

AT NAPLES

The Funny Things One Sees
in
Smiling Round the World
By
MARSHALL P. WILDER

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We spent five days at Naples, and filled every hour of it with sight-seeing. Of course we stopped at Herculaneum; but what can I add to the tributes that have been paid to that wonder of wonders? From its three strata of towns have been exhumed the rarest and choicest treasures that adorn the Naples museum.

We walked upon the crust of the seething volcano of Solfatara, now half extinct—in fact, it has laid torpid for seven centuries and is now spread with lush vegetation in the spring-time, and the walk to it, at that season, is through an inclosure like a lovely park of winding alleys and flower-edged paths. But in January we saw only the bare crust of the crater, from whose cliffs came puffs of white smoke, warnings that, at any moment, its hidden fires might break forth. We did not, as at Hawaii, drop our visiting cards into the clefts, only to see them burst into flame and consume in a few seconds, for we were not so curious about subterranean matters as when we were fresh and green in globe-trotting experiences; but we ventured out in obedience to our guide—in whom a long familiarity with craters had doubtless bred contempt—to a few feet of the center. He stamps upon it and says it is hollow. It certainly appears so. He jumps upon it, and the surface quivers. You begin to feel creepy up and down your spinal column, but, led on by his urgent appeals and assertions of "No fear! not be afraid!" you follow him on tip-toe to the very middle of the rocking thing, hoping with all your soul that it will hold together until you are safely off it, when you come to a hole out of which curls a little vapor and a curious murmuring sound as of some giant mumbling in his sleep. And that is the moment in which you wish you hadn't come. But you are induced to lean over and peer down into the hole, and are fascinated by the stirring and moving of boiling mud—horrid gray mud that reminds you instantly of Kipling's "great, gray, greasy Limpopo river," only this is a lake, but gray and greasy enough in all conscience, and seething and boiling in the vent-hole, and rising and falling with the escaping gas that bubbles and bursts and then collects and bursts again.

The lovely Bay of Baiae, that was once lined with the palace-villas of the wealthy Romans, much as Newport's shore is to-day, held our interest for a couple of hours. We explored the ruins of a castle built by a Spanish viceroy which stands on the site of Nero's villa; we compared it for beauty to the lonely temple of Serapis we had just left behind us near Pozzuoli, long buried beneath the sea, to be at last cast up by some mighty upheaval of unseen internal force. The beautiful, curved shore, "so beautiful yet so deadly," from the wilderness of craters which abound there, fascinated us completely. We lunched at a little inn at Baiae, where we had some of the famed wine of Posillipo and were amused by the importunities of the peasant beggars, who very successfully wheedled us out of our spare copers by their whines and wiles galore.

In Egypt it was "backsheesh!" in our ears from morning till night; throughout Europe cries of "pou-boire" and "trinkgeld" haunted one's footsteps; but ancient little Naples had a word all her own. It was "Spaghet!" Simply that, and nothing more. No last syllable, with crisp accent; but the shortened, curt "Spaghet!" was hurled at us from every corner and followed, with deafening echoes, our vanishing carriage wheels. "Spaghet! Spaghet!"

Beside the Lucrine lake we stood and conjured up the spot where the villa of Agrippina, mother of Nero, probably stood; but the thought of her cruel murder at the hands of her monster of a son did not mingle pleasantly with the peaceful lapping of the waves against the reeds, so we turned away and asked to be taken to the Grotto del Cane, or Dog Grotto, that amazing sepulcher of animal hopes and fears which year by year has drawn thousands of visitors to its rocky sides.

As if in keeping with its treacherous fame the guide who shows you the place is a full-fledged brigand, who, "when work is slow," ekes out a subsistence by playing at guide. Ten to one he has a little dog at his heels, and thereby hangs a tale. While you listen to the guide the puppy looks at you with blinking eyes and a grin of confidence, the while his busy tail seems to say, "I know you'll never put me in that poisonous hole, will you?" And you can't keep your eyes off his silly little face, until you find yourself wondering if he's like your little dog at home, your far-away "Buster," whose friendly face and welcome bark you have missed more than you would care to say. Certainly this idiotic little pup bears no outward resemblance to your far-away Buster; but inwardly—how about that? There lies a story. Shall you tell it to the guide? No, he's a brigand and might demand a ransom for permitting you to live; for no doubt he'd rather kill you out-

right than have you live to tell another story. Hurrah! now you've got it—happy thought! You'll try it on the dog. Fixing him with your eye you begin:

"The fleas bothered my dog so, I concluded I'd teach 'em a lesson I learned long ago, but never put in practice. I sent and got a piece of liver and put it near the dog. The fleas at hopped onto it and stuck. Just as I was getting ready to throw it in the fire I turned my back a moment and the dog ate the liver, fleas and all. Now, he's fleas lined."

But about the Dog Grotto. Well, it's filled with carbonic acid gas, and for generations guides have made money out of tourists by shoving some poor little canine into the cave and keeping him there until his legs began to totter and his head to whirl, when they would haul him out and souse him in the near-by lake until he revived; and revive he must, for was there not another tourists' carriage coming down the hill? But sometimes doggie didn't revive. Well, he was only a dog, and there had been instances where men had perished in the foul-smelling cave. But that was ages ago. There was a French king who brought a donkey to the grotto and tried the effect of the gas on him. The animal died. But why the king tried it on a donkey I don't know, unless that a fellow-feeling makes us—but, no—I won't. Then there was an early Spanish viceroy who wanted to decide whether the gas was in prime condition or not, so he put two of his slaves in the cave and they were brought out dead. Spoke well for the gas, at any rate.

Nowadays the question as to the virtue of the gas is more humanely settled. The guide takes a burning torch and plunges it into the cave. Instantly it goes out. But if the act is repeated several times the gas, impregnated with smoke, "assumes the appearance of a silver sea, flowing in rippling waves against the black wall of the cavern." A good story is told of the guides of that region. As a matter of fact they are wholly unreliable, with their high-sounding names of this broken wall or that defaced inscription.

It is said that they keep a little dog which they offer up as a sacrifice on the altar of the tourist's curiosity. "Shall I throw him in?" they will ask the visitor; and if he be of a humane disposition he will quickly reply, "Certainly not! What'd you think I am?"

And the guide will say—making a shrewd guess—"I teenk you are American. Englees he say, 'Yaas, bah Jove, 'trow leetle beggar een!'" But once there came along an American, whom the guide took to be English, and when he asked, "Shall I 'trow leetle beggar een?" the American replied:

"If you do, I'll throw your d—d carcass in after him!"

The thing to do while at Naples is to go to the pink coral grotto, so to the pink coral grotto we went. It lies between the Bay of Pozzuoli and that special little bay where Pliny kept his navy. We went out in a boat with four rowers, the chief of whom gave us large bunches of taffy about our country—"beeyuteeful America," "fine New York," etc.—he had traveled, oh, yes! he had been to Jib-later (Gibraltar) and to America—"beeyuteeful country!" etc., until it came time to return, when the fellow demanded that we pay them a franc each then and there, instead of the equivalent of ten cents each on the return to the shore. Upon refusal he worked himself up into a hysterical sort of paroxysm, and shrieked: "No! not shore! In de boat! In de boat! But my American nerve rose to the occasion and I flatly refused, notwithstanding that the situation began to get strained, to put it mildly. Sulkily he gave in, and gave the command to return to land, and slowly we were propelled—so slowly, indeed, that I had serious misgivings that we were to spend the night upon the darkening sea, while the muttered abuse of our country—"Vile country—people villains—dirty New York—America all thieves!"—made me long to knock the rascal overboard and have done with him. However, as we approached the shore they became more civil and, as we alighted—glad to be back with a whole skin—they bowed and scraped, cap in hand, begging for a settlement at once. But no, the game was now in my hand, and marching up to the hotel I demanded of the manager how it was that he sent his guests out with a parcel of rascals and extortionists, terrifying hapless foreigners and indulging in foul abuse of their country, etc., etc. He rolled his eyes to heaven and protested that he knew nothing of such methods; they were honest fellows, and hard-working, and, by the Madonna and all the saints! he had no knowledge of such iniquities; it was incredible, impossible! etc., etc.

"Here!" said I, "here is your money, according to the agreement I made with you. I will pay no extra extortion, nor be terrified into doing so. And, furthermore, for the protection of my countrymen, I will publish far and wide, I will print in every newspaper of America the name of your hotel and the rascally doings of your employes—"

I got no further, for the fellow, with a howl of anguish, fell upon his knees and with clasped hands implored me not to "put it in de paper—not to ruin hem!—hees familee, dey starve! Do not put in de paper!"

Suppressing the laughter which his ridiculous terror evoked I consented to relent and peace was restored. When we entered our carriage the rowers were waiting cap in hand, quite civil and ingratiating; but I ignored them completely, and we drove off, followed by a storm of curses and maledictions hurled at the American whom they found they couldn't bluff.

STRONG ON THE PROPRIETIES.

How Could She Be Expected to Address Perfect Stranger?

A traveler in the mountains of Tennessee had been stowed away in the best bed the cottage afforded. Late in the night he was awakened by the voice of the paterfamilias addressed to the daughter, who was entertaining company by the fireside.

"Mandy," growled the old man, "is that young man there yet?"

"Yes, pap."

"Is he got his arm around yer waist?"

"Yes, pap."

"You-all tell him to take't away."

"Aw, ye tell him yerself, pap," replied the girl, in a dull, lifeless voice.

"He air a plumb stranger to me."—Success Magazine.

FAMILIAR PHRASE.



"He paused for a moment's reflection."

An Important Line.

"She is a most accomplished woman."

"Is she?"

"Why, have you heard her sing?"

"Yes."

"And seen her paintings?"

"Yes."

"Then how can you ask?"

"I have never tasted her pies."

Concurrences.

Mrs. Grammercy—I married for love and it lasted only a year.

Mrs. Park—Pshaw! I married for money, and we blew it all in before six months.—Smart Set.

HOT ONIONS FOR PNEUMONIA.

Dread Disease Robbed of Its Terrors by Simple Remedy.

Owing to the prevalence of pneumonia and the great mortality which attends its ravages during the winter and spring, several boards of health in northern New Jersey have been taking measures to protect the citizens of their towns from the disease. The health board of Washington, N. J., has published a remedy which is said to be a sure cure for pneumonia, and other health boards are looking into the matter with a view of having the same thing published for the good of the general public. This is the publication as it has appeared in the papers of Washington:

"Take six or ten onions, according to size, and chop fine, put in a large spider over a hot fire, then add the same quantity of rye meal and vinegar enough to form a thick paste. In the meanwhile stir it thoroughly, letting it simmer five or ten minutes. Then put in a cotton bag large enough to cover the lungs and apply to chest as hot as patient can bear. In about ten minutes apply another, and thus continue by reheating the poultices, and in a few hours the patient will be out of danger. This simple remedy has never failed to cure this too-often fatal malady. Usually three or four applications will be sufficient, but continue always until the perspiration starts freely from the chest. This remedy was formulated many years ago by one of the best physicians New England has ever known, who never lost a patient by the disease, and won his renown by simple remedies."

"Internal Revenue" Collections.

The term "internal revenue" has been restricted in its meaning to such revenues only as are collected under the internal revenue bureau connected with the treasury department, and does not include all revenues that are, properly speaking, from internal sources, that is, from sources other than duties levied at the frontiers upon foreign commodities. Thus, moneys arising from the sale of public lands, from patent fees, or the revenues of the postal service, are not generally known as "internal revenues."

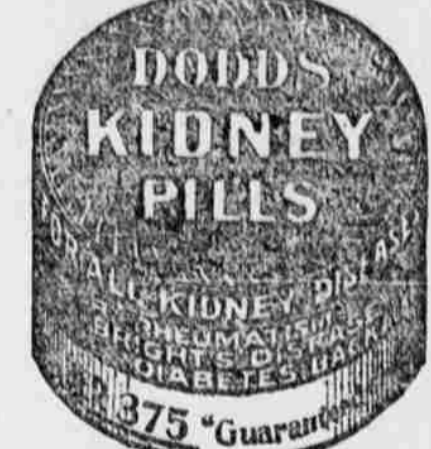
WISE CHE-ILD.



"That horse must love his work, uncle."

"Why so, Egbert?"
"He's so attached to the wagon."

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us dare to do our duty as we understand it.—Lincoln.



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