and, rushing upward, bursts with mighty power against the faroff dome.

The third floor of this marvelous mine contains the railway station and restaurant, attracting the visitor by its long vista of latticed galleries and ponderous pillars and its promise of refreshment after a long and weary tramp on unyielding floors; for here at this railway station, where the 25 miles of railways from all parts of the mine join, a tempting buffet exists the summer through, and is well patronized by the thousands who come from Austria, Russia and Germany to view the wondrous works of salt.

The mine is indeed full of many marvels, but the most marvelous of all—at least the one which makes the most impression on the visitor—is the subterranean lake, lying 700 feet below the surface of the earth. The waters on the lake are dark, thick and heavy, and as the boat glides over its face the spreading waters roll up against the sides of the grotto with a ghostlike swish. A ponderous solitude overweighs all. The Styx alone of all the deathlike streams in legend could rival this in stillness. The boat is guided through the Stephanie and Rudolf grottoes by ropes running on pulleys along the sides of the boat. There are 14 of these lakes in different parts of the mine, but this is the only one upon which visitors are allowed to go. The trip across and back takes 15 or 20 minutes, as the boat moves slowly through the sluggish brine. A gun shot off in the middle of the lake makes a long and lingering echo and the voice of the boatman, as he calls out that all is ready, seems like the voice of a giant from the depths of chaos.

The lower stories of the mine are occupied by over a thousand miners, who working eight hours a day each, manage in the course of a year to produce 65,000 tons of salt. They toil patiently, cutting their way through the solid salt, leaving beautiful passages heavily covered with a crust sparkling white.—Strand Magazine.

Tame Deer Are Dangerous.

The tameness of the deer in the Duke of Bedford's grounds is very remarkable. Except the acclimatized Japanese from Powerscourt and elsewhere, they are wild creatures, caught in distant islands and continents, from the Moluccas and Formosa to the Altai mountains or the swamps of Canada, yet the difficulty is to keep them wild enough. It is always dangerous to allow stags to become tame and familiar. If they lose their fear of man, they are liable to become dangerous at certain seasons and attack persons in a park or keepers as savagely as they do their own kind, consequently all familiarity has to be discouraged at other seasons when the deer are most anxious to be friendly. With the hinds this is not necessary, and their confidence is very pretty and engaging.—Spectator.

HE OBEYED ORDERS.

A Young Recruit's Rapid Rise to Title and Power.

One day a young recruit was standing guard before the door of the entrance to Peter the Great's private chambers in the Palace of St. Petersburg. He had received orders to admit no one.

As he was passing slowly up and down before the door, Prince Menschikoff, the favorite minister of the czar, approached and attempted to enter. He was stopped by the recruit.

The prince, who had the fullest liberty of calling upon his master at any time, sought to push the guard and pass him. Yet the young man would not move, but ordered his highness to stand back.

"You idiot!" shouted the prince. "Don't you know me? You'll be punished for this!"

The recruit smiled and said:

"Very well, your highness, but my orders are peremptory to let nobody pass."

The prince, exasperated at the fellow's impudence, struck him a blow in the face with his riding whip.

"Strike away, your highness," said the soldier, "but I cannot let you go in."

Peter in the room, hearing the noise outside, opened the door, and inquired what it meant, and the prince told him.

The czar appeared amused, but said nothing at the time.

In the evening, however, he sent for the prince and the soldier. As they both appeared Peter gave his own cane to the soldier, saying:

"That man struck you in the morning; now you must return the blow to that fellow with my stick."

The prince was amazed. "Your majesty," he said, "this common soldier is to strike me?"

"I make him a captain," said Peter.

"But I'm an officer of your majesty's household," objected the prince.

"I make him a colonel of my Life Guards and an officer of the household,' said Peter again.

"My rank, your majesty knows, is that of general," again protested Menschikoff.

"Then I make him a general, so that the beating you get may come from a man of your rank."

The prince got a sound thrashing in the presence of the czar, and the recruit, who was next day commissioned a general with a title, was the founder of a powerful family whose descendants are still high in the imperial service of Russia.

A JOKE ON THE PROFESSOR.

A Conspiracy of Silence That Threw Loomis Into a Panic.

The late Professor Elias Loomis for many years occupied the chair of astronomy at Yale and was the author of the well known series of mathematical textbooks. The truth of the following story on the professor can be vouched for by a number of Yale men:

Professor Loomis repeated each year to the junior class a course of lectures on physics. The lectures were illustrated by experiments, and in one on compressed air he explained the principle of the well known airgun.

The students of each succeeding class as they entered the room for this particular lecture found on the side of the room remote from the platform a small target. After explaining the operation of the gun Professor Loomis was in the habit of landing three of its projectiles with mathematical accuracy in the center of the bullseye.

The professor was always applauded for this feat, but his grim face, covered by a tightly drawn skin of parchment hue, never showed the slightest sign of gratification or recognition of any kind. To him it was apparently only a scientific experiment to be exactly demonstrated.

One class of juniors, however, who had learned of the immemorial incident from the then seniors, attempted a little experiment of their own, the subject being mathematical and scientific human nature.

Three puffs from the airgun, and although the students saw that the bullseye was perforated as usual there was not a sound of applause. Professor Loomis looked a moment at the class in a startled way, then at the target, and then, with a degree of emotion he had never before shown, exclaimed:

"Didn't it hit? Didn't it hit? Didn't it hit?"

A roar of laughter, followed by even more than the usual applause, showed the professor that he had not lost his mathematical accuracy.

The Horrors of Tea Smoking.

The Medical Press and Circular seems to hint that the latest fashionable wickedness is to take one's tea in the form of cigarettes. Judging, however, from what our medical contemporary says of the vice, it hardly seems likely to become general. The first sensation, it appears, though peculiar, is not as unpleasant as might be supposed, but this condition of qualified beatitude does not last long. Then comes "a thickening of the head and a disposition to take hold of something or to sit down." If the novice perseveres, he or she may be next rewarded with a feeling of exhilaration, intense, but of very brief duration.

But the after effects, our contemporary solemnly avers, are too dreadful for contemplation even by a medical commentator, and it takes many hours before the beginner even begins to revive. A dustpan and a broom seem to be the only things then required for removing the smoker.

Hard on the Author.

The author wanted some reading, and he sought out an unfamiliar shop. Unfortunately he was a facetious author. There were people who thought him rather proud of himself. At any rate, he thought he would be recognized anywhere, because his portrait had appeared with some frequency in the periodical press. So when, after he had chosen several works of fiction by other writers, the salesman handed him a copy of his own latest book he winked drolly at the man behind the counter and pushed the book away from him in mock disgust.

"For heaven's sake, no!" he cried. "I can't read that man's stuff."

"Well, to tell you the truth," said the salesman solemnly, "I can't either."

The Difference of a Letter.

A man recently left a widower, when arranging for his late wife's tombstone, gave orders that the lettering should be of a stated size. At the bottom of the stone he wished to have the words, "Lord, She Was Thine." The stonemason said he was afraid there would not be room for the words, but the bereaved widower insisted, and the carving was put in hand. The correctness of the mason's view was justified, for when the stone was finished at the foot of the tablet were the words, "Lord, She Was Thin."

An Old House.

The oldest inhabited house in England stands close to the river Ver and about 250 yards from St. Albans abbey. It was built in the time of King Offa of Mercia, about the year 795. It is of octagonal shape, the upper portion being of oak, and the lower has walls of great thickness.

A Common Complaint.

He—Yes, she is living under an assumed name.

She—Horrible! What is it?

He—The one she assumed immediately after her husband married her.—Syracuse Herald.

AFTER MIDDLE AGE.

The Things That Should Be Done to Prolong Life.

The causes that prolong life beyond middle age are some of them beyond the control of the individual. The inheritance of sound organs from a rugged ancestry is an example of this kind.

Yet it is easy for one of middle age to precipitate prematurely the season of old age, while, on the other hand, a reasonable modification of the habits of life may long extend the period of active usefulness. The man of advancing years should continue to indulge in bodily exercise, but in moderation and not immediately after meals.

Less food should be eaten as the "fires more slowly burn," if one would avoid premature old age. The act of eating should be more slowly performed, and even an occasional indulgence to excess in the pleasures of the table should be avoided.

The sage of Concord, whose philosophy was practical as well as "transcendental," found in late life "little food and often" to be the safe rule. A well known American physician considers it of benefit to miss a meal occasionally. The number of meals should be less rather than greater, he believes, and "red" meat should be eaten in great moderation—not more than once a day. It will be seen that the philosopher and the physician are at one in this—that less food is needed after middle age. At any age intemperate eating rather than intemperate drinking is the common sin against bodily health.

In regard to the use of alcoholic stimulants as conservators of vitality, it must be said that they have no value as such. If used at all, it must be in small quantities and well diluted with hot water, and even so they generally do harm rather than good. Hot water is in itself a stimulant of no mean value, and to those addicted to the practice of slowly sipping a glassful once or twice a day it has proved to be in every respect beneficial.

It may be said that the watery element of hot tea, which few condemn if properly made, commonly receives too little share of credit.

Unnecessary worry is sometimes indulged in because but few hours of sleep are possible in later life. Less work requires less sleep, and physical labor requires more sleep than mental work. On the other hand, long hours of sleep, combined with heavy eating, directly promote early old age.

Sensible rules of hygiene and temperate living in its broad sense tend to increase the enjoyments of life as well as the length of it. The cultivation of the habit of avoiding worry, while not usually included among hygienic rules, is hardly exceeded in importance by any other.

Cheerfulness and hopefulness are among the physician's most valuable allies. Not only are they sometimes decisive in critical stages of disease, but they have a direct and constant influence in postponing the weakness and decay which come with advancing years.—Youth's Companion.

HIS SORROW WAS IMMENSE.

But Not Too Great to Keep Him From Talking Business.

The following letter was recently received by the manager of a large German insurance company:

DEAR SIR—It is with deep sorrow that I take the pen to inform you that my dear wife, Annie Marie, nee Lindner, insured with you—you will find the number in your index—for the sum of marks 3,000, has died suddenly, leaving me in this world in the bitterest despair. This painful blow befell me this very day at 7 o'clock in the morning. Will you try to get for me the amount insured as quickly as possible? The policy bears No. 21762. I can say very seriously and very sincerely that she was a faithful wife and an accomplished mother. So that matters may proceed more rapidly I send you herewith an official certificate of her death.

Her illness has been very short; nevertheless she suffered very much, which rendered my sorrow the more intense.

I trust that you will help me in consoling myself by sending me very promptly the aforesaid amount, especially after having received my formal promise—and I make it to you this very moment—that when the time comes I shall insure my second wife for marks 6,000, double the amount of insurance of the defunct.

My sorrow is immense. However, the prospect that you will hasten to satisfy me sustains me in this terrible trial. In the hope that I shall soon receive the amount insured, I and my children pray you to accept, etc.

—Cote Europienne.

Sumner and Felton.

In the days of their great intimacy a certain grotesqueness of taste in Sumner made him the object of some good natured banter on the part of the other "Mutuals," says Mrs. Julia Ward Howe in The Atlantic. It was related that on a certain Fourth of July he had given his office boy, Ben, a small gratuity and had advised him to pass the day at Mount Auburn, where he would be able to enjoy quiet and profitable meditation.

Felton was especially merry over this incident, but he in turn furnished occasion for laughter when on a visit to New York in company with the same friends. A manservant whom they had brought with them was ordered to carry Felton's valise to the Astor House. This was before the days of the baggage express. The man arrived late in the day, breathless with fatigue, and when questioned replied, "Faith, I went to all the oyster houses in Broadway before I could find you."

A Turk Who Wanted to Know.

He was a very wealthy landlord and a descendant of the old sultans of Marash and Albistan. He would ask us every question under the sun—from the history of the royal family to the views of the English on matrimony; whether England was smaller than London, and which belonged to France; how much bigger the Turkish fleet was than the combined armaments of England, France and Russia, and what was the fashionable costume at home. We drew elaborate maps of the world for his benefit on paper 6 inches by 8 inches and the most artistic and faithful portraits of trains, steamers and hansom cabs. And I think I may say with perfect confidence that, after gravely discussing our statements with his servants and neighbors, he disbelieved them all with perfect impartiality.—"Notes From a Diary In Asiatic Turkey."

Her Awful Sin.

Mr. Tollemache tells in The Spectator the following story of a little girl, which he had, he says, at only one remove, from her own father: The child once went in great distress to her mother, saying that she had committed a sin which could never be forgiven and which was too bad to be repeated. By dint of a little coaxing she was induced to make a full confession, which was in this wise:

"I felt so sorry for poor Satan and wanted to give him a little comfort. So I got a glass of cold water and poured it down a little hole in the kitchen floor."

Took the Hint.

"Just by way of a hint, you know, I told her she looked sweet enough to kiss."

"Well?"

"Well, she said that was the way she intended to look."

"And so"—

"Precisely."—Chicago Post.

Realizes His Age Then.

A young married man never realizes that he is getting old until he is compelled to pay full fare for his first born when he has him on a street car.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Dr. Bull's COUGH SYRUP
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