

HONORARY DEGREES.

Times When They Were Bestowed Upon Unwilling Subjects.

It is to be supposed, "in the judgment of charity," at least, that college degrees are never conferred in these days except as they are deserved. This has not always been true, however, and partly for this reason, partly, perhaps, out of a feeling of modesty, some men have shunned honorary titles almost as earnestly as others have coveted them. Speaking about this subject, the Boston Watchman says:

Judge Peters is authority for the statement that after La Fayette had been made a doctor of laws by one of our colleges, Baron Stueben was in great fear lest he should meet with a similar mishap. Having to pass through a college town where the marquis had been thus distinguished, the old warrior halted his men and thus addressed them:

"You shall spur de horse vell, and ride troo de town like de mischieff, for, if dey catch you, dey make one doctor of you."

The tough old soldier had no more respect for such a distinction than his countryman, Handel, who refused to accept the degree of doctor of music from Oxford.

"Vat, from my money away for dat-de blockhead's vish! I no vant to be von doctor."

There is a story that not long ago, when college degrees were scattered somewhat lavishly, an illiterate rich man, having been honored with a degree by a college which he had laid under obligation, made a wager that he could obtain a similar honor for his servant.

He won the wager, and, encouraged by his success, made another that he could obtain a degree for his horse. This time, however, he lost. The college authorities got wind of his game, and, in answer to his letter requesting a doctorate for so and so, the president wrote a courteous note, saying that though the trustees were very anxious to oblige so good a friend of the college, they had found on examination of the records that though they had once conferred a degree upon a jacksnipe there was no precedent for conferring one upon a horse.

A RABBIT MINER.

The Little Animal Led an Indian to a Fortune in Silver.

The famous silver mines of Potosi, in South America, were discovered by an Indian who was in pursuit of an antelope. He was climbing the steep slope of a hill and seized a bush to help himself up. The plant gave way and he started to fall backward, but by a desperate effort saved himself, and, falling forward, cut his nose against a projecting ledge of stone, says the New York Journal.

Stopping to staunch the flow of blood, he chanced to look at the stone which had done the damage, when, to his astonishment, he perceived it was almost pure silver.

This story may be apocryphal, but a tale which comes from Mexico is tolerably well authenticated. According to this narrative, one of the richest mines in that land of mineral wealth was found by a rabbit. An Indian was hunting rabbits and his dog chased one to a hole in a hillside. The Indian hesitated for a moment whether to dig out the rabbit he had seen enter or go in pursuit of another. Determining finally that one rabbit in a hole was worth more than half a dozen on a rocky hillside, he got a spade and went to work.

Before he had turned over half a dozen spadefuls of earth he had forgotten all about the rabbit, for he made the thrilling discovery that he was handling almost solid silver. The man dropped his spade and ran to his employer with the intelligence, the latter returning with him to the spot to see for himself and verify the discovery. The rabbit escaped; at least it is supposed it did, for it enters no more into the story, but its memory is preserved in the name of the mine, which, being translated into English, signifies the "Rabbit's Den."

It would have been well for the Indian if he had escaped when the rabbit did, for, according to the story, the poor fellow was murdered by the Spaniard, who desired to keep the secret of the mine and was afraid that the Indian might reveal it and the government might step in and claim either the whole or a large part of the proceeds.

Coal-Dust Explosions.

The mining of coal is attended with many dangers, but none more to be dreaded than the dust explosions that are liable to occur at any instant and against which, in many instances, not even the most ordinary precautions are taken. The air becomes thick with dust, which by some means comes in contact with flame, and the fire, spreading with inconceivable rapidity, causes the most terrific explosions. It is claimed that all danger in this direction may be removed by a carefully-arranged system of spraying water through all the passageways. The wet particles at once fall to the ground and may be washed away by falling water or trodden down by the feet of the miners. Recent investigation seems to prove that gas alone produces comparatively few of the more dreadful accidents, but that gas and coal-dust mingled make an explosive compound that is greatly to be dreaded.

On Board of a Donkey.

A man-of-war was lying off Gibraltar, and permission was given the men to go ashore for the day. The sailors amused themselves in various ways—among others by riding on donkeys, and their want of experience in this line caused much merriment. An officer, observing one of the men sitting far back on the animal, instead of the usual position, called out: "I say, Jack, get up more amidships!" With an injured air, the sailor replied: "Well, sir, this is the first craft that I ever commanded in my life, and it's hard, indeed, if I can't ride on the quarter-deck if I like."

CHINESE WARRIORS.

Practicing with Bows and Arrows—Bombs Shells Filled with Mud.

Rev. W. E. Crocker, who went from Louisville as a Chinese missionary, writes of the war in China as follows: "Just outside the city of Ching Chow Fu is a garrison of Tartar soldiers. As I walked on the wall one day I saw some bows and arrows! Just think, bows and arrows in this day of repeating rifles and Krupp guns!"

"The government of China is not Chinese, but Tartar. Over three hundred years ago a Chinaman by the name of Li drove the last emperor of the Ming dynasty from his throne in Peking. This emperor was sent beyond the great Chinese wall to the nation of fierce Tartars, who lived in tents and engaged in much war. The Tartar king came down and drove out Mr. Li, and instead of reinstating the rightful emperor, took the throne himself. He ordered the Chinese men to shave the front part of their heads and plait their hair into a queue, and the women to unbind theirs. The men obeyed, the women did not. The Tartar women do not bind their feet, and the court ladies and most of the soldiers' wives are Tartars. So really China is a subject nation to an outside power. There is very little connection between the government and the people. The present emperor has just recently come of age and some think that he will be favorable to many reforms in China. He is studying English, and has intercourse with the representatives from foreign governments. China has no conscience, and until the name of Jesus shall teach them to have a conscience no kind of reform or advance in science can help them. They have fine silver mines, fine gold mines, fine old wells, fine resources as yet untouched, and it is impossible to utilize them until China can depend on a Chinaman to do his duty conscientiously."

"Dr. Crawford was telling how, in the war with France several years ago, a shell was shot from a Chinese gun into a French ship, and they expected an explosion which would seriously injure the vessel. It did not explode. They got skilled men to extract the dangerous shell from the timbers of the ship, and, after much care, the shell was taken out and carefully opened, to be found filled with mud! The wily Chinaman, having no conscience, extracted the powder, sold it and put in the mud."

VILLAGE LIFE IN MEXICO.

A Humdrum Existence with But Few Attractions.

A glance about the streets reveals a great monotony of color and outline, writes T. J. Hughes, in the Chautauquan. Unbroken lines of one story houses form narrow, dirty, gutterlike streets. The yards and gardens which make, with their semitropical trees and plants, delightful interior courts, whose abundant foliage hides the houses of the village at a distant view, are now themselves concealed, and everything looks barren and desolate. The only relief is the plaza with the cool and delightful shade of thickly-planted orange, banana and palm trees.

The ancient appearance of houses and streets is more like what one would expect to find in Jerusalem than in a nineteenth century republic. Oriental features are everywhere common—women carrying immense water jars, passing to and fro; sleepy-eyed, lazy donkeys loaded with cane until nothing but their ears are in sight, prodded along by the sharp-pointed sticks of merciless masters; dirty, ragged and often naked children wallowing in the dust; and great-wheeled, ancient-looking ox-carts, with immense loads, women, burros, children, carts, straggling along in the middle of the street. The muddy waters of the Rio Grande separates us from a people more different from ourselves than many across the waters.

Life among the young folks is of but few attractions to one who has experienced its enjoyments in the United States. All innocent amusements practiced by us are unknown. There are no parties, no reading circles, no public gatherings of young people. No means are employed to bring the sexes together to enjoy each other's society, the young man not even being permitted to visit his sweetheart at her home.

Where Do Looking-Glasses Go?

What becomes of the looking-glasses? The annual manufactures in Europe at the present time is about eighteen hundred and fifty square yards of looking-glass. Can it be that to their destruction much of the ill-luck of the race is due? Glass mirrors are supposed to have been first used in Sidon, and were very expensive for a long time after their introduction. A letter written in 1673 says that even if mirrors had been manufactured in France at that time only the king would have been rich enough to have one. In ancient times polished metals were used, and grand ladies gave their mirrors in charge of slaves to be kept bright enough to faithfully reproduce the charms of their owners.

Her Face Her Fortune.

Queen Victoria's newest maid of honor, Miss Majendie, owes her entrance to royal favor to a curious bit of chance. She happened to be singing in a church choir one day when the queen was present at Divine services and her majesty was so greatly pleased with the fresh sweetness of the girl's face and voice that she invited her to fill the place coveted by the young girls of the English aristocracy. The offer was the last thing Miss Majendie herself expected.

Literal Snakes in the Wine.

Snakes and lizards have hitherto been generally regarded as the effect rather than the cause of stimulants. According, however, to the official report drawn up by the British consul at Peking and submitted to the English parliament, an immense quantity of dried lizards have, during the last two years, been shipped from that Chinese port for use in the adulteration of wines in Europe and America.

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Cholly—Ethel Knox told me last night I wasn't over half witted. Susie—I shouldn't feel badly about that; she never did know anything about fractions.—Kate Field's Washington.

"That was a finished sermon," remarked a lady as she came out of church yesterday. "Yes, but I was afraid it never would be," said her husband.—Philadelphia Record.

Paderewski isn't coming over here this year, but the college football young man with Paderewski hair is already beginning to be very much in evidence.—Boston Globe.

Scientist (at railroad restaurant)—Do you know, sir, that rapid eating is slow suicide? Drummer—It may be; but on this road slow eating is starvation.—New York Weekly.

Eckstein—Do you take much interest in dose racing matters? Rheinstein—Dree per-cent a mont' from der fellus mit de "sure tings"—The Loser.

"Can't they find old Brinkeroff's will?" "No; his wife put it in the pocket of one of her dresses before she died."—Brooklyn Life.

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Dramatist—This joke is meant to hit the big theater hat. Player—It will go over the heads of the audience.—Detroit Tribune.

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