

The Santiam News

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L. W. CHARLES

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GERMANY AND ALSACE.

A Very Suspicious Doll and a Ruse That Saved a Life.

For many years after it was taken over by the Germans the province of Alsace had many difficulties. Every possible precaution was taken to guard against any demonstration of the French national spirit, and, though the children were allowed to learn the language of their ancestors, they were not allowed to be taught it by French instructors. The following instances indicate the extent to which the government carried its practice of watching the people:

A little girl was seen playing with a doll which was dressed in red, white and blue. The suspicions of the official were aroused, for it certainly was dreadful to see the power of the German empire so boldly threatened. The child was tracked to its home, and there the officer learned that the doll was a present. He immediately proceeded to the woman who had given it to the child and obtained the address of the shop where the dangerous plaything had been bought. It was a modest little establishment, but the officer found it at last and then discovered that the doll had been made and dressed in Leipzig. This was a surprise, but the matter did not end here, for the manufacturer in Leipzig was officially requested not to send any more red, white and blue dolls to Alsace.

The other story is that two Germans were walking one cold day on the banks of a large pond when one of them fell in. He could not swim and screamed for aid. The other, who was an officer, did not feel inclined to take so cold a plunge and calmly watched the struggles of the sinking man. All at once the man in the water began to sing a verse of the "Marseillaise," and the officer jumped in forthwith, for his strict orders were to arrest any person whom he heard singing that famous song. The unfortunate citizen was imprisoned for eight months, but that was better than drowning.—New York Press.

Wilkie Collins' Fat Villain.

Here is a story that was told by Hall Caine concerning Wilkie Collins: "The most successful character in 'The Woman in White' was not a woman, but a man—Fosco, the fat villain. When the book was produced everybody was talking about the fat villain. While the author was staying with his mother a visitor came. The lady said to Collins:

"You seem to have made a great success with your villain in 'The Woman in White.' I have read the book. I have studied this villain, but he is not half a villain. You don't know a real villain, and the next time you want to do a villain come to me. I am very close to one.

I have got one constantly in my eye—in fact, it is my own husband!" "Wilkie Collins often told this story, but withheld the name of the lady. It was the wife of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton."

The Curse of Scotland.

Among the reasons why the mine of diamonds has been called the curse of Scotland are the following: Diamonds, nine of, called the curse of Scotland, from a Scotch member of parliament, part of whose family arms is the mine of diamonds, voting for the introduction of the malt tax into Scotland.—"Chronology" or "The Historian's Companion," Fourth Edition, by Thomas Tegg, London, 1826.

There is a George Campbell mentioned in Burton's "History of Scotland" as having caused the mine of diamonds to be called the curse of Scotland because he stole nine diamonds out of the royal crown in the reign of Mary Stuart, in consequence of which all Scotland was taxed.

A COLLISION AT SEA.

The Scene as the Tai Hoku Plunged Into the Depths.

The Tai Hoku was a steamship of 3,100 tons, built at Middleboro, England, for the Osaka Steam Navigation company, says the Engineering News. Having sailed to Antwerp to complete her cargo, the steamship left that port on Aug. 6, 1897, for Japan. On the following Sunday she passed into a heavy fog, and at about 2 o'clock that night the steamer collided violently with another vessel. At first it was supposed that no serious damage had been done, but in half an hour five feet of water was reported in the forehold. The water gained at the rate of about two feet per hour, and the ship gradually settled by the head.

At 4 a. m. on Monday there was sixteen feet of water in the forehold, and all the pumping power available made no impression upon the inflow. At 5 a. m. all hands took to the boats and pushed off a few hundred yards from the sinking steamship, and at 8:30 a. m. the party was rescued by the Steamship Millfield. By this time the fog had cleared away, and the stern of the Tai Hoku could be seen gradually rising in the air. Shortly before 1 p. m. she began to roll heavily, and then she plunged and sank. In the fifteen minutes previous to her final disappearance four photographs were taken.

When the Tai Hoku went down there was, of course, considerable steam pressure in her boilers, possibly sixty or seventy pounds. When the bridge collapsed, the siren and foghorn cords being attached to it, both the siren and foghorn sounded just as the vessel disappeared. The third and final view shows, apparently, an explosion. But as a matter of fact, said an engineer who witnessed the accident and took the photographs, there is little doubt that when the water reached the boiler fires there was a sudden generation of steam and gas, which rushed with almost an explosive effect up the flues and smokestack, carrying with it quantities of soot, which remained suspended in the air for some minutes after the ship disappeared. There was not the least sign of the proverbial whirlpool when the ship went down, though there were abundant surface signs of the gradual escape of the air imprisoned in the hull.

Foast of Kioees.

Halmagen, in Roumania, possesses a public festival which is probably unique in the world. It is a little town of about 1,200 inhabitants, and on the morning of its annual fair day the population from about eighty villages come trooping in in swarms. To them go out all the young women, married or single, of Halmagen, each bearing a small flower garland and vessel of wine and all attended by their godmothers. This last precaution is taken from motives of deference for Mrs. Grundy. As the visitors approach, the young women offer to each a taste of wine and—a kiss.

Friendship.

The plant of friendship grows only in the warm air of congeniality. Confidence binds its parts together and is the cohesive power of its nature, while sympathy is the life giving sap coursing through every fiber.

It is an evergreen and is indigenous to all lands. Its most beautiful flowers, open during the night, and, while a perennial bloomer, it is most fragrant in winter. Time cannot wither or destroy it; age but strengthens and develops.—C. S. Field.

Bryant's Pastry.

Bryant always thought he could write much better poetry than that contained in his "Thanatopsis," which was one of his earliest. During his later days he on several occasions expressed some surprise at the preference shown by his admirers for this particular poem "when I have done so many things better." He believed the translation of Homer to be the best work he ever did.

A Convenient Ranch.

Some real estate dealers in British Columbia were accused of having victimized English and Scotch settlers by selling to them, at long range, fruit ranches which were situated on the tops of mountains. It is said that the captain of a steamboat on Kootenay lake once heard a great splash in the water. Looking over the rail, he spied the head of a man who was swimming toward his boat. He hailed him. "Do you know," said the swimmer, "this is the third time today that I've fallen off that bally old ranch of mine?"

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