

### HUMORING PETER THE GREAT.

How the Sovereign of Wurtemberg Carried Out His Little Joke.

It seems that the czar, who had determined on retaining his incognito in travelling through Europe, absolutely declined to take up his quarters at the royal palace at Stuttgart, but insisted on going to an inn. Having learned of this prior to his arrival, the Wurtemberg sovereign caused all the hotel and inn keepers to remove their signs. Over the principal doorway of his palace he had a huge sign hung out, saying that within there was cheer for man and beast at cheap prices, and that the name of the hotel was the Konigshaus. On the czar's carriage and retinue entering the city the postillions, previously instructed by the Wurtemberg officials, drove straight to the palace, and there, standing at the main entrance, was the sovereign, fat, burly and jovial, arrayed in the traditional costume of a boniface, with a white apron and cap, etc., while the various princesses, princes, nobles and dignitaries of his court were costumed as waiters and waitresses, hostlers and other servants. Peter the Great, greatly amused by this witty and kindly manner of humoring his wishes, entered thoroughly into the spirit of the joke, which was kept up until the following day, when he proceeded on his journey. Noticing that the postillion mounted on the wheeler of his travelling carriage was a man of singularly unkempt appearance, his clothes ragged and covered with mud, he made a remark to one of his attendants that there was at least no mistake as to the social condition of that man, and that there could be no danger of his being a nobleman in disguise. And yet, when at the end of the first stage, the postilion came to the carriage door to receive his gratuity and raised the cap from his head, the czar to his astonishment recognized in him the heir to the Wurtemberg throne, who had assumed this disguise for the purpose of speeding his father's imperial guest.

#### A LIVING NET.

Peculiar Method of Fishing Indulged in by Natives of Oceania Islands.

A peculiar method of fishing is indulged in by the natives of Tetulia, one of the islands of Oceania. At a given signal the inhabitants of the village assemble on the seashore, to the number of about 200 persons, each of whom carries a branch of cocoa palm. With these in their hands they plunge into the water, and at a certain distance from the shore turn toward it, forming a compact half circle, each one holding his palm branch perpendicularly in the water and thus forming a sieve.

The leader of the party then gives a signal, and this living net approaches the shore gradually in perfect order, driving before it a multitude of fishes. Surrounded by this living wall and entangled in the cocoa palm branches many of the fishes are cast on the sand by the waves, while others are killed with sticks. After being cooked over hot coals the fish are served with bananas and cocoanut milk.

The scene as described by a Frenchman who recently visited the island was interesting and picturesque in the extreme, the effect being immensely heightened by the appearance of the natives, whose costume consists of a short tunic of seaweed or leaves. Their hair is powdered with chalk, while the warriors are distinguished by the hair being powdered red. Wreaths of gardenias or red hibiscus are worn on their heads, also round their necks.

#### THERE WERE ONLY THREE LOADS.

Hence it was impossible for the Negro to "Divvy Up."

The curious plight of the three men who were to act as the governor general's body-guard on his late visit to St. John when it came time to "divvy up" is equalled by that of the landlord in the following story:

A politic mistake was that of a man of color in the States whose former master had allowed him a piece of land on condition that he—the owner—should receive one-fourth of the crop. When the corn was ripe the laborer hauled the loads to his own house, and none to that of the white man. Then he went innocently up to the great house to return his landlord's waggon, which he had used in the hauling. "Well, Jack," said the gentleman, "where is my share of the corn?" "You ain't got none, sah," was the sympathetic reply. "Haven't got any? Why, wasn't I to have a fourth of all you raised?" "Yes, sah, but dey wa'n't no fourth. Der wa'n't but just three loads."

#### Pearls that Decay.

One peculiarity of pearls is that, unlike other precious gems, they are liable to decay. Occasionally a valuable pearl changes colour, seems to be attacked with a deadly disease, and crumbles into dust. Such is reputed to have been the fate of the most magnificent specimen ever known. Passing through successive hands, it finally became the property of a Russian millionaire. He kept it hidden for a time, but at last consented to show it to some distinguished lovers of precious stones. But when he opened the casket he fell back in dismay, and staggered as though stricken with death. The gem had begun to change color. A fatal disease had attacked it. It was soon a worthless heap of white powder.

#### A Curious Employment.

Gentleman: "Where were you employed last?"

Servant: "At a writing-master's."

Gentleman: "What were you required to do?"

Servant: "I had to keep shaking the table when a new pupil wrote the words: This is my handwriting before commencing to take lessons."

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### HE WAS WOKED UP

With the Assistance of Operators all Over the World.

There is a good story about a telegraph operator, who once worked the land wires in the Duxbury, Mass., cable office, going to sleep one night, and a message having to be sent 6,000 or 7,000 miles to wake him up. The operator is now a practising physician in Cambridge, Mass., but before annexing M. D. to his name was one of the gilt-edged operators of the country.

One night, while on duty in the Duxbury office, he fell asleep at his key. The sleep was a sound one. The New York operator called till out of patience, when he sent a message to Boston, requesting the chief operator in charge to tell Duxbury to answer New York. The sleeper, however, was as dead to Boston's "Di" "Di," as to the impatient characters flashed on from New York.

In the cable-room next the sleeping telegrapher was the cable operator. The room was dark, and he was watching the mirror for the tiny sparks that in those days went up to make a message. To him the Morse alphabet of the overland wire was all Greek, as he only understood the Atlantic cable code, so the sleeper slept on.

Seeing no other way out of the muddle, and thinking the operator asleep, New York called Canso, in Nova Scotia, and addressed a message to the cable operator at Duxbury. The message read:—"Go into the other room and wake up that operator."

Canso sent it to Heart's Content, in Newfoundland; Heart's Content rushed it across to London, thence to Dover, and across the Channel to Calais and to Brest. Brest kept it moving on to Miquelon and Miquelon gave the cable operator at Duxbury a unique surprise. The sleeper was then aroused, about eleven minutes having been taken by the grand round of the cablegram. He tried to explain matters by telling New York that he was out of adjustment. The story didn't impress the officials as being truthful, and in a day or two there was a vacancy in Duxbury.

#### ST. PATRICK'S INK.

The Indelible Writing Fluid That Was Used by Irish Monks.

It is impossible to read the most ancient histories of the Irish saints without noticing how large a part books play in their lives.

In the library some cut the sheets of parchment, or even sewed together in the nearest way the odd shreds, for the monk must not waste the gifts of God, especially when they are rare and dear. They polished it on one side until it was smooth and laid it near the scribe. Others prepared the peculiar thick inks of the Irish writers, very much like varnish, in different colors. The red was the most beautiful, and after 1,000 years it yet shines as on the day it was first used. It was got from a kind of cockle collected on the seashore. Then there were black and green and golden inks, used in various thicknesses by the illuminators and the artists in miniature.

All these inks will resist chemicals that corrode iron. The ink was placed in thin conic glasses attached either to the side of the desk or to the chair, sometimes to the girdle of the writer, often fixed to the end of a pointed stick placed upright in the ground. It is owing to this peculiar skill in making ink that so many of the old Irish manuscripts have come down to us. They were like the cloth of corduroy—unless cut or burned up they were bound to last for ages—and are an eloquent symbol of that tenacious love of learning and that unquenchable faith which the hand of Patrick wrote in characters ineradicable on the very soul, in the very blood and innermost marrow of the Irish race.

#### Cornering a Fisherman.

"So you've been fishing," said Ticket Agent Green to Commercial Agent Lord on his return from an expedition last week. "Where are your fish?"

"We ate 'em all," replied Lord. "Collins, Horn, Dr. Vittum, and myself ate 'em all."

Green's eye twinkled under the lid. He ingeniously turned the conversation in other channels until Lord was off his guard, when he asked in all seriousness: "And so you really had good luck—on the square?"

"We had fine luck," responded Lord, boastfully.

"What would be your average catch apiece?"

"About 100 trout each."

"Average weight?"

"Easily a pound and a half."

"And you were away four days?"

"Just four days."

"Do you mean to tell me that you and Horn and Collins and Doc Vittum ate 2,400 pounds of fish?"

"You're a smart mathematician, Green," meekly responded Lord, "and I guess I'd better buy."

#### When Victoria Travels.

When Queen Victoria travels, an engine is carefully selected, in charge of an experienced engineer and fireman. A pilot engine always precedes the royal train, and no train is allowed to cross the main line for half an hour before the time for the queen to pass. The gates at all grade crossings are locked, all shifting operations are suspended and an army of track-walkers are on duty to remove any obstruction from the line. In addition to all this, a telegram is sent from every station heralding her approach. Altogether, it must be quite an event when her majesty takes a trip, but the general travelling public cannot enjoy it.

#### A Glad Disappointment.

The poet came in, trembling with suppressed excitement.

"Speak! I cannot bear the suspense!" said the anxious wife of his bosom.

"Ah, darling!" he cried; "I have good news the last magazine on the list has refused my poem on 'Purity.' I can now sell it to the Whiteside Soap Company at double rates, without a twinge from my artistic conscience!"

"I can't assist you any longer, as I've got a wife now, and I need all the money I can get," said a lawyer to a beggar he had just met.

"Well, now that's just coming it a little too strong. Here you actually go and get married at my expense."

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### A DETERMINED LOVER.

The Old Gentleman Had Wisdom Enough to Surrender.

The old gentleman didn't want the young gentleman to marry the young lady, the young lady being the old gentleman's daughter. So when the young gentleman came on the all-important mission, the old gentleman set his face against the young gentleman.

"No, sir," said he, with angry emphasis, "you cannot have my daughter."

"But I want her," urged the young gentleman, "and what is of some consideration in the count, she wants me."

"That makes no difference, sir; you can't have her."

"That means, I presume, that you want me to give her up?"

"Exactly."

The young gentleman took a hit in himself.

"Do you think I am going to do it?" he asked, in a tone which did not strike the old gentleman as altogether submissive.

"I do."

"Well, no wonder you don't want me for a son-in-law, if you think I am that kind of a fellow. I don't blame you at all; I wouldn't have that of a son-in-law myself, even if sons-in-law were going at a premium. But, my dear sir, I am not that kind. I want your daughter for my wife, and I am going to have her; she wants me for a husband; I have no objections to you as a father-in-law, and she rather admires you as a father. Therefore I am warranted in joining the combination, and mean to do it. See?"

And the old gentleman had wisdom enough to see.

#### TABLE TALK.

The Manners and Customs of the Dinner Table in Foreign Lands.

Round tables are the most popular in France.

The Persians are great lovers of confectionery.

The modern dinner is a direct descendant of the feudal feast.

In Turkey the water pipe follows the repast. In Persia it comes first.

Silence and expedition are the chief characteristics of a Turkish dinner.

In China there is no equivalent of what is known to us as "the dinner party."

The Chinese show their courtesy by feeding their guests and visitors at any hour of the day.

Raw fish, garnished with red seaweed, is the crowning feature of an "away up" Japanese feast.

In England the number of invitations to dinner is a good gauge of the individual's popularity.

Forks are unknown in Turkey, but a good Mussulman washes his fingers before he begins to eat.

A French hostess is noted for her careful personal attention to all the details of her dinner, both before and during the event.

Bill Nye as a Monkey Linguist.

In the last number of the Pall Mall Magazine Bill Nye appears for the first time in this magazine in a witty "take-off" on Professor Garner's cage experiences in Africa with the gorilla—"Personal Experiences in Monkey Language." Bill had a chimpanzee given him by a friend; this animal contracted a habit of "strolling under the persimmon trees between the glooming and the shank of the evening;" he had a voice "like the song of the lawnmower" and Bill began to learn his language so that he "could parse whole sentences or decline some of his verbs with thanks."

Sad to relate, Mr. Nye's efforts to acquire the monkey language were most unprofitable, for after the chimpanzee died he learned that his knowledge was useless, for three reasons: "First, Phelim had a cleft palate and had taught me incorrectly; second, it was proved that before he came to me he had lost his mind; and third, he was the last chimpanzee of the family using that language." What an instructive example of misdirected energy!

In Memory of George Herbert.

The Boston Commonwealth tells this pleasant little story of the lasting influence of a dear name: "An American gentleman visited the old home of George Herbert. As he left the hospitable house, he gave a five-pound note to his host and said, 'Use it for the love of George Herbert.'"

So after many days—there comes back from George Herbert's home a pretty note, to say that a nice girl in danger of permanent deafness, had thus been enabled to go to London, to consult a great aurist of our time. And the great aurist had performed one of the critical operations, "for the love of George Herbert." And the girl has come to her home well, and goes on with her musical training, or whatever else, to her heart's delight. So George Herbert still lives.

Wasn't Up on Cows.

It is said to be a true story of an English clergyman that on his appointment to a country living he went about from house to house asking why the good wives did not go to church on Sunday afternoons. "Milk the cows," was the universal answer. On Sunday morning, therefore, he spoke his mind. "I have been round the parish," he said, "and find you all make the same excuse. Now, I have only one thing to request, and that is that you milk your cows the last thing on Saturday night and the first thing on Monday morning."

A Girls' Picnic.

First Tramp—Let's wait here till that picnic is over, and then go and get what they leave behind.

Second Tramp (faintly)—My stomach is so empty that cake and candy would make me sick.

First Tramp—You won't find any of that. What they'll leave will be the roast beef, and tongue, and chicken, and bread, and such things. It's a girls' picnic.

More Victims Than Any Other.

There are more victims of nervous prostration in this country than any other physical or mental disability. It is the Nemesis of the man who overworks himself. But more and more of the victims are learning that Hawker's Nerve and Stomach Tonic, sold by all druggists, is a certain cure for nervous prostration in its many forms.

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