

A TWIN BORN IN A COAL MINE.

The Other, Very Strange to Say, was Born Above Ground.

Mrs. Katharina Schmidt is the mother of bouncing twin babies. There is nothing remarkable in that, but when is mentioned the fact that one of the new arrivals was born down in a coal mine, 100 feet beneath the ground, and that the other was born on terra firma at the mouth of the coal shaft a few minutes later, the double birth becomes unique.

John Schmidt is a miner, and delves for dusky diamonds in the Lenz coal mine near Belleville, Ill. The mining company is behind in its supply, and extra work is necessary to fill orders. For this reason the men are allowed to work overtime if they desire. The begrimed miners have reached a coal vein 100 feet below the surface, and there they were digging and shovelling when the noon hour arrived for changing the "shift." John Schmidt concluded to work extra time. He went word to his wife, with a request that she send him luncheon.

Mrs. Schmidt prepared the edibles and then decided to carry them to the mine herself, as she had done many times before. For Mrs. Schmidt is young and Mrs. Schmidt is loving, and her robust young husband is a hero in her eyes whom she cannot see too often. Arriving at the mine, she thought to surprise him by taking the lunch down the shaft and delivering it in person. She entered the iron cage used for hoisting purposes, and was lowered safely into the bowels of the earth. She alighted and soon found her rugged hero, besmeared with the inky marks of honest toil.

"John," said she, "I have brought the lunch."

"Why, Katharina," said John, surprise and pleasure mingling in his tones, "is it you?"

There was no doubt of it—Katharina was there. Before another word was uttered the glad light in Katharina's eyes gave place to a troubled look, and with a little shriek she fell upon the beaten floor of that coal mine.

The husband rushed to her, as did his companions. They lifted her tenderly, and was about to place her in the cage again when she struggled to be free. They laid her down, and several rushed to the cage to go for medical assistance, but before the cage had started on its upward journey to the earth and fresh air above, the event chronicled in the beginning had happened.

There, in the cavernous depths of the coal mine, in the twilight shadows of the flickering lamps on the miners' caps; there, with the miners standing around like sturdy phantoms in silhouette, upon a pile of coarse straw, was born a hero to the house of Schmidt—a bouncing baby boy.

As soon as possible the helpless ones were placed in the cold iron cage and hoisted from the gloomy depths to the bright sunshine above. Messengers were sent hurrying to a physician, and for a conveyance to take the young natural-born coal miner and his mother home.

Then there was another surprise. Before either doctor or vehicle arrived Mrs. Schmidt gave birth to another chubby boy to divide honors with the brother who had been ushered into the world in the night blackness of a coal mine. The second birth took place within a few feet of the edge of the shaft.

Near Cultured Boston.

In one of Boston's suburban cities the church organist was called before the music committee for reprimand.

"We don't doubt," said the spokesman, "that you know your business, and can handle an organ; but, to tell you the truth, we think—have thought for some time along back—that your pieces are too much like the opery (with the accent on the second syllable), and seems to us the house of the Lord ain't exactly the place for opery music."

"Do you mean that my selections are too operatic?" asked the amazed organist.

"Well, yes, that's about it. Now for example, that solo Miss—sang last night and Sunday morning—way up then way down—that's the kind of music we object to in the house of the Lord."

"Last Sunday! Miss—'s solo!" answered the organist, thinking back. "But, my dear sirs, that was 'I Know That My Redeemer Liveth.'"

"Well we don't know anything about that; but what we'd like is some good hymn tunes. A good rousing opening piece like 'Hold the Fort' we don't object to; but the opery music, as we said before, we don't feel satisfied with it."

And this within five miles of cultured, musical Boston!

Souvenir Seekers.

Occasionally it is possible to satisfy the souvenir seeker without doing any damage in particular. This is the case at the tomb of George Washington in Mt. Vernon. A lady had just picked up a pebble from the walk in front of the venerated spot, to carry home with her, when a workman came up with a wheel-barrow load of gravel which he dumped on the spot.

"Have you—have you fixed up the place that way recently?" the lady asked in a slight apprehensive tone.

"Bless you, Miss," was the reply; "we have to do this about every two weeks so the tourists can have something to carry away for mementos."

Syrian Manners.

In Syria people never take off their caps or turbans when entering the house or visiting a friend, but they always leave their shoes at the door. There are no mats or scrapers outside, and the floors inside are covered with expensive rugs, which, in Moslem houses, are kept very clean, and used to kneel upon while saying prayers.

Bouillon Capsules.

The English papers state that the Japanese government has 1,000,000 "bouillon capsules," each of which is said to be equal in solid nutriment to a pound of beef. It is claimed for this form of solidified soup that a soldier can carry in his knapsack a sufficient number of capsules for several months' rations.

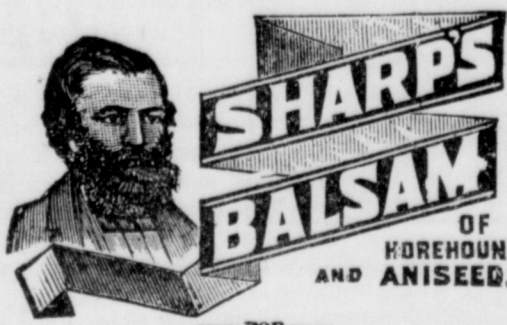
While some workmen were digging recently among the ruined temples of Upper Egypt, they unearthed an iron box containing a metal plate, which two scientists declare to be a camera and lens.

Babies

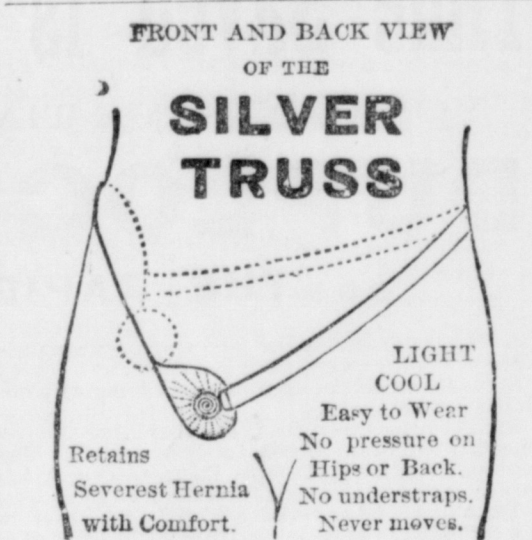
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"YE ANTIENTE GAME"

As it was in the Beginning So it is Now and Ever shall Be.

Mr. Laurence Hutton's contribution to the football literature of the hour is a compilation of historical notes showing the reputation of the joyous game in England, 300 years ago. Sir Thomas Elyot, in "The Governour," 1557, speaks of "Football, wherein is nothing but beastly fury and extreme violence, whereof proceedeth hurte, and consequently rancour and malice doe rehaune with them that be wounded; wherefore it is to be put in perpetual silence." In 1583 Master Philip Tubbes in his "Anatomic of Abuses" said:

"For as concerning football playing I protest unto you it may rather be called a friendly kinde of a fight then a play or recreation; a bloody and murdering practise than a felowly sporte or pastime. For dooth not every one lye in wait for his Adversarie, seeking to overthrow him and to pickle him on his nose, though it be upon hard stones? So that by this means, sometimes their necks are broken, sometimes their backs, sometimes their legs, sometimes their arms: sometimes one part thrust out of joint, and sometimes another: sometimes the noses gush out with blood, sometimes their eyes start out? They have the sleight to meet one betwixt two, to dash him against the hart with their elbows, to hit him under the short ribbes with their gripped fists, and with their knees to catch upon the hip, and to kick him on his neck, with a hundred such murdering devices; and hereof groweth envie, malice, rancour, choler, hatred, displeasure, enmitie, and what not else? and sometimes fighting brawling, contention, quarrel picking, murder, homicide, and great effusion of blood, as experience daily teacheth."

"THE DOCTOR'S ORDERS"

How the Man from the Tamaracks was Carrying them Out.

The man from the tamaracks had been standing around the Brush street station so long that the policeman on duty concluded he would tackle him on suspicion, so he crossed the street and approached the man standing on the sidewalk.

"What are you doing here?" inquired the officer.

"Nothin'," was the quiet response.

"What are you going to do?"

"Nothin'."

"What are you after?"

"Nothin'."

The officer getting tired.

"Well," he said sarcastically, "why don't you take it and go?"

"I am, as soon as that train gets ready to start."

The officer looked at his victim curiously. "That's all right," the visitor. "I ain't going to steal the street car track, nor a house and lot, nor a church steeple, I ain't got no use fer 'em up my way. I live a piece up here onto a farm. I've been working for five years trying to live a mortgage on my place. It's the heaviest litten I ever undertook. Got it histed at last, though, an' felt good, but the doctor said I need rest and a change of scene. Told me I'd better come down to Detroit and do nothin' for awhile. That's what I'm doing now. You've seen me at it. You'll do for witness in case I need one. I've been doin' it since the train came in this mornin'. It's the hardest work I ever done. I'd rather lift mortgages. I'm goin' back soon as the train starts. If that doctor says anything to me I'll give him a lickin' that'll make him think rest and a change of scene restored me to strength and health in a surprisin' manner. Now, you g'long about your business, and I'll end to mine, but the officer talked with him till the train left, and was invited to come up and spend a week with him.

The Lightning of the Eyes

Mario Procco, the famous artist, who is now in prison in Rome, charged with murder, is too dangerous a man to be at large. As the story goes, and there is a column and a quarter of it in a Roman newspaper, the artist killed Anna de Luigi, the daughter of a noble and wealthy family, by merely looking at her. The prisoner, while painting Anna's portrait, was captivated by her beauty and fell in love with her. The lady pretended to return his affection but turned out to be an unmitigated coquette. Procco became suspicious and one day found his sweetheart bathing in the surt with his rival. The artist had studied hypnotism, and had been practicing in upon the fair Anna. So, when he saw her kissing her lover he directed at her a concentrated and powerful gaze. He threw his whole strength into that glance, and at the same time he willed that the woman should be drowned. In a few seconds she fell over into the water and expired. This is a most astonishing narrative, but Procco himself admits that it is true. And now the Roman authorities are wondering how they shall punish this monster. Possibly his deadly glance will dispose of judge, jury and executioner. Evidently he is not a man to be trifled with, and it may be that extraordinary methods will have to be resorted to in order to get rid of him. Of course nobody doubts his story.

Lady Randolph Churchill's Freak.

There are certain women of the world who capture public attention to that degree that everything they do is promptly chronicled. Lady Randolph Churchill is one of them. When returning home from India with Lord Randolph she noticed a British soldier tattooing a deck hand. It dispelled the ennuui that had seized upon her as an incident of ship life, and from watching the operation from her deck chair she concluded to try it herself. She had the artist brought before her and asked for some designs. He suggested the Talmudic symbol of eternity—a snake holding its tail in its mouth—Lady Randolph was charmed and bared her arm for the operation. Lord Randolph swore and protested. But the tattooing was done—so it is said at least—and is described as a beautifully executed snake, dark blue in color, with green eyes and red jaws. As a general thing it is hidden from the vulgar gaze by a broad gold bracelet, but her personal friends are privileged to see it and hear the story of the tattooing.

The Ainu women in Japan tattoo their faces to give them the appearance of men with whiskers.



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CHINESE PUNISHMENT.

The Terrible Cruelty With Which Prisoners are Often Treated.

The evil-doer in China has a hard time of it if he is caught, for the punishments inflicted are very cruel and would not be tolerated in more civilized countries. Perhaps it is because there is so little moral force to keep the people in right ways that physical force is so excessively employed. However that may be, the few Chinese newspapers frequently contain details of tortures imposed upon offenders that are equal to any inflicted by Indian or African savages.

The most common instrument of torture in the Chinese jail is the bamboo. No attention is paid to the law which provides how many strokes of the bamboo rod may be inflicted for certain offences. Often the executioner of the sentence inflicts ten or twenty times as many blows upon the naked victim as the law designates. The Shanghai newspapers a while ago reported that between 2,000 and 3,000 strokes of the bamboo had been laid upon the backs of two old persons who had been found guilty of levying blackmail, and that in addition to this awful punishment, their ankles had been broken with an iron hammer.

An educated Chinese who is practising law in this country, made a remarkable excuse for the brutality of his countrymen. He spoke of the "absence of nerves" in the Chinese, said his people were apparently not so susceptible to pain as most other human beings, and on this account, he argued, Chinese punishments are not specially cruel. This testimony has been directly contradicted by some of the missionaries in China.

The fact is that in some parts of the country punishments are inflicted which are not authorized by law, and the Government has tried in vain to put an end to these cruel and illegal practices. The Perkin Gazette reported some years ago that in some of the country districts of Yunnan the people were in the habit of burning to death any man who was caught stealing from the fields grain or other agricultural products. They were liable to punishment themselves for such atrocities, but they took pains to see that there was no danger of a complaint being lodged against them. They threatened the relatives of the culprit with death if they made complaint, and ostensibly made them parties to the crime by compelling them to take fagots and light the fire themselves. This terrible custom began to be practiced at the time of the Yunnan rebellion, when the people were in danger of starvation, and no efforts of the Government have since availed to extirpate it.

Books on China abound with instances of unusual and almost unheard of cruelty to prisoners. Father Hue, in his "Travels," says that on one occasion he saw a number of prisoners whose hands were nailed to the carts in which they were being taken to jail. He learned that the constables had forgotten to bring their shackles with them, and so employed this method of preventing their prisoners from escaping.

The Cannibal Serpent.

Among the remarkable incidents which have recently taken place in the reptile house of the Zoological Society's Gardens in London, was that of the swallowing his companion by the South American boa constrictor, and exhibiting no symptom afterwards either of the pangs of remorse or those of indigestion. The two serpents, according to the London Illustrated News, had lived amicably together nearly a twelve month. They were of the same species, but one was nine feet long and the other eleven. It is not supposed that the larger one intended to eat the other, and they are still less likely to have quarrelled; snakes are, indeed, between themselves, peaceable and gentle animals. Both were usually fed with pigeons. One afternoon their keeper had placed two birds—one for each serpent—in the glazed apartment fifteen feet by six feet which was the boa constrictor's dwelling. The bigger serpent having quickly swallowed his own appointed meal, observed the second pigeon visibly sticking in the jaws of his messmate. He, perhaps, only thought of taking a playful bite out of it, even as a greedy or wanton little boy might be seen biting at an apple in another child's mouth. The keeper had left them, and it is conjectured that both the serpent's having got their teeth fastened in the pigeon's bones, neither could withdraw. An explanation had been found in the peculiar structure and action of the joints of the serpent's jawbones. We are told this gorging boa constrictor, though his body is swollen to threefold bulk, having a brother reptile inside, down to within twenty-four inches of his tail, will not die of a surfeit; but he will have to eat nothing more for the next four or five months. Little the simple creature be acquainted, however, of the dire crime of serpentine cannibalism, it is his original purpose was only to devour a second pigeon.

A Few More Campaigns.

A delicate compliment is a work of far higher art than the most biting sarcasm. Every one knows the story of the poor creature who found himself seated between Mme Ricamier and Mme. de Stael, and managed to offend them both by saying that he sat between wit and beauty, and was crushed by the retort of Mme. de Stael that he possessed neither. The court of Louis XIV. was the school where this art was brought to perfection. The flattery offered the king by the men of genius was at once coarse and exquisite. Witness that inimitable reply of Mignard, who was painting the king's portrait for a tenth time when Louis asked him: "Do I look older?" "I see a few more campaigns on the brow of your Majesty."

Saved.

"Stay!" cried Pocahontas. The obedient father paused. "Do you realize," said she, "that if you undertake the job of killing off all the John Smiths you won't even have time to eat?"

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