Prohibited by Government Orders After the Present Season's Close-Avarice Gets the Better of Simplicity and Causes Disaster-Actors and Theatre.

"In 1633, because of the plague, eighteen burghers assembling from the village of Oberammergau vowed that once in ten years they would present by living pictures the passion of Jesus Christ; and not only were they all healed which were afflicted, but they begged God to bless these his servants who had thus lovingly exposed the passion of his blessed Christ."



THE OBERAMMERGAU THEATRE.

Thus quaintly runs the old chronicle, telling in brief and berren phrase the story of a deadly epidemic, and the appeal to heaven when all earthly power had failed to stay its ravages. Perhaps the plague had exhausted its powers, or perhaps, to adopt the view of the peasants, the Deity was pleased to avert the death angel's wrath because of humble supplication and trust in supernal mercy. At any rate health and happiness returned once more to the picturesque valley of the Ammer. and save when war or rulers intervened to prevent, the vow has been kept. As years went by and travel increased the presentation of the Passion Play in the little moun-tain hamlet by the humble carvers of wood attracted more and more attention.

Early in the century the tide of tourists set on each summer of the drama's recurrence toward Oberammergau, and in a sense the result has been disastrous. The simple methods and abiding faith of the peasant actors are gone, and with them their hearty hospitality. Four decades back the devil was cut out of the play because his horns, hoofs and sulphurous personality displeased the sensibilities of aristocratic patrons. Then the text and action were revised to meet modern demands. The revision eliminated the mediaval ruggedness and strength, but breathed no fresher or more vigorous spirit into the dry bones of the skeleton that remained. An open air theatre went up at a cost that strained the resources of the villagers. But they knew



JOSEPH MAYER AS CHRIST. what they were about, for they had grown less simple and more worldly wise. Ten years ago curiosity seekers trooped into the debt laden town and made of the speculation an enormous success. They bought wood carvings, paid handsomely for board and lodging, and distursed largely for admissions to the theatre. Exhibitions were given weekly, beginning with the last Sunday in May and ending with the last Sun-day in September. The "box office receipts," as the irreligious showman would say, averaged \$5,000 for each performance during the season, and the profits were divided among the actors, those appearing in

the chief roles getting the bulk of the cash Naturally, for man is weak, prosperity made the villagers avaricious and turned the Bayarian Arcadia into a mart for money making. In 1888 the principal characters for the production of the summer of 1800 were selected. The era of harmony had gone by and a great quarrel attended the construction of the cast. Its noise rolled beyond the confines of Oberammergau, and the government of the kingdom decided that as the Passion Play had degenerated from its original purpose into an ordinary scheme for money making the present season should be its last. Consequently, this summer's visitors to the valley of the Ammer will view the final performance of a drama that has had the longest run of any theatre success, ancient



THOMAS RENDL AS PILATE.

As stated before, those who enact the chief roles are given their parts two years in advance. This is done that they may have time to grow hair and whiskers appropriate to the characters they are to represent, for anything in the way of wigs or facial make up is not allowed. The costumes, however, are of the time of Christ, and it is attempted in every detail to make them historically accurate. The cast, given out recently, is as follows:

Christ (chosen for the third time). Joseph Mayer John Peter Rendi Peter. Jacob Hett

.... Helen Lang

Martin Oppenrieder Franz Steinbacher Caiaphas (second time). . . the Burgomaster Lang Annas (first time) Nathaniel (second time) Franz Rutz, St Sebastian Lang Rabbi Archelaus (first time). Sebastian Bauer OWNERS Pilate (second time)......Thomas Rendl Herod (first time)........................John Diemes Jacob Rutz

All will dress in symbolical attire. The colors of some of the costumes are: Christ's, erimson and purple; St. John's, green and red; St. Peter's, blue and yellow; Judas', orange and yellow; Mary's, crimson and blue. The play is divided into eighteen parts or acts, all preceded by tableaux from the Old Testament. The latter include such scenes as the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradis, Abraham's attempt to sacrifice Isaac, Moses smiting the rock, and Jonah emerging from the whale's mouth. The main action of the play, of course, has to do with Christ's life from boyhood to the time of the betrayal, trial and crucifixion. With the exception of two rows of boxes the seats of the theatre as well as the stage are uncovered and exposed to every vagary of the elements. The play begins at 8 a. m. and ends at 6 p. m. with a brief noonday intermission for lunch. The date of the first performance in this, the last season of its life, is May 25; the final one Section 28.

the final one Sept. 28.

The number of persons connected with the production exceeds 800, all of whom are natives of Oberammergau. No outsider is



JACOB HETT AS PETER. are also excluded. Every morning before the curtain goes up the players wend their way to church in a body and receive the sacrament as a preparation to the theatrical labors of the day. It is expected that throughout the summer there will be constantly present in the village 5,000 visitors, and arrangements have been made to feed and lodge that number.

An old saying is to the effect that familiarity breeds contempt. A writer who visited Oberammergau in 1880 brought back proof of the truth of the proverb. The villagers in daily life call the actors, not by their real names, but by those of the characters they portray. The result is ludicrous in some respects and distasteful in others. For instance, there must be a certain shock on hearing a burly villager announce that Simon Peter drank too much beer last night;" that "Pontius Pilate has the rheumatism," or that "Mary Magdalene makes good coffee." Yet these are ordinary and unthought of outcroppings of daily con-versation among the wood carving Thes-FRED C. DAYTON.

Vicar General Keegan's Death. nited States has recently susta William Keegan, vicar general of the diocese of Brooklyn and pastor of the Church of the Assumption. He was not only very efficient as a priest and greatly beloved as a man, but was noted for his executive ability, and was always sought when some unusual difficulty presented itself in the organization of a local church or society. He seemed to be gifted with one of those happily constituted intellects which at first

glance perceive the weak points in any organization. and his judgment had so often proved correct that his advice in such cases was ac cepted as the best ossible. He was orn April 22, 1824. in Kings county, o Brooklyn with his parents in 1842. soon entered

St. John's college, New York, and VICAR GENERAL KEEGAN. was graduated therefrom in 1853. Oct. 16 of that year Cardinal Bedini, then papal nuncio, ordained him a priest in the old St. Patrick's cathedral, and soon after he assumed the pastorate of the Church of the Assumption, which he held to his death. He took a very active part in the work of his church. He is the last of a large family of brothers and sisters, all of whom, like himself, died of pneumonia. He was made vicar general in 1880.

The Hero of Last Island Dead. Does heroism pay? Nearly always in the sense of honor deserved, very often in the sense of honor received, but rarely in the direction of practical recognition. Capt. Abraham Smith, who died recently in a New Orleans hospital, had few friends besides his devoted wife and adopted son. Yet in 1856, when he was but 25 years of age, the country rang with his name, and he was known far and wide as the hero of Last Island. The island was a famous summer resort until a storm on the night of Aug. 9, in the year mentioned, practically swept it from existence. The steamer Star, with Capt. Smith in command, was at the landing when the hurricane began, and the few people saved owed their lives to the daring sailor's exertions. In later years he distintinguished himself by rescu-ing over forty people from perilous situa-tions. At the last he had nothing save the memory of a life well spent and the cour-age to accept death's summons fearlessly when it came.

Fixing Fictitious Values in China. In China an attempt is made to secure steadiness and uniformity in the prices of commodities by the appointment of a class of public arbitrators and appraisers known as "Ching Chi," who declare the just and proper value of all things that come into the markets for sale. It appears, by recent mail advices, that of late sham Ching Chi have gone about bearing forged credentials and resping rich harvests by accepting bribes from traders. One of the gentle-men, recently caught at these tricks, was sliced into strips, but his surviving com-rades keep at work, daring darger in order that they may make money fac. A PRETTY DOUNTRY HOUSE.

Comfortable and Convenient House at This is, undoubtedly, the most economical arrangement of rooms that can be devised for a small dwelling. It is so planned that the entrance hall, parlor, dining room and kitchen are grouped in such a manner that one chim-

ney is sufficient for the whole house. The staircase hall is of good size, and serves as a reception room, with a corner fireplace, in which is an open grate for burning coal. The parlor is immediately adjoining the reception hall, at the front of the house, separated only by an archway hung with heavy portiores, which may be thrown back, making the parlor and reception hall, as it were,

one room when desired. The dining room is immediately back of the parlor, separated from the latter likewise by portieres. Both parlor and dining room are provided with open grates and wood mantels in keeping with the finish of the rooms.



The kitchen is at the rear of the house adjoining the dining room. The passage from the kitchen to the dining room is through the pantry, which is placed in the extension at the rear of both, with suitable china closet and storeroom conveniently placed.

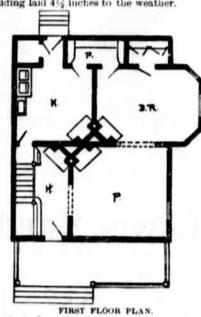
Entrance to the cellar is under the main stairs. The front of the house is protected by a wood veranda.

In the second story are three good sized chambers, with closets for each; a bathroom and one small bedroom, which can be used as a dressing room for the front chamber if desired. In the attic is one room finished, the balance is left for storage left. The cellar extends under the entire building.

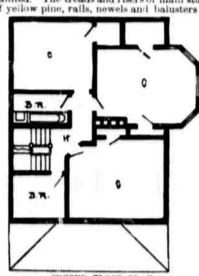
The foundation walls are of field stone laid in good lime and cement mortar. Chimney of hard brick; facings of hall fireplace and



bed slate hearth for kitchen; glazed tile hearthfor hall, parlor and dining room; tile facings for grates in parlor and dining room. The side walls and ceilings throughout are hard finished on one coat of brown mortar and seasoned lath, with neat center pieces in the ceilings of main rooms. The veranda roof is sheathed with tongued and grooved spruce. All other roofs, side walls and gables of the building are sheathed with surfaced hemlock, the whole covered with water proof paper. The panels The Catholic church of New York and of in first story bay window, side walls of second story and gr des of main building as great loss by the death of the Very Rev. dormer windows, and all roofs except the veranda, are shingled. The lower story is clapboarded with 6 inch white pine beveled, siding laid 414 inches to the weather.



Attic floor of spruce. Second story floor of white pine. First floor of yell w pine. All % inches thick, tongued and groovel and blind nailed. Veranda floor 1 inches thick. Attic and second story rooms, with the exception of hall and bathroom, of white pine, painted two coats. The finish of bathroom and second story hall and all rooms on the first story is in North Carolina pine, left natural color of the wood, with one coat of wood filler and two coats of varnish rubbed smooth. The doors of first story are of clear white pine, finished in the same manner. The attic and second story doors of white pine painted. The treads and risers of main stairs of yellow pine, rails, newels and balusters of



SECOND FLOOR PLAN. oak, filled and varnished with three coats, rubbed smooth. Mantels to correspond with fluish of rooms.

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ESTIMATE OF COST. Mason work DAVID W. KING ODDS AND ENDS.

The colony of Victoria, Australia, with ,110,030 inhabitants, is said to muster 150

There has been little progress in cooking utensils in 2,000 years. Implements like those still in use are to be found in Pompeian ruins

A cat in Santa Cruz, Cal , has become st expert in climbing up the door and raising the latch to get in that the carrying of a big rat does not now interfere with her performing the feat.

Many take it for granted that because musk is sold in what is called a pod that it is a vegetable. It is instead an animal product, being a substance found in a two or three inch sac in the body of the music deer of

At the sale of the Marquis collection, at the Hotel Drouot, Paris, \$9,500 was paid for a superbly decorated Louis XVI clock, and a Louis XIV chandelier fetched \$4,000. The first five days of the sale realized upward of

A fox driven by the hounds in a recent hunt upon the estate of Lord Granville, at Walmer castle, bolted right before Lord Granville's eyes through the hall of the castle and into the drawing room, with the hounds in full cry after him. They ran him down and killed him in front of the mantel-

A curious fact is that of the seventeer clerks in the senate of the new state of Washington a majority (nine) are women, and there is but one who carries "Mrs." before her name. The same rule holds good with the house, a majority of the clerks being

In the recent sale of old books and manuscripts in New York a letter written by Christopher Columbus sold for \$2,000. It consisted of 116 lines, and 84 words, and very easy words at that, were spelled the most convenient way.

The rates of transporting heavy freight, merchandise and the like have changed. Less than a half century ago the railroads of Great Britain made a very careful estimate, and it cost just a penny a ton per mile for carrying coal.

A gentleman at Poona, India, recently received a letter that had been posted at a station twenty miles away two years and four months before, accompanied by the explana-tion from the postal authorities that the delay was owing to the fact that it "had been posted by the wrong train." Instead of being grateful for the explanation he is mean enough to insinuate that the train the letter got on if ust have had an uncommonly long run.

The present standing army of Great Britain may be said to date from the reign of King Charles II; although some few of the oldest regiments claim, and with justice, to date back to the previous century. Cromwell's army, which was disbanded at the restoration, was certa uly the best, most disciplined, most sober and most highly trained army England ever had.

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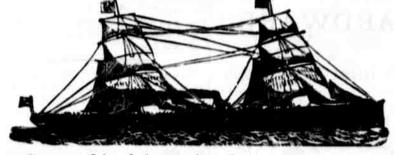


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