

FROM PICA TO NICE.

A Journey Through the Earthquake Shaken District of Italy.

That part of the Italian coast which was recently shaken up by the earthquake is historical. Passing on the Corinna road used to be part of a liberal education. I made a trip in the saddle once from Pisa, by Genoa, and through Monaco to Nice, where my gallant jade gave up the ghost, and I took to the railroad. It was a wonderful journey. At the start it was in a pleasant country. Then we came into the shadow of the Apennines, in regions bleak and black with bandit history. Rain and poverty were on all sides. Even the noble carriage road was advancing in decay. The locomotive mocked us as it went by, scaring the ghosts of Byron and Coleridge, of Keats and Shelley, Lover, Dickens and the rest of the storied solitudes through which we rode. All that was left of their time and the remoter past was the beginning.

These no locomotive whistle could charm away. They stood guard, or squatted it, along the road, much closer than the milestones. I never saw such horrible examples of bodily deformity and mutilation in my life as there. One of our party, a young Neapolitan student, assured me that there was a man in Naples who manufactured cripples for this trade. He took children and maimed and distorted them to order, and, no matter how short nature's supply of monstrosities might be, contrived to eke it out. I thought my pleasant fellow traveler was drawing the long bow until years later, here at home. I read in an Italian paper of the leading up of a cripple factory in the miscreant city, and the condemnation of the miscreant who ran it to penal servitude.

The most beautiful part of the Corniche is between Cenon and Nice. Here the tropics circle the temperate zone with fruit and blossom. The Mediterranean is a plain of sapphire, netted over with the white crests of the breaking wavelets. The fishing villages and the farms on either hand are like scenes to the opera. The only people who work are the convicts breaking stones to mend the roads. You have plenty of company, for there are winter resorts all down from Savona to the French border. Here the Alps come down to the sea, and the foam beats the feet of the eternal hills. They begin at about San Remo. Ventimiglia is among them, Mentone, too, and Monaco is on a miniature Alp of its own. It was at this point that the earthquake did the least damage, according to reports. It caused most harm in the Riviera, as the street is called, from San Remo to Cenon. But the swells at Cannes, Nice and Mentone had a dreadful fright—Alfred Trumble in New York News.

Expense of Running a Circus.

"Now, there's the matter of the expense of running a circus," said Mr. Cooke. "Few people understand or know anything about it. When they look at their bill and read the line 'At an enormous expense,' etc., nine out of every ten of them smile incredulously. By the way, all big circuses employ a man especially to write the programme and other billing matter. Well, the general public, as I said, looks upon all statements of this sort as mere figures of speech. But I can show you clearly that there is no particular fun in owning or running a large circus and that there is little or no exaggeration in the figures generally given as the expense of operating the shows."

"Before we exhibit in a city at all the first expense we incur is that of advertising. This department alone entails an expense of about \$800 per day. This covers all the outlay necessary to bring the show before the public eye, and the newspapers naturally get the men's share of it. The rest is laid out in pictorial paper for the walls and bill boards, in lithographs for store windows, in bill posting, Every hire, etc. You see, we 'tare' every town within fifty miles of that in which we built, and each country road or school district is thoroughly canvassed by our bill posters and mounted barkers—the latter an innovation of ours introduced a few years ago. These barkers carry huge bundles of bills on horseback, and as they ride through the country, blowing loud blasts at every farm or cross road, they create a great sensation. I have often seen the farm hands leave the plow and run a quarter of a mile or more in the searching sun to ascertain what was up, and then, having found out, walk leisurely back reading our advertisements."—New York Cor. Boston Herald.

Novel Idea in Advertising.

In France, the original idea of substituting some fair damsels for the negroes, who in our land, and for a consideration, sandwich themselves between two posters and perform the functions of an ambulating signboard, was based on the Salvation Army. A Frenchman, observing the quaint charm of some of the young damsels in their odd gowns and pink bonnets who offered tracts to an unthinking public on a street corner of Paris, conceived the idea of utilizing feminine loveliness as an advertising medium for new costumes. The name and the address of the modiste who creates the work of art are introduced tastefully in some portion of the garment, and the advertiser, who is naturally chosen for her aptitude in displaying this chf d'œuvre to the best advantage, promises to and fro on a frequented street, so that all who walk may read.

There is nothing grotesque in the introduction of the advertisement, so that as the costume is not impaired in its elegance, it is perhaps the most effectual method of advertising discovered in modern times. For it seems that the Roman hippodrome had its well-filled bench of advertisers in the shape of girls who were clad in the last fashion of peplums and trailing skirts, to be studied and admired by the excellent Roman matron, who in this way was informed exactly where to shop on the following morning. Fashionable and witty women in Athens performed the same role for compatriots of their own sex—not gratuitously, of course, but receiving proper compensation from the Grecian modiste, who thus brought her wares before the public.—The Argonaut.

Sparring by Ladies.

An opinion in support of the efficacy of the exercise comes from one of the leading actresses of the day, who thus speaks of sparring by ladies: "A lady engaged in theatrical or operatic work could select but one of the many accomplishments to which we as a class are devoted I should recommend sparring. The stately carriage, without which any one can hope to succeed, is made the more easy by a knowledge of the principles of boxing, and it comes, too, without any seeming effort. The grace of motion that some believe comes only after having spent days and weeks with the foils or under the tutelage of a dancing master is just as easily acquired by sparring, and I think in a much less time. Our most successful actors and actresses are those that include among their other accomplishments that of the principles of self-defense." Langtry, Maudsley, Fanny Davenport, Mary Anderson and others are all adept in the art, and I am glad to know that the younger members of the profession are beginning to devote some attention to the matter."—New York Mail and Express.

It was awful good if you can forgive your enemies, but some men had a great deal more respect for you if you was a hard hick.—Carl Dunder.

THE RULES OF STYLE.

THE PRINCIPLES WHICH GOVERN WRITING AND PRINTING.

The First Point for Newspaper Contributors to Consider—Grammar and Rhetoric—Be Fully Alive to the Events of the Day.

We publish herewith a letter which reached our hands the other day from the other side of the American continent. Though apparently not intended for the public eye, we assure the writer will allow us to answer his questions in this public manner.

Editorial Department,
The PORTLAND DAILY NEWS,
Portland, Ore., Feb. 16, 1887.

"DEAR SIR—You will confer a great favor on the advancing civilization of the 'wild and woolly west' by forwarding to me, if convenient, a copy of the rules of style in force in The Sun's composing rooms. The News desires to be abreast of its eastern contemporaries in style, as it is otherwise, and you can see my object. The Sun style is the best in the United States; in fact, The Sun is a perfect model of typographical excellence, and it is the intention to make The News as near as possible a full fledged, life sized photograph of the luminous eastern champion of Democracy. Yours respectfully,

J. G. EGAN,
City Editor Daily News."

THE FIRST POINT.

We should take great pleasure in doing all that Mr. Egan desires; but unfortunately there is not such code as he wishes us to send forward. The principles which govern the style of writing and printing in The Sun are, like the common law, preserved by authentic tradition, but nowhere inclosed in the iron formulas of unvarying prescription.

In our view of the subject, the first point in a good style of writing is to have in the mind a clear and distinct idea and then to put it into language which presents it accurately, vividly and picturesquely, so that the reader may apprehend it exactly as the writer intends. The great rule of all is accuracy. Sun's fact or the proposition precisely as it is, or precisely as it should be, and never say twenty-three or seventeens and a half when you mean twenty.

Sun snobbishness. "A man's a man for a' that" is the soundest doctrine, but he is never more than a man; and no thinker or writer has any call to be afraid of him, of his clothes, of his title, or of his money. Be an American always, a Democrat, a Republican. No literary style is good for an American journalist without this moral foundation.

Never discuss more than one proposition at a time; and never attempt to enforce more than one idea at the time. Intellectual confusion, helpless complication of thought, is the bane of good writing.

GRAMMAR AND RHETORIC.

Know the truths and the maxims of English grammar and of English rhetoric. Know the language that you are dealing in. There is one effective way to gain skill in these things, and that is to read the great masters, and, if possible, to practice writing under criticism that is intelligent and merciful, as well as sympathetic and vigilant. Who are these great masters, do you ask? There are many of them. John Bunyan is one, Sir William Blackstone another, Jonathan Edwards another, Lord Chesterfield another, Dr. Channing another, Cardinal Newman another, Arthur Helps another, Matthew Arnold another, Nathaniel Hawthorne another, Thomas Jefferson another. We might make a list of these masters of style that would fill a column.

Finally, be alive to the events of the day if you wish to possess a good style as a newspaper writer. Understand the value of news. What is news but the living record of Providence, the daily tally which God indites for the instruction of man? Even the trivial incident of the hour has its place in the mighty chapter of human destiny. Treat as you may, then, gravely, satirically, or jocosely, let there be ever in your heart a profound reverence for the momentous power from whose operation it proceeds.

These are some principles of style which occur to us as we read Mr. Egan's letter. We fancy they form a pretty good code of rules, but we put them forth without dogmatism. Nothing would give us more pleasure than to have the opportunity of studying a better one and profiting by its indications.—New York Sun.

Elaborate Evasion.

As a model of "how not to say it," Mr. Gladstone's reply to the question whether he was going to support Scotch disestablishment will probably never be surpassed. As a master of record, here it is: "I will only say that so far as I am able to judge, we are thinking at the present time, and the people of Scotland are thinking, of other subjects, which are regarded, I believe, as of much more urgent and immediate duty than the determination of a very much controverted question, which, as I have said before, I believe the people of Scotland will find themselves perfectly sufficient to determine, and in a manner which the rest of the empire will respect; whether the answer be ay or nay. It is not within my knowledge certainly that the consideration of that question has entered definitely into the concerns of the present election, and therefore I do not feel my own information or means of judgment about it at all augmented in the course of it by anything that has reached me."—New York Tribune.

Pat Donan on "Hamlet."

Col. "Pat" Donan doesn't like the play of "Hamlet." Hear the eloquent adjective-slinger: "I have no patience, much less sympathy, with a wretched weakling who goes around jabbering at dilapidated old ghostian helmets and green gauntlets, under bogus moonlight, everlasting threatening to do something and never doing it; driving his sweethearts to lunacy and a catch death, by his dime museum freaks; making stump speeches to sculps and grave-diggers; going into all sorts of hie-hysterics; and at last running a section of barbed wire fence, in the most approved Chicago pig sticking style, through his dead girl's brother, and dying himself, to sow flukes mass, amid a general carnage of lunatics and wreck of absurdities."—Tangler Cor. Boston Transcript.

A Dynamite Substitute.

A new explosive, to which the name of "belleto" has been given, is regarded by certain scientific men of Europe as likely to come into general use in place of dynamite and other nitroglycerine compounds, and is recommended as a substitute for coarse gunpowder in larger firearms. It is a mixture of nitrate of ammonium with a dinitrobenzene. Experiments during the past two years by Carl Lamm, of Stockholm, indicate that the substance is not only the safest but the most powerful explosive known, with a mean force equal to thirty-five times that of ordinary gunpowder, and a blasting effect greater than that of any material having nitroglycerine as a base. It has the great advantage of being exploded only by heat, no amount of shock or friction having any effect upon it, and it may therefore be handled without danger of accident, while it is less adapted for illegitimate use than dynamite. Further results will be awaited with interest.—"Rambler" in Brooklyn Eagle.

EUROPE AND THE ORIENT.

Conversation Between a Chinese and a Japanese Diplomat—Novel Conclusion.

Some time ago a friend of mine, who speaks the Chinese language, listened to a conversation between a Chinese and a Japanese diplomat which forcibly illustrated the progress that European ideas have made in the far east. The two men were discussing the question as to how much of western civilization it was desirable to introduce into their respective countries. The diplomat from China was greatly impressed with the immeasurable superiority of European sciences over anything of the sort existing in that empire. The Japanese fully agreed with his friend that both China and Japan should profit to the utmost by the fruits of modern inventions and discovery; but he remarked that that was not enough and that something more was needed. Pressed to say what it was he replied that to the science they ought to add the religion of Europe. The Chinaman differed from his friend on that point, but the latter repeated his opinion in yet stronger language. He said that although the Japanese government did not know much about the Christian religion and attached no more importance to it than they did any other form of supernatural belief, it was at one time seriously thought of taking it over and making it the religion of the state. The Chinaman still expressed his incredulity as to the wisdom of such a proceeding, but the Japanese clinched his opinion by referring to the case of the Turks.

"Look at the Turks," he said; "they have availed themselves of all the benefits they could derive from modern science. They have gumbots and ironclads and artillery, but yet they are losing ground every day. Science in this instance does not suffice to arrest national decay, and therefore I am forced to believe that the Turks have made a mistake in sticking to their religion instead of adopting that of the stronger race."

This remarkable conversation took place in London. As evidence that, so far as the Japanese diplomat was concerned, it was not empty sound, I may mention that, at the request of the Japanese authorities, a committee has been formed in this country for the purpose of establishing female boarding schools in the city of Tokio. They desire to establish institutions in which Christian ladies would impart instruction, both secular and religious, to Japanese girls of the upper classes, and I am assured by a friend who is interested in the matter that before long the experiment will be made. The Japanese agnostic, although utterly skeptical himself, is quite willing that his daughter should be taught any religion which would enable them to better their condition in this world.—New York Mail and Express.

The Story of a Play.

James Barton Key tells an old story about the first English production of "Jack" which enjoyed such a prosperous run at the Grand last week. It seems that Mrs. Henry Becket, the author, took her inspiration from an old French play, but her work on the piece was entirely original, having changed the construction entirely and keeping only the motif. She originally sold the play ten years ago to Harry Monagle and it was played by him in this country under another name. He, however, received his San Francisco offer and left to accept it. Soherne fell in love with the piece and was to produce it had his death not occurred just then. By the terms of the contract it reverted to Mrs. Beckett and it was again sold by her to Mr. Pyntom. About two months before it was produced in London she was asked by a publisher for whom she worked to write a short novel. The piece was alluring, but she had no theme handy. In despair she took the play and turned it into a novel, putting in only enough description to connect the scenes.

"The novel came out before the play did," said Mr. Key, "and some hack writer in London perceived its dramatic value and turned it into a play. As luck would have it, our play was produced anonymously and the hack writer was there. He was astounded, and when he saw Mrs. Beckett responding to the calls for 'author,' he raised such a row that we were obliged to conduct him behind the scenes to her. He was so enraged that he could hardly speak. He claimed to be the author of the play and threatened her with the discharge of the injunction imposed upon them by nature. Moreover, as they are the channel for the escape of certain impurities from the blood, increases their usefulness by strengthening and healthfully stimulating them. In certain morbid conditions of these important organs, they fall into a sluggish state, which is the usual precursor of disease. What then can be the greater service than a medicine which impedes to greater severity when sinful? No medicines are more pernicious than those which affect the kidneys, and a medicine which averts the peril should be highly esteemed.

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