

The World's Wonders

STRANGE THINGS FOUND IN VARIOUS PORTIONS OF THE EARTH

Oldest Hotel in Germany



In Miltenberg on the Main, stands what is believed to be the oldest hostelry in Germany, the Hotel Zum Riesen. The date of its building is not known, but in 1158 the Emperor Frederick I. lodged there, and in the many years of its existence it has sheltered numerous other princes. In 1518 Martin Luther was a guest of the hotel when on his way to Heidelberg. The inn, still occupied, is a great attraction for tourists.

GERMAN PRINCE IN KILTS FROGS FROM THE CLOUDS



Prince Henry of Prussia, brother of the kaiser and pleasantly remembered in the United States which he visited some years ago, is not only a warm admirer of the British, but is especially fond of their favorite sport—golf. He visits England and Scotland occasionally, and when there never fails to indulge in the Royal and Ancient game. Moreover, he sometimes dons the kilts when on the links, and the photographer caught him when dressed in the garb of the highlands.

ROOSTER HAS A LONG FAST

A remarkable instance of a fowl living twenty days without food occurred at Stamford, near Hythe, Eng. A buff Orpington cock, belonging to a resident named Franks, had been missing for three weeks, and was discovered wedged in the wooden foundation on which a haystack had been constructed. The bird was terribly emaciated, but has now recovered.

WONDERFUL ENGRAVING FEAT.

An extraordinary feat has been performed by Paul P. Wentz of Sharon, Pa., who has, on the head of an ordinary pin, engraved the alphabet four times and then added his name and the date when he completed the work, making 113 characters in all.

BLOOMS ONCE IN 70 YEARS.

At the London zoological gardens says a correspondent, near the eagles aviary visitors may now see the rare sight of an aloe in bloom.

The specimen, which stands about 24 feet high, and is shooting upwards rapidly, is a plant of symmetrical growth, with huge fleshy leaves, furnished with large spines, and disposed naturally in the shape of immense rosettes. The leaves contain a strong fiber, which is valuable for rope-making, and the expressed juice may be used as a substitute for soap. It may also be manufactured into a liquor like cider.

It has been called the "century plant," from the belief that it flowers only once in 100 years. It is a fact that it takes many years to come to maturity, in some cases extending to seventy years. It flowers but once, and then dies. The zoo is fortunate in having a second example of this very rare flowering plant, for it is just four years ago since a similar occurrence took place there.

A specimen of the aloe bloomed in Victoria Park ten years ago, when it was found necessary to remove a pane of glass from the roof of the house in which it was growing, so that the stem might have space to grow upwards. The crown of blossoms in this instance towered above the roof. At Kew Gardens, about twenty-four years ago, a similar method had to be adopted when the aloe bloomed there.

The flowers when in full bloom will be a sight worth going a long way to see, not only on account of the magnificent golden blossoms, but also because of the rarity of blooming in this country.

SAFETY SUIT FOR AIRMEN



At the International Congress of Aerial Leagues held in Boulogne recently some interesting demonstrations were given of special devices for the protection of aviators in case of fall. Among these was a safety suit consisting of a padded head-piece and jacket six inches thick, the entire apparatus weighing only eight pounds. The inventor buried himself head-first against a very splly wall in the stone work of the old walls of Boulogne and suffered no inconvenience from the impact.

Opening the Oyster Season



The ancient civic ceremony with which the opening of the Croyne Oyster Fishery at Colchester, England, is celebrated took place this year on board the lugger Henry VII off Brightlingsea. The deputy mayor of Colchester, the town clerk, and the town sergeant bearing the mace, were in their civic robes. The deputy mayor declared the Fisheries open, and the town clerk read a declaration, which dates from December 6, 1189, in the reign of Richard Coeur de Lion, confirming previous charters. Gin and gingerbread were handed round to the company. After the reading of the declaration, which ended with three cheers for the king and three for the mayor of Colchester, the chairman of the fishery board, and the deputy mayor cast the first dredges, and made a good haul of oysters. A luncheon then took place on Peewit Island, Colchester oysters being the chief item on the menu.

The Mysterious Message

By MARTHA RICKER

When Iva Hayman's place was vacant at supper and again at breakfast, Barrington looked worried, but it was Barton who inquired at the close of the meal what had become of Miss Hayman.

"Indeed, I don't know what to think of it," said Mrs. Waythe, with motherly anxiety. "She never came in at all last night, and it's the only time she ever stayed away."

"She was in her room last night, Mrs. Waythe," asserted Barton.

"Oh, you are mistaken," said his landlady. "I've knocked and knocked at her door this morning without getting any answer."

"Well, I heard her up there about three o'clock this morning," insisted Barton. "Her room being just over mine I distinctly hear any noise there," he continued.

Barrington shook his head. "I don't believe she came in last night. She and I were pretty good friends and I think she would have told me if she were going to any frolic," he said.

"I tell you I know what I am talking about," Barton repeated. "She must have come in very quietly, but she was up there and she worked on the typewriter a little, just before three o'clock. I'd take my oath on it."

"I know she writes little stores and articles for the papers," Mrs. Waythe said. "She works at it evenings and has just bought a machine so she can typewrite her own manuscripts. Oh—what if something has happened to her up there all alone!" she cried tremulously. "I hadn't smelled any gas, but—oh, excuse me!"

She hurried up the stairs, Barton and Barrington following after a moment's hesitation while the rest of the boarders awaited developments at the table.

By the time the two men reached the top floor Mrs. Waythe was shaking Miss Hayman's door and calling her name and after two or three minutes of this without a sound in reply the poor woman was ready to cry with nervousness.

"Haven't you a key to this door?" Bates asked.

"I have one somewhere, but I don't seem to find it with the other keys. I looked this morning," she answered.

"Shall I force the lock?" A strange foreboding of evil had seized upon Barton. He could not have told why, but it seemed imperative that the door be opened.

"Such foolishness!" Barrington broke in. "She'll probably be back all right tonight."

"Mrs. Waythe?" Barton repeated questioningly, neither seeing nor hearing Barrington.

"Oh, just as you think best, Mr. Barton," she faltered. "I don't know, really."

It was a matter of a few moments for Barton to pry back the bolt and swing open the door. Then he stood aside for Mrs. Waythe to enter, while Barrington in the background glared at both of them for the liberty they were taking.

"There," cried Mrs. Waythe in a tone of relief. "Just as I said! Not a sign of her here and she hasn't been here, either. Come in and see for yourselves. Oh, I believe she's all right elsewhere!"

Barton, as in a dream, heard Mrs. Waythe's voice running on. He was so positive that Iva Hayman had been there; had been so strangely certain that he should find her—under some unnatural conditions—behind that closed door that for the moment he was unable to comprehend the facts as they were. In a half-dazed way he obeyed the summons and walked into the room, while Barrington lingered resentfully on the threshold.

Suddenly, without knowing why he did it, Barton crossed the floor and lifted the cover from the typewriter. There was a sheet of paper set in place and as his eyes fell on the words written at the top of the page an unearthly chill ran over him.

He tried to speak, but not a sound would come, so he silently held out his hand to Mrs. Waythe and pointed her to the words.

This was the message she read: "Neil, come to me. I am in trouble." During the tense moment that followed, Barrington came silently into the room and when he, too, had read the mysterious appeal the three faced each other wordless.

Mrs. Waythe was the picture of superstitious horror. Barton, too, had turned a gray color, but it was not fear that chilled his heart; it was the fact of that name "Neil" written at the beginning of the strange message. Neil Barton was the first to speak.

"I heard those words written on the typewriter last night," he said slowly, "and I was certain she had not come in until suddenly I heard this machine working carefully as if she was afraid of disturbing some one. I surely couldn't be mistaken in the sound. That north window of mine was open and you see it's right under hers. If she wasn't here herself she managed, somehow, to send that message."

"But, Mr. Barton, you surely don't mean to say that you believe in—"

Mrs. Waythe hesitated.

"It makes no difference what I believe," Barton returned. "Here is a fact. This appeal is her and it is addressed to me, and it seems I am the only one who heard it written. I believe Miss Hayman was in some trouble at three o'clock last night."

"Oh, it makes the shivers go all over me!" gasped Mrs. Waythe.

"Sit down in this chair, please," Barton commanded gently, "you must try to be calm and answer some questions for me. First, tell me how long Miss Hayman has lived here."

"About a year and a half." The frightened woman seated herself, steadied by Barton's tone of authority.

"What do you know of her home and family?"

She began to speak and stopped. She glanced from Barton to Barrington and from Barrington back to Barton.

"What I know she told me in confidence," she said doubtfully. "Perhaps I ought to tell you, Mr. Barton, under the circumstances, but—"

"Certainly, I am going," said Barrington stiffly. "But I want to enter a protest against raising too great a hue and cry for nothing. It may be very annoying to Miss Hayman if she comes back all right tonight."

But his words fell on deaf ears and the moment he was gone Barton, with pencil and memorandum in hand, said:

"Now, Mrs. Waythe."

"She lived right here ever since she left her home down in Mapletown. It's just a little place and her father has a farm about three miles from town. The reason she came away in the first place was to try and make a little money to help pay off the mortgage on the old place. She left home and came to the city by herself and an uncle got her a position in that newspaper office. But now that uncle has moved out west and oh dear! Who'd have ever thought—"

"What newspaper office?"

Barton's voice brought the frightened woman back to the business in hand like a lasso and she gave him the address.

He entered it in a note book.

"Oh, she's the sweetest, nicest little thing! If anything's happened to her! Mr. Barton, are you going to look in the hospitals—or—where?"

"I am going to her office first," Barton answered, slipping the memorandum into his pocket. "I'll let you know as soon as I can what I find out."

As he was facing the storm of sleet on his way down town Barton suddenly remembered the girl in Londale, whose picture was in a small leather frame on his dresser. What would she think of this strange message?

But what she would think was not the business in hand just then. Barton felt in his pocket to make sure that the sheet of typewritten paper was safe, and it was.

At the office of the newspaper he learned that Miss Hayman had received a telegram the day before that her father was ill, and that she had rushed off with barely time to catch the train. Barrington had been there an hour earlier than Barton, it seemed, and had been told the same.

Barton's normal first thought on hearing this would have been to telegraph an inquiry, but under the spell of those words: "Neil, come to me," there seemed but one thing to do. He waited only long enough to telephone Mrs. Waythe a reassuring word, then started for the railway station, and took the next train for Mapletown.

It was a slow journey, and when it was ended there was a vexatious wait before he could get a conveyance to carry him out to the Hayman farm.

It was afternoon when Iva Hayman opened the door to him, and impulsively held out both hands, whether in joy or astonishment, Barton could not be sure.

He followed her into the comfortable living room, and almost her first words were:

"My father's better; he will live, the doctor assures me, and I shall be able to go back to work in a few days. It has come to seem like home here at Mrs. Waythe's, everybody has been so good to me."

Barton caught at the first pause and asked abruptly: "What were you doing at three last night?"

"Three o'clock?" Her face grew serious. "Sitting by father's bed. I was there all night. Why?"

"Did you think of me?"

She gave him a startled glance, but after an instant answered in a low tone: "Yes."

"What was the thought?"

If she could have kept from meeting his eyes she would have kept from answering the question, but one was as impossible as the other. The words came slowly, against her will.

"I thought of you. I wished you could know I was in trouble. And—the clock struck three."

"He's in love with a girl in Londale, and she's a heartless creature that has led him a chase for five years."

Barton kept hoping as they talked commonplace for a return of the friendly, confiding atmosphere, but he was disappointed. He was so disturbed by the change in her manner that it was not till he was on the point of leaving that he suddenly remembered to wonder once more what the Londale girl would say to all this.

"Where did you stand near the door, the position he had taken on rising to leave, when, abruptly, without a word, but with a curious expression on his face, he unfolded a slip of paper and handed it to her."

A wave of color swept from her neck to her hair, and she laughed nervously as she took the paper and tore it nervously across.

"My poor little story!" she cried. "Where did you get that?"

Barton was starting in bewilderment, but he answered:

"I told you how we searched your room. That was in your typewriter."

"Of course! They were the last words I wrote the night before I left town."

Then suddenly she met Barton's gaze squarely and her laugh died.

"You'd hardly believe it, Miss Hayman," he said after a minute, in a strained, unnatural voice, "but I've been a superstitious fool about this thing, and I can't shake it off all at once. You might as well know first as last—I've been thinking you sent me that message in some mysterious way last night at three. I—I even heard your machine going just long enough to write it."

"One of my birds tapping!" breathed the quick-witted girl. "You know Mrs. Waythe's house was wired for electric lights, but it has never been connected, and heavy wires hang down in front of my window, and the sparrows perch there, and then the wires tap on my window like a signal to me. I call it my alarm clock. Some mornings there will be three or four birds all cuddled together there at once. I believe they sleep there all night, because once in a great while they have awakened me at unearthly hours, with their tapping, but usually it comes in the morning."

"It's no matter," said Barton.

He turned on his heels as though the affair were of no consequence.

A rush of thoughts crowded her mind. This explained it all, then. This was the reason he had come into the country to find her. He had obeyed a supernatural summons. The "girl down at Londale" could understand that, of course. He had lost all interest in her—Iva Hayman—now that he knew there was no mystery to probe. Oh—!

But just as she reached that point, Barton wheeled back and caught her by the shoulders.

"You did think of me last night by your father's bed," he said. "You did wish I could know? You wanted me to come? Is that part true?"

She tried not to look at him, but his eyes insisted.

"Is it true?"

"Yes," she acknowledged, under her breath; her heart had begun to beat so loudly that it seemed as if he might hear what it was saying. It said it over and over, and its message brought a hot flush to her face, she made her try to draw away from the grasp on her shoulders.

"What are you thinking?" he asked, as if he had a right. "What thought came into your head just then?"

"Come—throb—throb went that tell-tale heart. Was it possible that he could hear every word that it said? She could never tell him—never!"

"Tell me," he insisted.

His eyes were looking into hers, and then, to her horror, she heard herself putting words to those heart beats.

"He's in love with a girl down at Londale!"

"I am not!" denied Barton, as if he had been accused of murder; and the next instant that gossiping little heart was muffled tight in a great overcoat, learning a new song, which went:

"He's in love with you! He's in love with you!"

Marie Spiridonova.

In Akatoni, the penal colony, is one Marie Spiridonova, whose beauty is so great that the reports always read: "That though showing proofs of all she had undergone, her great beauty is not really marred." This young girl had taken it upon herself to mete out justice to the governor general of Tomboiy for having gone through that province with fire and sword. He would order peasants to be whipped, keeping them tied for two or three weeks lying on the floors in barns, and taking them out each day to be whipped again, until death relieved them. The bench where the whipping was done would invariably be next to the barn where the men lay, and thus the blows and cries of the tortured man were heard by the victims within. Spiridonova went to meet the governor general at a railway station, drew out her revolver, which she carried in a muff, and shot him dead at a distance of thirty feet. Before she had time to use the revolver on herself she was jumped upon by the guards and officers, beaten, dragged by the hair, burned with cigarettes and so horribly maltreated in prison for days that even her lawyers could not, for decency's sake, make public the things that were done to her.—Rose Strunsky, in the Forum.