

SAINT PETERS CHURCH IN ROME IS A CITY WITHIN A CITY; IS THREE HUNDRED YEARS OLD

(By Pierre Van Paassen in New York World.)

Rome.—St. Peter's Church, that most stupendous and incomparable basilicum which holds the ashes of the Galilean fisherman, who, according to tradition, became the first Bishop of Rome, has celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of its consecration.

The years have not dimmed its glory, for with the mellowing of age its beauty becomes constantly greater, while the lavish care bestowed upon it has kept the interior as fresh as if the marbles and frescoes had been put on but a few months ago.

St. Peter's is really a city within a city with its own climate, temperature and light.

No wonder that thousands upon thousands fell upon their faces when beholding this temple for the first time, for it is difficult to conceive it as the work of man. Mendelssohn thought of it as a tremendous forest of granites and marble. It seems more like an abyss into the sky.

Services are held with an organ rolling out volumes of melody and a choir singing, and the visitor is not even aware of it. Its size is overwhelming. Marble pigeons are the size of eagles, the statues of the Popes are towering giants of white.

While the Gothic churches of the Continent and America create a deep reverential spirit which produces in man a feeling of humbleness, St. Peter's causes him to life up his head and spread out his arms.

Yet with all its superb treasures and uncountable riches, this church represents in the eyes of many "a monument to wanton destruction." For it was erected in a place where once stood for thirteen centuries an earlier basilica, that of Constantine. The building of St. Peter's alone caused more destruction and did more injury to ancient classic remains than ten centuries of barbarism, declared an Italian authority. Of the huge mass of marbles of every nature, color, value and description used in building St. Peter's, nearly all were removed from classical buildings, many of which were leveled to the ground for the sake of one or two pieces.

An Aggregation of Churches.

It is an aggregation of splendid churches, chapels, tombs and works of art, but it is also a shrine for countless pilgrims from all over the world. For in the centre is the Tomb of St. Peter, and in the four pillars that support the dome, the conception of Michelangelo, are kept the four great relics of the Church, namely, the lance of Longinus, the soldier who pierced the side of Christ on the cross; the head of St. Andrew; a portion of the true cross, and the napkin of Veronica, said to bear the impress of the Divine face.

The ashes of St. Peter are there, but the sarcophagus is invisible since 1594. In that year, while an architect was leveling the church floor, the ground gave way and he saw through the opening what nobody had beheld for thirteen centuries—the golden coffin of St. Peter and the gold cross of Emperor Constantine on the lid. On hearing of the discovery, Pope Clement VIII, accompanied by the Cardinals, descended into the crypt and, with the help of a torch which had been lowered into the depths, could see with his own eyes.

The impression produced upon the Pope by this wonderful sight was so great that he caused the opening to be closed at once. The tomb became once more invisible and inaccessible, although the scaling material used at that time can still be seen through the "cataract" below the altar.

So large is St. Peter's that a whole village actually exists upon the roof, houses and shops, churches, and even one great temple. Sixteen people can stand in the ball on top of the dome at one time. The height makes one tremble, especially when the frequent earthquakes to which Italy is subject come to mind.

It is told that two Spanish monks, who found themselves in the ball on top of the dome during the earthquake of 1730, were so frightened by its rocking that one of them died on the spot.

There is now incontestable scientific proof that the obelisk in front of St. Peter's, right in the centre of the piazza with its hundreds of columns flanking it, marks the exact spot where the Apostle himself met his death and was crucified head downward because he counted it too great an honor to die exactly in the same manner as his Divine Master.

The number of statues, historic monuments of this church, are innumerable. One door in a pillar is a constant reminder to the reigning Pontiff that he also must die and lie here some day, for the door always bears the name of his predecessor, whose body is kept here until his tomb has been prepared.

The empty tomb of Alexander VI, Rodrigo Borgia, is here, the father of

Caesar and Lucrezia. When he died "all Rome ran with indescribable gladness to visit the corpse. Men could not satiate their eyes with feeding on the carcass of the serpent," says a contemporary historian. The body was removed from its tomb by the Borgia family's bitter enemy, Pope Julius II.

Vatican Stands Nearby.

For two hundred years the Popes deliberated over the building of this church. Finally Julius II. began the work of destroying the earlier church going about it with the ruthlessness of a Vandal. For years the work lagged, architects died, a pest broke out in Rome, and each succeeding builder changed the plans for the new basilicum.

Then at last the Pope, "inspired by God," called in Michelangelo, the immortal painter and sculptor. This man was seventy-two, but he worked sixteen years, "day and night," with an army of workmen "without thinking of pay." When he died the dome, which would have been his chiefest glory, was not completed. Later architects modified Angelo's ambitious plans.

Next to St. Peter's is the Vatican, the Pope's residence, a domain unto itself, with its indefinable touch of melancholy of former glory.

Soldiers in mediaeval uniforms, chiefly young noblemen from Belgium and Switzerland, form the guard. Past them must go every one who wants to visit the Pontiff and receive a pilgrim's blessing. A constant stream from all countries passes through these gates, peasants and aristocrats, Kings and statesmen.

The one moment the courtyard is dozing in the golden sunlight, and the next muskets rattle and halberds clash, you see a flash of scarlet, and a Cardinal has passed on his way to see the Supreme Head of the Church.

BROKERS MADE GOOD PROFIT ON BOGUS ORDER

Toronto, Jan. 6.—A Toronto brokerage house, by the sale of a block of shares of a mining stock today, which they had bought on a false order, made a profit of \$1,000 according to a story in the news columns of the Toronto Star today.

The firm bought the shares on an order received by telephone from Oshawa, which purported to be the contents of a telegram from a prominent citizen of that town. Inquiries showed that the message was a false one, but the firm held the stock until they could dispose of it at a profit.

DUTY ON TOOTH PASTE \$11 A TUBE IN RUSSIA

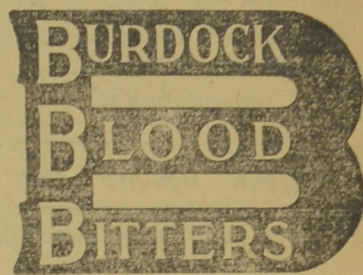
Moscow, Jan. 7.—American tooth paste costs dearly in Russia. Six tubes of it mailed to an American newspaper man here were held up at the Soviet postoffice for minute examination for diamonds, gold or counter-revolutionary propaganda and then the correspondent was assessed a duty of \$11 a tube. He contributed the paste to the government instead, and now cleans his teeth with common ashes.

"Are you in favor of colleges?"

"Yes. What would humorists have to write about if it weren't for the college boy and coed?"

Got Relief From Dyspepsia

Mrs. Clarence Sealy, Bathurst, N.B., writes:—"I suffered a long time from dyspepsia. I used tablets and medicines of all kinds, but got no relief until I started using



After taking two bottles I can gladly say that I became much better, and can now eat most any kind of food without having to suffer for it after."

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TO BE CALLED, NOT CHOSEN

Rome, Jan. 7.—The former German crown prince passed a few days on the shores of Lake Maggiore, in Italy, recently and made haste, according to a Rome newspaper, to consult a locally famous palm reader concerning his future. This shrewd lady, grasping his hand, read that one day he would be summoned to the throne of Imperial Germany by his followers. She added, however, that he would never occupy the throne.

STOMACH MISERY ACIDITY, GAS, GAS INDIGESTION

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* SPECIAL ATTRACTION *
* AT GAIETY THEATRE *

"Tin Hats" is the photo play at the Gaiety for Friday and Saturday. It is a post war comedy, with Conrad Nagel and Claire Windsor in the leading roles, and it is a story of American doughboys who find themselves in possession of a German village immediately after signing of the Armistice. Miss Windsor plays the part of a titled German girl, who comes to claim her castle on the Rhine immediately after the Armistice. Her path is crossed by the American doughboys and her destiny becomes strangely interwoven with the boys. An added feature is "Raggedy Rose" with Mabel Norcand in the leading role.

Tom—I'm not making enough money to get married.
Virginia—Get married and you will.

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