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THE NAVAL SEARCH LIGHTS.

The Recent Splendid Exhibition on the Hudson River.

New York city's leisure population enjoyed the grandest show of the age in the illumination line the other night, and it did not cost them a cent, for it was furnished by the naval squadron of evolution. The squadron is composed of the new steel cruisers Chicago, Newark, Boston and Atlanta; the gunboats Yorktown and Concord, and the dynamite cruiser Vesuvius, and their recent business was to instruct the naval reserve militia in the use of the search lights.

A LIGHT LIKE THAT OF DAY.

Every available foot on the Hudson river front between Twentieth and Sixtieth streets was covered with gazers, and so were all the housetops and the points on the Jersey shore, when at 9:15 p. m. the flagship Chicago gave the signal and turned on her two lights of 23,700 candle power each, and each set in the focus of the most powerful reflector known. All the other vessels set their lights in order, and then the "search light sweep" began, guided by the Chicago's signals. Thirteen broad bands or streams of pure white light spouted into the clouds from the anchored fleet—a sight so awfully grand that not a cheer arose from the 200,000 or more people who witnessed it, but a convulsive wavy motion and a general a-h-h showed the excitement.

Then the streams of light began to turn this way and that. One fell on a small boat two miles away and every motion of its occupants could be seen as plainly as at noon. Another struck a group a mile and a quarter away and they could read fine print in the pure cold light. Far up the river every outline of the rocks was shown and the sails of yachts in the distant Bay were made luminous. The spray and steam of ferryboats showed rainbows and the expression on faces a mile distant was discernible through the ship's glasses. It was a certain demonstration that no hostile vessel could get within shooting distance unseen even in the darkest night.

The Population of Michigan.

A census bulletin just issued, which is devoted to Michigan statistics, says that the population of the state under the census taken as of June 1, 1890, is 2,093,889, while in 1880 the population was 1,636,937, an increase in ten years of 456,952 or 27.92 per cent. In 1880 Montmorency and Oscoda counties were unorganized and were attached as townships to Alpena and Alcona counties, respectively. Since then, however, they have been organized and appear separate and distinct as counties. The following new counties have been organized since 1880: Alger, in 1885, from Schoolcraft; Arenac, in 1883, from Bay; Gogebic, in 1887, from Ontonagon; Iron, in 1885, from Marquette and Menominee, and Luce, in 1887, from Chippewa and Mackinac. When parts of counties have been taken to form new counties the population according to the census of 1880 of the part taken is deducted from the population in 1880 of the county from which it was taken, wherever possible, and is set over against the population of the new county for 1890, as in this way comparison to show growth is more accurately made. Fifteen counties in the state show decreases, most of which are small, while fourteen counties show increases of more than 100 per cent. Thirty-eight counties show increases of more than 50 per cent.

The Prediction Was Verified.

Many a true word, the saying goes, is often spoken in jest, but no more striking example is at hand than that furnished by a recent news item from Connecticut. At an excursion of New Britain people a few days ago a jolly German, Christopher Dahl, joked with Mr. Curtin, to whom he had been introduced that day.

"Are you Mr. Curtin the grocer, or Mr. Curtin the undertaker?" asked Dahl jocularly. "You know there are two Curtins in New Britain."

"Yes, I know there are," replied Curtin; "but I'm Curtin the undertaker."

"Very well," replied Dahl seriously, and shaking hands with Mr. Curtin, he added: "Then you will be my undertaker very soon."

His prediction was verified within three hours. Dahl was instantly killed and horribly mutilated by the excursion train in returning to New Britain. Curtin was his undertaker.

To Explore Strange Lands.

Mr. Frank Vincent, of New York city, has in the past dozen years traveled 275,000 miles in out-of-the-way parts of the earth, and written various books, such as "The Land of the White Elephant," "Norse, Lapp and Finn," etc. He is soon to start on a tour of 40,000 miles, under the auspices of the American Geographical society and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and will take not only such scientific apparatus as will enable him to get views of all worthy objects, but passports and letters of introduction which will secure him the aid of all regular governments.

FRANK VINCENT.

He will sail around Africa, making frequent journeys inland to places not hitherto visited or described, and will traverse and describe the Congo Free State and the eastern section, thence to the Cape of Good Hope; also the island of Madagascar. He will go through Media and Persia to Central Asia, the region lately opened by the Russian Transcaspian railroad, and then cross the Pacific and come home through California and the west.

He thinks all this can be done in three years, and he expects to make it the crowning work of his career. Mr. Vincent is in the prime of life, 6 feet 2 inches high, and in fine physical condition. He has an unusual faculty of making friends with strange races, and insists that he can travel alone among the wildest savages and be safe.

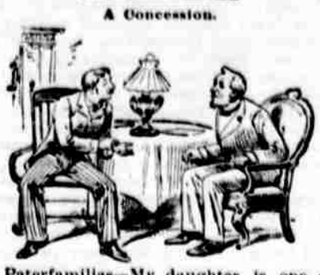
Nothing to Laugh At.

Great Humorist—What! only fifty cents apiece for these jokes?

Thrifty Editor—Yes, that's all we can afford to pay for jokes, and we can get all we want at that price.

Great Humorist—Oh, you can undoubtedly get plenty of a certain grade of jokes for fifty cents; but I would like to have you know that my jokes are no laughing matter.—Boston Courier

A Concession.



Paterfamilias—My daughter is one of my treasures, young man. You ask a great deal; and what will you give me in return, eh?

Suitor—Oh, I'll give you time on her dowry.—Life.

Within a Block of It.

"Can you tell me whether this car passes the Union deepo?" asked the timid woman as she climbed wearily up the steps of the Live Oak electric car in front of the post office. She addressed her remark in a general way to all the passengers, but seemed to indicate with her eyes the woman in black with the shopping bag and the gold rimmed eyeglasses.

"This car passes within a block of the Union deppo," said the lady in black, gazing severely through those strong glasses. "You can easily see the deppo from the place where you alight." And she drew the strings of her shopping bag tighter, and looked defiantly at the other passengers.

"And when you see the daypo," said the pert young woman with the red hat, "you'll be sure to know it by its resemblance to a western cattle shed that is somewhat out of repair."

"Tell you what," said the young man in the corner, removing the head of his cane from his mouth for the purpose of making the remark, "this here dippo is a caution, ain't it? Makes people think Dallas is the jumping off place, doncherknow. I had a friend—mighty nice fellow, from Boston—was coming here to locate—hardware business. Came and took one look at the dippo and said he believed he'd go on down and take a look at Hutchins. Couldn't stand the dippo."

And just then the car slowed up, and they all glared scornfully one upon another and cried:

This is the Union { deppo! daypo! deepo! dippo!

—Dallas News.

Keeping Up Appearances.

It was one of those clear summer mornings for which the Ozark region is famous. I was with a fishing party on the Current river. It was about 7 o'clock that I strayed off from my companions for a stroll through the woods of yellow pine. Perched on a high rock about 300 yards from our camp I found a native with a line out.

"Hello!" I saluted.

"Howdy," was the sleepy response.

"Catching anything?" I asked.

"Nope."

"Caught anything?"

"Nope."

"Expect to catch anything?"

"Not much."

"What are you doing here, then?"

"Keepin' up erpearances."

"How is that?"

"Well, yer see, I've got oneer them wimmin what runs things ter home, and she's allus er tellin' me thet I never work. Thet's why I'm hyer—I'm foolin' her. I don't want no feesh nor nothin'—I on'y want ter keep up erpearances."—Detroit Free Press.

One on the Doctor.

A well known clergyman of this city was asked to solve the following puzzle a few night ago: If all the children that King Herod killed were buried in such a manner that only their arms from the elbow to the tips of their fingers were visible above the ground, how could you distinguish the arms of the boys from those of the girls? The reverend gentleman worked at it faithfully but was obliged to give it up.

"For shame, doctor," cried the interrogator. "The idea that you should forget that the children that Herod killed were all boys."—Buffalo Commercial.

Behind the Times.

"Well, you may criticize the young emperor of Germany as much as you choose, but there's a mark of business about him that I like," said Spodkins.

"Why, man, when did you read the papers last? He got rid of that months ago," said Bodkins.

"Got rid of what?"

"His biz mark, to be sure."

Spodkins had to pay for two.—Detroit Free Press.

A Cheap Cow.

Stranger—What do you value your white cow at?

Farmer Furrow—She ain't worth over ten dollars. Taxing cows this year?

Stranger—I am not the assessor. I am an official of the Quick Time railroad. Your cow was killed this morning. Here's the ten dollars. Good day.—New York Weekly

A Great Wearer.

Wooden—I know, Miss Smilax, that I'm not as brilliant as some people; but I think it is the general opinion of my friends that I wear well.

Miss Smilax—Oh, yes indeed; you wore me out long ago.—Boston Courier

A Good Model.

Fashionable Applicant (to fair Delsartean)—Yes, my husband heard you lecture on "How to Walk Gracefully," and he wanted me to join your class.

Miss Henrietta Tussel—I'm always pleased when men realize the importance of my mission.

Applicant—Yes, he said by studying you I'd learn what to avoid.—Truth.

A TRUE TALE OF HORROR

THE AWFUL MEDIÆVAL TRAGEDY OF BEATRICE CENCI.

A Fiendish Father Slain by His Children—The Palace They Occupied Said to Be Haunted—Touching Scene at the Scaffold—An Exciting Story Retold.

[Special Correspondence.]

NEW YORK, July 1.—Rome used to be one of the most interesting cities in Europe. It is very interesting still; but having, since 1870, been the capital of Italy, it has lost much of its peculiarity. When it was the great center of Roman Catholicism, the pontific capital of the world, it had an ecclesiastic atmosphere, many devotional pomps and ceremonies, and special customs alluring to the nomadic and philosophic traveler, which its secularization has banished necessarily. I did not care for its theology (I do not care for any theology, in fact,) save as it lent a curious and picturesque element to the ancient city. Pio Nono was the pope and temporal prince of what little remained of the once powerful states of the church. Rome was, like Benares, a theologic capital, and its history and traditions had an interest, through its associations of the day, which they have not now, as I have learned by later visits.

Then Italy had a great charm for me, the charm which resides in so many things in our early youth. Then the mediæval chronicles were fresh in my mind, among them the tragedy of the Cenci, replete with fame and horror. I had not been a week in the city before I visited the old palace of the family, in the Trastevere, in a dirty, dismal neighborhood bordering the Ghetto. I had expected to find a decayed, massive structure, dignified and pictorial in its decay, not such a worn, wretched, repulsive pile, full of vile odors and all uncleanliness. It was revolting to any idea of the romantic, too mean to seem tragical. The former palace was what we should call a tenement house of the lowest class, inhabited by thirty or forty families, who apparently depended on washing for a livelihood, but who had no thought of washing themselves. The swarm of small children were squalid, the women slattern, ugly, forbidding. The husbands and fathers were absent, earning their daily pittance, except a few old and decrepit men, who might have been superannuated brigands. The broad stairways and high arches, filthy and broken, served to remind one of the departed majesty of the edifice. I went up and down stairs resolutely, exciting the wonderment of the swarthy inmates, who evidently regarded me as one of the crazy foreigners that invade Rome every winter and spring. I pleased them by distributing small coins among them, but they could give me no information. They seemed never to have heard of the Cenci; I might as well have asked them about Numa Pompilius or Tarquinius Priscus. They believe, however, that the place is haunted—this is an old tradition—and talk of seeing ghosts, and hearing sobs, cries and moans after the manner of the superstitious. If there were any ghosts, the ruined palace would be eminently proper for them to stalk in. If I were a ghost, and did not mind dirt, I might select it myself.

All the while I was there I kept marveling in what room the lovely Beatrice Cenci had slept, and if her diabolic father could really have abused and tortured her, as has been recounted. What a hideous story it is! Shall I repeat it? It may be new in certain of its details to many readers. There are different versions, but they all agree in substance.

Count Francesco Cenci was one of the richest and most powerful lords of the Sixteenth century, his father having been minister of finance to Pope Pius IV. A greater monster, according to accounts, never lived. He was as infamous as Nero, Caligula, Commodus, or any of the vilest emperors of ancient Rome. He seems to have been as near as possible totally depraved. Muratori, the Italian historian, narrates in his Annals that he was twice married,(what should such a wretch as he want of a wife?), Beatrice being, with eleven other children, the product of the first marriage. He hated these children with a fiendish hate, after he had taken a second wife, as if they had been his bitterest foes. He was accused of causing the murder of two of his sons at the hands of his hired bravos, and he treated everybody with wanton cruelty. Beatrice was so beautiful that she inspired him with an incestuous passion, and he persecuted her, day after day, until he finally accomplished his infernal purpose. Having sought the protection of her kinsmen and of Pope Clement VIII to no purpose, she was so aroused to frenzy by her wrongs as to conspire with her brothers and her stepmother to kill her father.

If ever human creature were justified in committing parricide, she was certainly. Such a villain as the count needed to be swept from the earth; he was a moral pestilence. There are several reports of the manner in which Francesco was removed. One is that Mgr. Guerra, who was in love with Beatrice (any man might have been excused for loving her, if a little of what has been told of her be true), joined with Beatrice and her brothers, Bernardo and Giacomo, to rid themselves of this human fiend. They engaged two desperadoes to waylay him and kill him while he was on his way to Petrella, a grim castle in the Sabine hills, near the Neapolitan frontier. Their attempt was frustrated, whereupon Beatrice and her stepmother, goaded to desperation, drugged the count's wine in the palace, and introduced into his room, while he was in a stupor, two assassins, who dispatched him, Sept. 9, 1598, by driving a nail into his eye, penetrating his brain.

Some writers contend that Beatrice was guiltless of her father's death, and that nothing could be proved against her at the trial; that his slayers were two of his own hirelings whom he had injured so foully that they thus took revenge. One of the men confessed, implicating the Cencis. They were put to dreadful torture, and Giacomo and his stepmother confessed, as any one might do, to escape the exquisite pain. But Beatrice, though a delicate girl of only sixteen, with heroic fortitude refused to implicate herself, and won thereby the enthusiastic admiration of the sternest, most pitiless men.

As the Cencis were connected with the most illustrious families of Rome a great effort was made to save them. The renowned advocate Farinacci defended them ably and eloquently, urging in their behalf, even if culpable, the dreadful vices and crimes of the count, which were well known in the highest circles of society, particularly to the ecclesiastics. But nothing availed. The pope, who was autocrat then, and continued to be until quite recently in his own dominions, might have shown clemency, had not the Princess of Santa Croce at that juncture been murdered by her son. The highest nobility were in the habit of committing the most atrocious crimes in those days with perfect impunity. Pillage, ravishment, poisoning, hired assassination, every sort of iniquity, were cultivated along with literature and the arts. Rome was the center of every conceivable form of wickedness at which justice ordinarily winked unless moved by reasons of policy.

The Santa Croce murder alarmed Clement VIII, who thought that an example must be made, in the hope of discouraging private assassination, then so common in Rome. He determined, therefore, that the Cenci should suffer, and his will was omnipotent. He is said by some authorities to have been influenced to destroy them by his desire to confiscate the rich estates of Count Francesco to the holy see, something to which the popes in that and in later centuries were addicted. The famous Villa Borghese, which all tourists remember, for it is one of the stock sights of the Eternal City, was part of the Cenci property, all of which was given to the Borghese and Aldobrandini families, kinsmen of Pope Clement and his successor, Paul V. Every kind of corruption and villainy, from wholesale slaughter and the sacking of towns to forging wills and the practice of simony, was so much the custom that crime caused no horror. But severe punishment, especially executions, awakened the most animated interest, stirring Rome to its depths.

When it was known that Giacomo Cenci (the younger brother, Bernardo, had been acquitted for want of evidence), Beatrice and their stepmother—her maiden name was Lucrezia Petroni—were to be beheaded, the whole city was excited and eager to witness the closing scene. The Romans have for ages been devoted to every species of show or spectacle, and retain this form of devotion to the present. The scaffold was erected near the Castle of Sant' Angelo, a memorable pile, long used as a state prison, and built around the tomb of the Emperor Hadrian.

Beatrice, who has been confined in the castle nearly a year, is naturally the object of all eyes. She is very pale and worn, having been meagerly fed in her dark, damp dungeon, and showing traces of intense mental and physical suffering. Those graceful limbs have been twisted until the bones cracked and were nearly dislocated. From those hazel eyes tears of agony have been wrung, while the strong will kept back the words for which the torturers anxiously waited. Those golden tresses have been almost torn out. She has been racked again and again, and yet her great soul conquered her soft nature and kept it firm as rock. Despite all she has endured her step is firm as she moves toward the scaffold; a faint smile of resignation plays about her sweet lips; a strange light, as of another and a better world, rests upon and illuminates her lovely face. She looks to the vast Catholic crowd like an angel descended from heaven, ready to atone with touching patience for the sins of mankind.

A feeling of deep awe for the beautiful girl creeps through thousands of hearts in that pitying, superstitious throng, and they need only a commanding voice to snatch her from her doom. But the voice comes not, and she soon ascends the platform, unaided, and awaits the headsman without a tremor. Clad in white robes, with her confessor at her side, she embraces her brother and mother-in-law, kisses the crucifix presented to her, puts back her abundant hair, with a serene smile lays her beautiful head upon the block, and in another moment it is severed, with a heavy thud and a gush of blood, from the symmetrical trunk. The vast concourse starts with a half suppressed groan and a thrill of horror, and the brief, clouded, tragic life of the ill starred Beatrice is ended. She continues to live, however, on canvas and in marble, in song and story, and will yet live through coming centuries embalmed in the pathos of her unnumbered woes. Tens of thousands of wayfarers will in the future visit, as I have done, the scenes of her misfortunes and her distressing exit, to repeat, as their sole comment, "Poor, poor Beatrice!"

Her remains were buried in the vault of the Church of San Pietro, in Montorio, and there they still repose. She may have been somewhat idealized by time and through her sorrows, but there is no rational doubt that she was a brave and beautiful maiden, and tried as few have been in the furnace of undeserved affliction. The celebrated painting in the Barberini palace, attributed to Guido Reni and familiar to all persons interested in art through countless copies and engravings, is not, as has been generally supposed, a portrait of Beatrice. I used to think so, in common with everybody else, but I am glad to know otherwise. I never could understand how the original could have so insipid, so characterless a face. It is far better to leave the form and features of the charming, ill fated girl to the imagination, which is more gifted than any artist can be, since it presents to each mind its own ideal.

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