

ANXIOUS WAGNER.

The First Performance of "Rienzi" at Dresden.

In Ludwig Frankenstein's Wagner year book Gustav Kietz tells this story in connection with the first performance of "Rienzi" at Dresden: "On the day of the first performance Wagner asked me to meet him in front of the theater after the box office had been opened, so that he could give me and my friend Schuster, the butcher, tickets for the performance. Wagner was in a state of great excitement, and when he gave me the two tickets Heine whispered to me, 'Take some one with good big hands with you.' He watched the people as they came toward the theater, and every time one went in he would make some remark to his wife which showed his satisfaction. I had to go within, but I shall never forget the childish joy of the composer when he saw groups enter the house and the disappointment when others passed the open doors. I thought of it even that evening when the enthusiasm was the greatest. How happy Wagner and his wife must have been at the following two performances, when the house was so filled that even his relatives, who had come to Dresden for that purpose, could not be admitted to the theater!"

THE DESERT SANDS.

Why the Arabs of Sahara Lose the Use of Their Eyes.

"I shall winter in the Sahara," said a traveling man. "With a caravan I shall traverse under a blinding sun and an endless plain of snow white sand, but none of my Mohammedan attendants will wear any kind of shade over his eyes. "Against that dazzling glare the backs of their necks will be swathed in white linen, and even their ears will be protected. Nothing, though, will keep the sun out of their faces. "Wondering about this, I said one day to the kaid of an Algerian village: "Why don't you Arabs wear a cap of some sort? You live in the world's worst sun glare, but neither fez nor turban under any circumstances has a peak. "The Koran," the kaid answered, "forbids all true believers to shade their eyes. Obeying the Koran implicitly, we dwellers in the desert avoid like poison briks to our headgear. In consequence there is more blindness among us than among any other people in the world."—Los Angeles Times.

A Popular Play Indeed.

Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" has been translated into German nine times, into French seven, into Italian six, into modern Greek three, into Latin and Swedish twice and into Croatian, Danish, Dutch, Frisian, Polish, Roumanian, Russian, Magyar, Portuguese and Yiddish. There are seven or eight English acting editions of the tragedy. But one attempt actually to alter and improve it has ever been made. This was in 1722, when John Sheffield, duke of Buckingham, divided it into two parts at the death of Caesar, calling it "The Tragedies of Julius Caesar and Marcus Brutus," and made many other changes. To enrich this poor play, or, rather, these poor plays, Pope furnished some choruses, but they had the usual effects of ill adjusted ornaments—they served only to make the meanness of the thing they bedecked the more conspicuous.

Full Faith in the Doctor.

A young farm laborer called one market day at the registrar's office to record his father's death. The registrar asked the date of death. "Well, father ain't dead yet," was the reply, "but he will be dead before morning, and I thought it would save me another journey if you would put it down now." "Oh, that won't do at all," said the registrar. "Why, your father may take a turn before morning and recover." "Ah, no, he won't," said the young laborer. "Doctor says he won't, and he knows what he's given father."—Liverpool Mercury.

Irish Wit.

As Sir Walter Scott was riding with a friend near Abbotsford he came to a field gate, which an Irish beggar, who happened to be near, opened for him. Sir Walter was desirous of rewarding him by the present of sixpence, but found he had not so small a coin in his purse. "Here, my good fellow," said he; "here is a shilling for you, but, mind, you owe me sixpence." "God bless your honor!" exclaimed the Irishman. "May your honor live till I pay you!"

The Bone.

"Say, paw," queried little Tommy Toddles, "what is the bone of contention?" "The jawbone, my son," answered the old man, with a side glance at his wife.—Chicago News.

A Blunder.

Customer—I must say, waiter, this is the first time I've ever had a really tender steak here. Waiter (aghast)—Good gracious, I must have given you the proprietor's steak!—London Standard.

His Awful Threat.

Mother—Why did you not scream when Hans kissed you? Daughter—He threatened me. Mother—How? Daughter—He said if I did he'd never kiss me again.—Meggendorfer Blatter.

THE THERMOMETER.

It Was Invented by a Poor Man Who Had Failed as a Merchant.

There is one little instrument in which the interest of all classes of people in this country never diminishes through all the changing seasons of the year, from the first day of January to the last day of December. It regulates the business pulse of the nation and is the shrine to which men of all occupations turn. And this little instrument is the thermometer, which bears the name of Fahrenheit.

Before the seventeenth century men could only judge of the amount of heat prevailing at any place by their personal sensations and could only speak of the weather in a very indefinite way as hot or very hot, cold or very cold. In that century several attempts were made by scientific experimenters by means of tubes containing oil, spirits of wine and other substances to establish a satisfactory means of measuring heat, but none of them proved successful. Even Sir Isaac Newton, who applied his great mind to this work, and also the noted astronomer, Halley, failed in their attempts to produce a heat measure.

It was reserved to Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit, an obscure and poor man, a native of Dantzic, to give to the world the instrument which has proved to be so serviceable to mankind. He had failed in business as a merchant and, having a taste for mechanics and chemistry, began a series of experiments for the production of thermometers. At first he made these instruments with alcohol, but soon became convinced that the semisolid mercury was a more suitable article to use in the glass tube.

Fahrenheit had removed from Dantzic to Amsterdam, and there about the year 1720 he made the mercury thermometer which has ever since been fashioned much like the original.

The basis of his plan was to mark on the tube the two points respectively at which water is congealed and boiled and to graduate the space between. He began with an arbitrary marking, beginning with 32 degrees, because he found that the mercury descended 32 degrees more before coming to what he thought the extreme cold resulting from a mixture of ice, water and sal ammoniac. In 1724 he published a distinct treatise on the subject of his experiments and the conclusions that had resulted therefrom.

Celsius of Stockholm soon after suggested the more rational graduation of a hundred degrees between freezing and boiling point. This was the centigrade thermometer. Reaumur proposed another graduation which has been accepted by the French, but by far the largest part of the civilized world Fahrenheit's scale has been accepted and used, with 32 degrees as freezing, 55 degrees as temperate, 96 degrees as blood heat and 212 degrees as boiling point.

It is true that the zero of Fahrenheit's scale is a solecism since it does not mark the extreme to which heat can be abstracted. This little blemish, however, does not seem to have been of any practical consequence. Arctic explorers have persisted in describing temperatures below the zero of Fahrenheit, and scientists have produced artificially temperatures far below any ever dreamed of by the thermometer maker of Amsterdam. There is doubt as to the year of the death of Fahrenheit, but it is generally placed in 1740.—Los Angeles Times.

Sun Power.

There is one source to which all minds revert when this question is mentioned, a source most promising and yet one which has so far eluded the investigator. The sun on a clear day delivers upon each square yard of the earth's surface the equivalent of approximately two horsepower of mechanical energy working continuously. If even a fraction of this power could be transformed into mechanical or electrical energy and stored it would do the world's work. Here is power delivered at our very doors without cost. How to store the energy so generously furnished and keep it on tap for future use is the problem. That the next half century will see some solution thereof, either chemical or otherwise, seems likely.—H. S. Pritchett in Atlantic.

Victoria and Lady Millais.

It is related that when Sir John Millais fell ill Queen Victoria sent the Princess Louise to the dying man to inquire what favor she could accord him that could alleviate his sorrow if not his pain. Sir John thereupon called for his writing tablet and inscribed upon it the words, "I should like the queen to see my wife." Then the queen broke through her iron rule not to receive any woman whose marriage tie had been once dissolved, whether there be blame or not, graciously acceded to the request and accorded the sorely tried lady a tender and sympathetic interview.—St. James' Gazette.

Ambitions.

The toiler in the city had been given an advance in salary. "Now," he said jubilantly, "I can begin saving to buy a farm." The agriculturist looked at the check received for his season's wheat. "An other such crop or two and I can move into the city," he mused.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Light Work.

"Want a job, Rastus?" "No, sah; no, sah. Done got a job, sah." "Indeed! What are you doing?" "Takin' in washin' foah ma wife to do, sah."—Lippincott's.

Grieving for the lost opportunity in the very worst way to find new ones.—Baltimore American.

BLOOD PRESSURE.

The Determination of Its Relation to Mental States.

In addition to those bodily movements which are called "voluntary" various bodily phenomena which are clearly involuntary accompany violent mental excitement. The blush of shame, the distinctive flushes of joy and of anger, the pallor and sweat of fear, the tears of grief and the "creeping" of the flesh provoked by horror are familiar examples. The respiration is quickened by joy and retarded by anxiety, and the feeling of relief finds expression in a deep sigh. Violent emotions often disturb the digestion. The heart "bounds with joy," is paralyzed by horror, "leaps to the throat" in terror. The connection between the heart and the emotions is so intimate that the heart was long regarded as the seat of the soul.

Most of these involuntary physical concomitants of mental excitement are brought about by a special part of the nervous system, the sympathetic nerve and its branches, which ramify to every part of the body. The best known branches are those that govern the dilatation of the blood vessels, which are profoundly affected by mental states. These phenomena are susceptible of exact quantitative determination by means of a method devised by the Italian physiologist Mosso. The result is fairly accurate measurement of the variation of blood supply in the brain. The subject is laid on a board which is balanced on a fulcrum at the center of gravity. When the subject is quiet and undisturbed the board lies horizontal. Now, if an unpleasant sensation or emotion is induced in the subject his head is involuntarily elevated, indicating diminution in the quantity of blood in the brain. An agreeable sensation of emotion produces the opposite effect.—Scientific American.

Tennyson's Queer Ways.

It was with great difficulty that Professor Hubert Herkomer, the portrait painter, obtained Tennyson's consent for a sitting, but at last he was successful and called at the poet's house. After some little delay the door of the room where the artist was waiting slowly opened, and Tennyson entered with drooping head. He looked most dejected and murmured: "I hate your coming. I can't abide sitting." However, Mr. Herkomer was allowed to remain. Soon after he had retired to his room for the night there came a knock at the door. A head was thrust in and the voice of the poet remarked: "I believe you are honest. Good night."

Secondhand English.

Swede (to Englishman at Colorado Springs, noting that the Englishman's accent was unlike that of the other inhabitants)—How long you bane in dese country? Englishman—Nine months. Swede—You bane spake de language putty goot already. Ven you bane in dese country two years you vil spake as well as de people here. Englishman (annihilatingly)—Man alive, I am from the country where this language is manufactured. What you are learning to speak is secondhand English.—Judge.

The Modern Youth.

"When I was your age," said the severe parent, "I was compelled to earn my own living." "Sir," answered the complacent youth, "I know too little of the circumstances to attempt to defend my grandfather."—Washington Star.

The fox may lose his hair, but not his cunning.—Dutch Proverb.

Nearly every Japanese follows the profession of his father.

EAST INDIAN SERVANTS.

An Amusing Complication Over a Dose of Medicine.

The experiences of an English householder in India are often amusing. An instance of one of the amusing experiences is given.

The old gray bearded butler announced at luncheon one day that the dishwasher was ill with fever, but that if I would give him some medicine he would soon be able to resume his work. I happened to have none by me, but the matter was urgent, clean dishes being important.

"Can he go to the chemist's, do you think, for some physic if I give him a letter?" I asked. "I don't know what to write for."

"Oh, yes," he said; "he is quite able to go that short distance."

I thought that was much the best way, and then the chemist could give him what was proper. So I wrote: "Please give the bearer a dose of medicine. He says he has fever."

I forgot to inquire about him till two days after.

"How is the dishwasher?" I said.

"He is much better, your honor."

"Ah, then he took the physic?"

"No, your highness. The bazaar cooly took the physic."

"The bazaar cooly!" I exclaimed.

"What for?"

"The dishwasher said: 'Cooly goes errands. He may fetch me the physic.' So the cooly took the letter. Shop master prepared physic, then told bazaar cooly to drink it. Cooly said: 'Not for me is the medicine, but for another man. I take it to him.' 'Not so,' said the shop master. 'The mistress has written, 'Give to bearer,' and she means you must drink it here.' Many times the cooly said he was not the man, but they would not listen, and they made him drink it."—Exchange.

True.

"It isn't true, is it," asked Rollo as he finished reading "The Pied Piper of Hamelin"—"It isn't true that he could play on his pipe so that the rats would go off and drown themselves?"

"Well," replied Rollo's father, "I don't know about that. I think it may be true. Your Uncle George can play the flute so that it will scare a cow into a river and drive all the dogs in the neighborhood crazy. Yes, I should say the poem is true."—London Answers.

The Obsolescent Honeymoon.

Honeymoons are going out of fashion and will probably eventually disappear. At present they are often shortened to four or five days or even a paltry week end. Marriage is getting to be looked upon in a more matter of fact way, and it is no doubt well that the romantic girl should not expect absolutely unreachable things of wedded bliss.—London Bystander.

A Good Excuse.

"Now, then," demanded Luschman's wife the next morning, "what's your excuse for coming home in that condition last night?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, m' dear," he replied, "none of the hotels would take me in."—Philadelphia Press.

Of High Degree.

"What kind of a dog have you got there, my boy?" "Dat's a mouse hound, mister."—Judge.

Quite a Difference.

"What does Vernon do for a living?" "He works in a paint shop." "Why, I understood he was a writer for the magazines." "Well, you asked me what he did for a living."—Bohemian.

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