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A WOODEN SHOE.

IT WAS announced to all Paris that Pagan had fallen seriously ill at the conclusion of his grand concert, had been attacked by a fever which refused to yield to the remedies employed by his physicians.

Some days later, Pagan, whose form was almost spectral, seemed to have his frail existence suspended by a thread, which the slightest shock might sever. The physician ordered solitude and absolute repose, therefore he removed to the Villa Lutetana in the Faubourg Poissonnerie. It was an excellent establishment and stood in a large park-like garden, where the patient could enjoy either solitude or society at will. The great charm of the place was that every one lived as he pleased; in the evening, either retiring to the solitude of his apartment, or joining in the games, music and conversation held in the drawing-room. Pagan preferred the latter, the evening in quietness and repose. Thereafter, the gossip about him in the drawing-room and three or four censorious old women fell on him tooth and nail.

"Ladies," began one, "have you seen this great musician? He salutes no one and never speaks a word. He takes his bowl of soup in an arbor in the garden, and then hastens away if anyone approaches. What an oddity he must be!"

"That's part of his malady," said another. "People say that there is some terrible mystery about his life; some love story, I imagine."

"Not at all," added a third. "Pagan is a miser; there's no mystery about that. Do you remember the concert which was organized in favor of the families who suffered from the inundation of St. Etienne? The great violinist refused to take part in it because he would have to play gratuitously. Depend upon it, he fears that were he to mingle in our society, he might be asked for similar favors."

In the entire household Pagan never exchanged a word with anyone except Viçette, the housemaid who attended him. She was a cheerful, innocent country girl, whose prattle, when she served his meals, amused him.

One morning Viçette presented herself with a sad, drooping countenance, and served breakfast without uttering a word. The musician noticed this change in the young girl and questioned her about it.

"What's the matter, my child? You look sad. Your eyes are red; some misfortune has befallen you, Viçette?"

"O, yes, sir."

"Would it be indiscreet to ask you what it was?"

Pagan fixed his great black eyes on the girl's troubled countenance.

"Come," he said, "I see how it is. After having made you a thousand promises he has quitted you; you no longer have any diamonds of his?"

"Ah! poor fellow! He has quitted me certainly, but it was not his fault."

"How is that?"

"Because in the inscription he drew a bad number, and he has been sent away with a long gun on his shoulder; and I shall never see him again."

Sobbed poor Viçette as she buried her face in her white apron.

"But, Viçette, could you not purchase a substitute for him?"

The girl, withdrawing her apron, smiled sadly through her tears.

"Monsieur is jesting," she said. "How could I ever buy a substitute? This year men are tremendously expensive on account of the report that

there is going to be war. Fifteen hundred francs is the lowest price."

The musician pressed Viçette's little plump hand between his long, sawy fingers as he said:

"If that's all, my girl, don't cry; we'll see what can be done."

Then taking out his pocketbook he wrote on a blank leaf:

"Memorandum: To see about giving a concert for the benefit of Viçette."

A month passed on, the snow came and Pagan's physician said to him: "My dear sir, you must not venture out of doors again until after the winter."

"To hear is to obey," replied the musician.

At Christmas eve, on the anniversary of the birth of the Lord, a custom exists in France very dear to the children. A wooden shoe is placed at the corner of the hearth and a beneficent fairy is supposed to come down the chimney laden with various presents and dainties, with which he fills it.

On the morning of Dec. 24, four of Pagan's feminine critics were in consultation together.

"It will be for the evening," said one. "Yes, for this evening; that is settled," replied the others.

After dinner Pagan was, according to his custom, seated on the drawing-room sofa, sipping his eau sucree, when an unusual noise was heard in the corridor. Presently Viçette entered and announced that a porter had arrived with a case, directed to Signor Pagan.

"I do not expect any case," said he, "but I suppose he had better bring it up."

Accordingly a stout porter entered, bearing a good-sized wooden box, of which, besides the address, were the words, "Fragile, with care." Pagan examined it with some curiosity, and having paid the messenger, proceeded to open the lid. His long, thin, but extremely muscular fingers, accomplished the task without difficulty and the company, whose curiosity caused them somewhat to transgress the bounds of good manners, crowded around in order to see the contents of the box.

The musician drew out a large package secured with several seals. Having opened this, a second, and then a third wrapping appeared, and at length the

curious eyes of twenty persons were regaled with a gigantic wooden shoe, almost large enough to serve for a cradle. Peals of laughter hailed this discovery.

"Ah!" said Pagan, "a wooden shoe. I can guess who sent it. Some of these excellent ladies wish to compare me to a child who always expects presents and never gives any. Well, be it so. We will see if we cannot find some method of making this shoe worth its weight in gold."

So saying, and scarcely saluting the company, Pagan withdrew to his own apartment, carrying with him the case and its contents.

During three days he did not appear in the drawing-room. Viçette informed the company that he worked from morning till night with the tools of the carpenter. In fact, the musician, whose hands were wondrously flexible and dextrous in other things besides violin playing, had fashioned a perfect wooden shoe, and finally ten pieces, five on a violin and five on a wooden shoe. The price of the tickets was placed at twenty francs each. Of these only 100 were issued and they were immediately purchased.

The evening arrived and Pagan appeared, smiling, with every appearance of renewed health, and on his favorite violin played some of those marvelous strains which never failed to transport his auditors to the seventh heaven of delight. Then he seized the shoe, which in his new guise of violin still preserved somewhat of its pristine form, and his whole being lit up with enthusiasm, he began a wondrous improvisation which captivated the souls of his hearers. It represented the first departure of a conscript, the tears, the wailing of his betrothed, his stormy life in the camp and on the field of battle, and finally his return, accompanied by triumph and rejoicing. A merry peal of wedding bells completed the musical drama.

Long and loud were the thunders of applause; even the old ladies who disliked Pagan could not refrain from clapping their palms and bowing and throwing by fair and fabled hands fell at the feet of the musician. In a corner of the hall next the door, Viçette was weeping bitterly. The sympathy of the conscript had gone straight to her heart.

At the conclusion of the concert the receipts were counted and they amounted to two thousand francs.

"Here, Viçette," said Pagan, "you have five hundred francs over the sum required to purchase a substitute. They will pay your bridegroom's traveling expenses."

Then after a pause he continued, "But you will want something where-with to begin housekeeping. Take this shoe violin, and sell it for your dowry."

Viçette received from a rich amateur six thousand francs for Pagan's wooden shoe.

This violin is to-day in the possession of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava.

WILL M. CLEMENS.

A Prince of Guides.

Grindelwald had just celebrated the seventieth birthday of Almer, the doyen of Swiss guides. Almer has been the pioneer of all the modern mountain climbers, to use the picturesque German word. In the Bernese Oberland alone he has made the ascent of the Jungfrau, Mönch, Elger, Wetterhorn and Schreckhorn no less than 100 times, and with the exception of the Jungfrau, he has been the first to set foot on their snowy crests. He is also the only living mountaineer who has made the descent from the Mönch on to the Wengernalp and it is said there is not a mountain peak in the Valais, Grisons, Savoy and Dauphine on which he has not bivouacked. He has five sons, all of them trained from childhood to be guides, and some have carried on their father's work with English mountaineers in the Caucasus and the Himalayas. Almer affirms that none of his children has ever had an accident, but to himself he has ascribed the credit of the Grindelwald glacier a falling block of ice broke several of his ribs and in a winter ascent of the Jungfrau in 1885 his toes were all frozen and had to be amputated. Since then he has retired from work and now enjoys a green old age in his chalet at Grindelwald.

Journal des Debats.

How to Use Court-Plaster.

Did you ever notice the way a physician prepares the court plaster for a wound? First, he holds the piece lengthwise directly through the middle. The plaster should be considerably larger than the wound, to keep well over the edges; then slash the plaster lengthwise nearly to the edge. Straighten the court plaster out flat and cut the slashed pieces at opposite ends. Place the straight edges of the court plaster to the flesh on either side of the wound, bringing the strips across the wound. Moisten them, and taking a strip from each side, draw them together gently, closing the cut, and stick the plaster in place. Continue with all the strips, and the cut will be dressed in a manner to insure a perfect healing, and as well as any doctor could do it.

Cheering Money Killed Him.

Alexander Watzfelder, a betting man, well known as "Sherry Dan," died in New York from the result of a thought, of holding greenbacks in his mouth when he was counting money or trying to make bets on the race track. A short time ago he bit his lip accidentally and the result was blood poisoning.

Beat with Blazing Sticks.

The "fire robbers" are busy again. Their latest victims is Jack Keel, an old German storekeeper near Springfield, Ill. They tied him to a bed and beat him with blazing sticks, in a vain effort to make him divulge the hiding place of his money. Keel is in a precarious condition.

The Most Costly Tomb.

The most costly tomb in existence is said to be that which was erected to the memory of Mohammed. The diamonds and rubies used in the decorations are worth \$2,000,000.

IN A PIE FACTORY.

TURN OUT AN AVERAGE OF 18,000 PIES A DAY.

Men at Work on a Mountain of Dough.—The Oven is a Big Wheel with Flaming Rings.—The Dough is Hung from its Rim—Not a Flaming Sign.

If you want to see something interesting," he said to the New York Mail and Express man, "come with me. It will make you a mouth water if you have a taste for the sweets and, in addition, it will give you an insight into a business that has reached immense proportions within the last ten years."

Down this street and up the next, and up a long flight of stairs to an office where the lucky number of thirteen misses was at work. This was the initial bow to the largest pie factory in the whole of Gotham—and, for that matter, the entire country. Here it is that an average of 18,000 pies is turned out every day of the week except Friday, when the figures go over the 20,000 mark because of the demand for Sunday. Pies little and big and in all conditions of preparation, are to be seen here, and the average office boy or downtown "clerk" would imagine himself in pie heaven were he to get upon the ground.

Ask the most experienced housewife and she will readily testify to the statement that it is no easy matter to make

pies always remain horizontal. One of the platforms is always over the opening of the oven. The attendants cover the platform with pies and the wheel is then turned until the next platform comes into view, which in like manner is filled. This is continued until the eight platforms have been covered. The next turn brings into view the first lot put in, all baked to a nicety. They are then removed and the platform filled again. Again the wheel turns and another army of baked pies is presented and removed. This continues hour after hour so long as the demand lasts an average of about 1,000 pies is baked hourly over this oven. The pie factory is a great institution and must be seen to be appreciated.

Friend of the Workmen.—Miss Ellen Key, a Swedish lady, has attracted much attention in her native land by her efforts to ameliorate the condition of workmen. Jointly with Dr. Aron Frydman, she founded the "workmen's institute of Sweden," which now owns a handsome building in Stockholm and branch establishments in all provincial towns. It has courses of lectures by the most distinguished literary and scientific authorities of the country on historical, philosophical, scientific and literary subjects, adapted to the comprehension of laboring men, who attend in large numbers. Swedish literature is the topic treated by Miss Key, who, in addition to her philanthropic labors, has done literary work, publishing books, chiefly on sociological themes. One is a biography of Anne Charlotte Leffler, Duchess of Calanellio, who is widely known through her sketch of the life of Sophie Kovalevsky. Miss Key is a sort of lay professor of the work-

men's institute of Sweden.

English Sea Trolley on Stilts.

The strangest of all electric railways is that at Brighton, England, connecting that famous seaside resort with Rottingdean, several miles away on the shore. The peculiarity of this railway is that its cars are mounted on four steel stilts twenty-four feet high. The cars are run by a trolley on a high trolley pole, this arrangement makes the electric car in a manner amphibious, able to run through water that is many feet deep.

Each one of the stilts on which the car is supported rests upon a truck having four wheels, the four trucks being braced together by steel tubular struts. The trucks have the appearance of inverted canoes, thus affording easy passage through the water. The electric current is conveyed to the car by

a trolley pole to an overhead wire the same as is in use on the trolley electric roads in this country. This queer little electric line was opened to the public on Saturday, Nov. 28, and is now in regular operation. It makes the distance from Brighton to Rottingdean and back to Brighton in a few minutes over an hour.

The possession of this curious line gives Brighton the distinction of having something in the way of a railroad that is absolutely unique. There is nothing like it anywhere else in the world. The nearest approach to it is at St. Malo, where a tall structure is pulled through the water for a distance of 110 yards. The motor in this instance is simply a stationary steam engine operating an endless chain.

A first-class pie. Pie-making is easy with the young bride only. Still, in this big factory spoken of, it really does seem a simple affair—the putting together of fruit and dough—because the workers go through the performance in "apple-pie order," but it is practice and experience with them rather than personal pleasure. To make a pie correctly, as well as digestively, it is necessary to resort to four processes.

Take, for instance, a mince pie. The work of preparing the filling is the work of preparing the crust, and then in regular order come the task of making the crust, filling the pie and baking it. Contrary to some ideas, it is essential to the welfare of the aforesaid pie that the meat required be of a superior kind. This obtained, the mince is put into an immense steam-jacketed copper kettle that has the capacity of a medium-sized barrel. In this way it is cooked and then entrusted to the beneficial graces of an enormous chopping machine, that does the work as finely as a projectile from a twelve-inch gun might do with a wooden fence. Next for attention the best suet, apple, citron, currants, spices and, finally, the brandy, and these are mixed with the mince-meat by another machine and are sent to the filler. While the mince-meat is being mixed with the other mixture, another force of men is engaged in preparing the crust. This force of men works before an immense trough and is rigged out in clothes of immaculate white, with bare arms as powdered with flour as the hair on their heads. The trough is partly filled with flour and shortening or lard is worked into it by the white workmen. Water that has been specially kept for the purpose is then poured into the trough and the whole thing soon takes on quite a doughlike appearance.

This dough is taken to another force of men, who roll it out into thin slices and place it on the platform. The operation is perhaps the quickest of any in the process. The men go through the mountain of dough like wind through a sand hill. Quicker than it takes to tell, the white covered tins are taken to the fillers-in, and no army of old toppers ever filled in as rapidly as they do. All use a long-handled dipper, which has a capacity just sufficient to fill one pie. With this dipper in one hand and the dough-covered tin plate in the other, the filler-in dips the dipper into the barrel of filling alongside of him, raises it in the air and, with a graceful movement of the wrist, turns it into the waiting plate. This accomplished, everything is ready for the oven. The latter is a gigantic thing operated much on the style of the Ferris wheel. Suspended by its axle above a red-hot fire is a wheel about twelve feet long and sixteen inches in diameter. Eight iron platforms are hung from the rims of this wheel and upon these platforms the pies are placed. The manner of suspension is such that the

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HOW OLD IS NIAGARA?

Some 36,000 Years in the Scientific Opinion of the Geologists.

The Niagara River, which had first been a strait joining Lake Erie to the Canadian gulf, gradually became a lake, shallow, rapid stream, and then, the waters of the lower lakes subsided, its bed narrowed and its fall increased to 420 feet, says Knowledge.

The river was soon greatly enlarged. The stand was rising to the north of Ontario well, and ultimately the outlet from Lake Huron to the Ottawa Valley was blocked, and the waters of these great lakes forced by their present course to Lake Erie, and thence to the Niagara River. The continued rise of land, especially toward the east of Ontario, the water level rose until it attained its present elevation, and the fall of the river between the two lakes was reduced to the present 360 feet. Can you be surprised to learn that the first of the great falls of Niagara was 12,000 years old? The geological age of Niagara River, as given by Elliot, is 12,000 years; Lyell's estimate of 35,000 years is accepted for many years after 1841, but recent writers, using the mean rates of recession during forty-eight years as determined by surveys, make the value 9,000 years. Dr. Spencer has made a new and careful computation of the age of Niagara River and falls. He shows that the recent estimates have not taken into account the various changes that have occurred in the fall and volume of the river. His calculations result in a value nearly that of Lyell's.

Dr. Spencer believes that Niagara River was formed 32,000 years ago, and that 1,000 years later the falls were in existence. For 17,000 years their height was about 200 feet; thereafter the water fell 420 feet. Seven thousand eight hundred years ago the drainage of Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron flowed through the Niagara gorge, and 3,000 years ago the waters rose in Lake Ontario until the level reached that of today. The falls, then, are 31,000 years old. This estimate, calculated from the rate of erosion, is confirmed by another made from the terrestrial movements—one as to the past, the other concerning the future.

The lakes came into existence after the glacial epoch and Niagara after the lakes, and calculations based on the mean rate of rise of the beaches in the earlier period of the lakes' history show that the close of the ice age may safely be placed at 18,000 years ago. As to the future: With the present rate of calculated terrestrial uplift in the Niagara district, and the rate of recession of the falls continued, or even doubled, before the cataclysm shall have reached the Devonian escarpment at Buffalo, that limestone barrier shall have been raised high as to divert the waters of the upper lakes into the Mississippi drainage by way of Chicago. An elevation of sixty feet at the outlet of Lake Erie would bring the rocky floor of the channel as high as the Chicago divide, and an elevation of seventy feet would completely divert the drainage. This would require 5,000 to 6,000 years at the estimated rate of terrestrial elevation.

German Business Women.

The registration of business in Germany has had the effect of showing how large is the number of women engaged in business. In Chemnitz alone 6,000 retail businesses and workshops are the property of women.—Philadelphia Press.

Dumb in All the Seven.

Wife—You do not tell me that Prof. A—has been struck dumb?

Husband—Yes, last night. He was making a lecture on the subject of dumbness.

Wife—Is it possible? And he was struck dumb in all seven?—Comic.

Her Invariable Rule.

"I don't believe in long engagements," said Miss Smatter.

"Neither do I," replied Miss Kittish.

"Short engagements with plenty of them is my motto."—New York World.

MISCELLANY.

The movement for amending or revising city charters is spreading in Maine.

An English journal says that Queen Victoria has been a total abstainer for three years.

A peddler arraigned in Suncook, N. H., last week, bore the famous name of Mark Hanna.

A Belfast (Me.) judge has ruled that shaking dice for money is gambling, but shaking them for money is not.

About 600,000 trees are annually planted by Swedish school children under the guidance of their teachers.

But three old soldiers have thus far availed themselves of the privileges of becoming inmates of the home at St. James.

An unmarried woman has made a reputation in Gage county, Nebraska, as a corn-husker, doing seventy-five bushels a day.

Lord Leighton's house in London has been offered by his sisters to the British nation on condition that it be preserved as it is.

The Canadian government is considering the advisability of deepening the St. Lawrence and the canal from Montreal to Lake Erie.

Japan's steamship line to the Russian ports of the Black Sea will begin running in the spring. The fleet will consist of six steamers.

The Pottawatomie Indians of Athens, Mich., are about to devote a distribution of delayed annuities to the construction of a church.

The work of the new Episcopal Church has commenced in Boston. Fifty members have already been organized throughout the country.

A certain farmer of Glimanton, N. H., netted just 2 cents on five bushels of apples sold to Boston. Last year the same quantity brought him \$13.75.

An Arizona editor has been found guilty of libel. He had been charged with this sign on his office door: "Gentlemen, please to take a drink. Will be back to-morrow."

"How do you like this style of cut?" asked the detective, snapping a pair of slender steel bracelets on the wrists of the prisoner. "I like it very much. It is a good deal like a bird's." responded the other.—Chicago Tribune.

Good for the Health.

Jenks (who has taken to horseback riding and bounces about ten inches at every step)—Ah, how do you like it? "I think horseback riding is good for the health, don't you?"

Blinks—Yes, indeed. All who see you will be benefited. Laugh and grow fat, you know.—New York Weekly.

Scottish Stonecutters.

Scottishmen have almost entire control of the stonecutting industry of New York.

ASTROLOGICAL LORE.

SIGNS OF THE PLANETS AT TIMES OF BIRTH.

They Do Not Exact an Influence Over Life, but Indicate Events Likely to Occur—Come from the Egypt—Ancient.

HE planets do not exert an influence over life. Their position at the time of a person's birth only indicate what that life is likely to be. The science has come down to us from the earliest ages of man, and was one of the foremost arts in the days of the supremacy of the Egyptian empire.

Its revival began in the sixteenth century, and its progress has been steady, especially in England and the United States. The most enlightened minds of the century are giving it special study,