

THE MIDDLEBURGH POST.

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Korea is a shut-in nation no longer. An American trader named Morse has obtained from the Korean Government a concession for a railroad between Seoul and Chemulpo, its seaport.

Horses are still worth something in some parts of the country, despite the bicycle. A man whose horse was killed at a defective crossing at Brookfield, Mo., has been allowed \$2.50 for it.

From all that sealing experts say, it is high time that the Government bestirred itself in the Bering sea matter, for the seal-pochers every season are slowly but surely exterminating the remnant of the great herds that once swarmed in thousands over the Pribilof Islands. Competent judges declare that four years more under the present loose regulation will see the fur seal almost as extinct as the buffalo.

The British Consul at Foochow says in his last report: "I think that few Europeans at home or in China realize how much trade benefits from the presence of missionaries in the interior. These gentlemen, in addition to fulfilling the duties of their sacred profession, take it upon themselves to bring foreign inventions and the needs of foreign civilization to the notice of their Chinese neighbors, and thus a knowledge of things, and consequently a demand for them, spreads through the country."

Three hundred bicycle-riders recently attended an Anglican church in the diocese of Toronto, Canada, the rector preaching a special sermon to them. A silver-plated bicycle covered with flowers was one of the special decorations of the chancel, which a church paper denounces as "a most monstrous, irreverent and distracting intrusion into the house of God's presence." "Stronger language," says the New York Independent, "could hardly have been used if the rector had quarrelled with a vestryman, or told a lie, or done anything else really wrong. Between adorning a church with a bicycle or a bouquet is a matter of taste; and as to its being distracting, the cycle is both quieter and less distracting than many a choir."

Says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat: "The popular impatience of the law's delay is strongly emphasized by the fact that in the last ten years the number of lynchings and mob executions has considerably exceeded that of the legal hangings, while both have fallen so far below the number of homicides as to suggest that still a vast number of guilty men escape a fate they richly deserve. From January 1, 1892, to the end of 1894, there were in this country 40,934 murders, or homicides, 917 legal executions and 1,495 lynchings, only 2,412 murders out of 40,934 coming to justice. The showing is calculated to appal even conservative men, since it proves not only increasing disregard for human life, but increasing reluctance to administer stern justice to the worst form of crime."

It is estimated that it will cost the railways of the United States about \$50,000,000 to comply with the provisions of the federal statute requiring them to equip their trains with safety appliances. The law affects only those railroads which are engaged in interstate commerce, but this classification, of course, includes all the important lines in the country. While the cost of compliance with this act will be enormous the railroads will find a great element of compensation in reduced damages for accidents. The frightful loss of life and the enormous number of persons who are crippled in railway service caused the passage of this act. The record is terrible indeed. From 1888 to 1894 over 16,000 railway employees in this country were killed in the discharge of their duty, and the number of those crippled and injured reached 172,000. While the safety equipment law does not go into effect until January 1, 1898, many of the railroads of the country have already in large measure complied with its provisions. The effect of increased use of safety appliances is seen in the greatly reduced number of deaths and casualties. In 1893 the number of employees killed by railroads was 2,727, and in 1894 the number was only 1,823.

MAMMA—"My darling, don't you think you've eaten enough?" Maude—"Me don't know. Me ain't dot a very bad tumnickache yet."—Harner's Bazar.



THE HELMET.

BUT, uncle—I love my cousin!"
"Get out!"
"Give her to me!"
"Don't bother me!"
"It will be my death!"
"Nonsense! you'll console yourself with some other girl."

My uncle, whose back had been to me, whirled round, his face red to bursting, and brought his closed fist down upon the counter with a heavy thump.
"Never!" he cried; "never! Do you hear what I say?"
And as I looked at him beseechingly and with joined hands, he went on:

"A pretty husband you look like!—without a son, and dreaming of going into housekeeping! A nice mess I should make of it, by giving you my daughter! It's no use your insisting. You know that when I have said 'No,' nothing under the sun can make me say 'Yes!'"

I ceased to make any further appeal. I knew my uncle—about as headstrong an old fellow as could be found in a day's search. I contented myself with giving vent to a deep sigh, and then went on with the refurbishing of a big, double-handed sword, rusty from point to hilt.

This memorable conversation took place, in fact, in the shop of my maternal uncle, a well-known dealer in antiquities and objects d'art, No. 53, Rue des Claqueuses, at the sign of the "Maltese Cross"—a perfect museum of curiosities.

The walls were hung with Marseilles and old Rouen china, facing ancient cuirasses, sabres, and muskets, and picture-frames; below these were ranged old cabinets, coffers of all sorts, and statues of saints, one-armed or one-legged for the most part and dilapidated as to their gilding; then, here and there, in glass cases, hermetically closed and locked, there were knick-knacks in infinite variety—lacrimatories, tiny urns, rings, precious stones, fragments of marble, bracelets, crosses, necklaces, medals and miniature ivory statuettes, the yellow tints of which, in the sun, took momentarily a flesh-like transparency.

Time out of mind the shop had belonged to the Cornuberts. It passed regularly from father to son, and my uncle—his neighbors said—could not but be the possessor of a nice little fortune. Held in esteem by all, a Municipal Councillor, impressed by the importance and gravity of his office, short, fat, highly choleric and headstrong, but at bottom not in the least degree an unkind sort of man—such was my uncle Cornubert, my only living male relative, who, as soon as I left school, had elevated me to the dignity of chief and only clerk and shopman of the "Maltese Cross."

But my uncle was not only a dealer in antiquities and a Municipal Councillor, he was yet more, and, above all, the father of my cousin, Rose, with whom I was naturally in love.

To come back to the point at which I digressed.

Without paying any attention to the sighs which exhaled from my bosom while scouring the rust from my long, two-handed sword, my uncle, magnifying glass in hand, was engaged in the examination of a lot of medals which he had purchased that morning. Suddenly he raised his head; five o'clock was striking.

"The Council!" he cried.

When my uncle pronounced that august word it made a mouthful; for a pin he would have saluted it bareheaded. But this time, after a moment's consideration, he tapped his forehead and added, in a tone of supreme relief:

"No, the sitting does not take place before to-morrow—and I am forgetting that I have to go to the railway station to get the consignment of which I was advised this morning."

Rising from his seat and laying down his glass he called out:
"Rose, bring me my cane and hat!"
Then, turning toward me, he added, in a lower tone and speaking very quickly:

"As to you—don't forget our conversation. If you think you can make me say 'yes,' try—but I don't think you'll succeed. Meanwhile not a word to Rose, or by Saint Barthelemy, my patron of happy memory, I'll instantly kick you out of doors!"

At that moment Rose appeared with my uncle's cane and hat, which she handed to him. He kissed her on the forehead; then, giving me a last but eloquent look, hurried from the shop.

"I went on scouring my double-handed sword. Rose came quietly toward me.
"What is the matter with my father?" she asked; "he seems to be angry with you."
I looked at her—her eyes were so black, her look so kind, her mouth so rosy, and her teeth so white that I told her all—my love, my suit to her father, and his rough refusal. I could not help it—after all, it was his fault

He was not there; I determined to brave his anger. Besides, there is nobody like timid persons for displaying courage under certain circumstances.

My cousin said nothing; she only held down her eyes—while her cheeks were as red as those of cherries in May.

I checked myself.
"Are you angry with me?" I asked, tremblingly. "Are you angry with me, Rose?"

She held out to me her hand. On that, my heart seething with audacity, my hand on fire, I cried:

"Rose—I swear it! I will be your husband!" And as she shook her head and looked at me sadly, I added:

"Oh! I will know that my uncle is self-willed, but I will be more self-willed still; and, since he must be forced to say 'yes,' I will force him to say 'it!'"

"But how?" asked Rose.
Ah! how? That was exactly the difficulty. But, no matter; I would find a way to surmount it!

At that moment a heavy step resounded in the street. Instinctively we moved away from each other; I returned to my double-handed sword, and Rose, to keep herself in countenance, set to dusting, with a corner of her apron, a little statuette in its faded red velvet case.

My uncle entered. Surprised at finding us together, he stopped short and looked sharply at us, from one to the other.

We each of us went on rubbing without raising our heads.

"Here, take this," said my uncle, handing me a bulky parcel from under his arm. "A splendid purchase, you'll see."

The subject did not interest me in the least.

I opened the parcel, and from the enveloping paper emerged a steel helmet—but not an ordinary helmet, oh, no!—a superb, monumental morion, with gorget and pointed visor of strange form. The visor was raised, and I tried to discover what prevented it from being lowered.

"It will not go down—the hinges have got out of order," said my uncle; but it's a superb piece, and, when it has been thoroughly cleaned and touched up, will look well—that shall be your to-morrow's job."

"Very good, uncle," I murmured, not daring to raise my eyes to his.

That night, on reaching my room, I at once went to bed. I was eager to be alone and able to think at my ease. Night brings counsel, it is said; and I had great need that the proverb should prove true. But, after lying awake for an hour without receiving any assistance, I fell off to sleep, and, till next morning did nothing but dream the oddest dreams. I saw Rose on her way to church in a strange bridal costume, a fourteenth-century cap, three feet high, or her head, but looking prettier than ever; then suddenly the scene changed to moonlight, in which innumerable helmets and pieces of old china were dancing a wild fandoula, while my uncle, clad in complete armor and with a formidable halberd in his hand, conducted the bewildering whirl.

The next day—ah, the next day—I was no nearer. In vain, with clinched teeth, I scoured the immense helmet brought by my uncle the previous evening—scored it with such furry as almost to break the iron—not an idea came to me. The helmet shone like a sun; my uncle sat smoking his pipe and watching me; but I could think of nothing and no way of forcing him to give me his daughter.

At three o'clock Rose went into the country, whence she was not to return until dinner time in the evening. On the threshold she could only make a sign to me with her hand; my uncle had not left us alone for a single instant. He was not easy in his mind; I could see that by his face. No doubt he had not forgotten our conversation of the previous evening.

I went on rubbing at my helmet.
"You have made it quite bright enough—put it down," said my uncle. I put it down. The storm was gathering; I could not do better than allow it to blow over.

But suddenly, as if overtaken by a strange fancy, my uncle took up the enormous morion and turned and examined it on all sides.

"A handsome piece of armor, there is no doubt about it; but it must have weighed pretty heavily on it wearer's shoulders," he muttered; and, urged by I know not what demon, he clapped it on his head and latched the gorget-piece about his neck.

Struck almost speechless, I watched what he was doing, thinking only how ugly he looked.

Suddenly there was a sharp sound—as if a spring had snapped—and—crack!—down fell the visor; and there was my uncle, with his head in an iron cage, gesticulating and swearing like a pagan!

I could contain myself no longer, and burst into a roar of laughter; for my uncle, stumpy, fat, and rubicund,

presented an irresistibly comic appearance.

"Threateningly, he came towards me. 'The hinges—the hinges, fool!' he yelled.

I could not see his face, but I felt that it was red to bursting.

"When you have done laughing, idiot!" he cried.
But the helmet swayed so oddly on his shoulders, his voice came from out it in such strange tones, that the more he gesticulated, the more he yelled and threatened me, the louder I laughed.

At that moment the clock of the Hotel-de-Vill, striking five, was heard.

"The Municipal Council!" murmured my uncle, in a stifled voice. "Quick! help me off with this beast of machine! We'll settle our business afterwards!"

But suddenly likewise, an idea—a wild, extraordinary idea—came into my head; but then, whoever is madder than a lover? Besides, I had no choice of means.

"No!" I replied.
My uncle felt back two paces in terror—and again the enormous helmet wobbled on his shoulders.

"No," I repeated, firmly, "I'll not help you out, unless you give me the hand of my cousin Rose!"

From the depths of the strangely elongated visor came, not an angry exclamation, but a veritable roar. I had "done it!"—I had burned my ships!

"If you do not consent to do what I ask of you," I added, "not only will I not help you off with your helmet, but I will call in all your neighbors, and then go and find the Municipal Council!"

"You'll end your days on the scaffold!" cried my uncle.

"The hand of Rose!" I repeated. "You told me that it would only be by force that you would be made to say 'yes'—say it, or I will call in the neighbors!"

The clock was still striking; my uncle raised his arms as it to curse me.

"Decide at once," I cried, "somebody is coming!"

"Well, then—yes!" murmured my uncle. "But make haste!"

"On your word of honor?"

"On my word of honor!"

The visor gave way, the gorget-piece also, and my uncle's head issued from a distance, red as a poppy.

Just in time. The chemist at the corner, a colleague in the Municipal Council, entered the shop.

"Are you coming?" he asked; "they will be beginning the business without us."

"I'm coming," replied my uncle. And without looking at me, he took up his hat and cane and hurried out.

The next moment all my hopes had vanished. My uncle would surely not forgive me.

At dinner-time I took my place at table on his right hand in low spirits, ate little, and said nothing.

"It will come with the dessert," I thought.

Rose looked at me, and I avoided meeting her eyes. As I had expected, the dessert over, my uncle lit his pipe, raised his head, and then—

"Rose—come here!"

Rose went to him.

"Do you know what that fellow there asked me to do, yesterday?"

I trembled like a leaf, and Rose did the same.

"To give him your hand," he added. "Do you love him?"

Rose cast down her eyes.

"Very well," continued my uncle; "on this side, the case is complete. Come here, you."

I approached him.

"Here I am, uncle," and, in a whisper, I added quickly: "Forgive me!"

He burst into a hearty laugh.

"Marry her, then, donkey—since you love her, and I give her to you!"

"Ah!—uncle!"

"Ah!—dear papa!"

And Rose and I threw ourselves into his arms.

"Very good! very good!" he cried, wiping his eyes. "Be happy, that's all I ask."

And, in turn, he whispered in my ear:

"I should have given her to you all the same, you big goose; but—keep the story of the helmet between us two!"

I give you my word that I have never told it but to Rose, my dear little wife. And, if ever you pass along the Rue des Claqueuses, No. 53, at the place of honor in the old shop, I'll show you my uncle's helmet, which we would never sell.—From the French, in Strand Magazine.

Water Beneath Coral Rock.

There are no streams in Yucatan which flow above the ground, but the whole peninsula is one vast table of coral rock, and beneath it are immense sheets of fresh water, with regular, though ill-defined, tides and currents. Along the coasts these subterranean waters are quite near the surface, but in the interior, where the calcareous layer is of great thickness, the waters are low down. At intervals they break into caverns formed by earthquakes by pressure of their own force or by the infiltration of surface water into the natural grottoes of the coral rock, and wherever the water can be reached, whether through artificial pits or by the operations of nature, the place is called a cenote. There are a great many of them scattered all over Yucatan, and these near Merida are utilized as public bath houses, affording most refreshing resorts.

THE POPULIST PLATFORM.

It Favors Free Coinage, an Income Tax and Government Railroads.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., July 25.—The Populist platform, as reported by the majority of the Committee on Resolutions and adopted by the convention, is as follows:

The People's party, assembled in National Convention, reaffirms its allegiance to the principles declared by the founders of the Republic, and also to the fundamental principles of just government as enunciated in the platform of the party in 1892. We recognize that, through the connivance of the present and preceding Administrations, the country has reached a crisis in its National life, as predicted in our declaration four years ago, and that prompt and patriotic action is the supreme duty of the hour.

We realize that while we have political independence, our financial and industrial independence is yet to be attained by restoring to our country the Constitutional control and exercise of the functions necessary to a people's Government, which functions have been basely surrendered by our public servants to corporate monopolies. The influence of European money changers has been more potent in shaping legislation than the voice of the American people. Executive power and patronage have been used to corrupt our Legislatures and defeat the will of the people, and plutocracy has thereby been enthroned upon the ruins of Democracy. To restore the Government intended by the fathers, and for the welfare and prosperity of the Nation, we demand the establishment of an economic and financial system which shall make us masters of our own affairs and independent of European control, by the adoption of the following:

Declaration of Principles.

1. We demand a National money, safe and sound, issued by the general Government only, without the intervention of banks of issue, to be a full legal tender for all debts, public and private; a just, equitable and efficient means of distributing wealth to the people and through the lawful disbursements of the Government.
2. We demand the free and unrestricted coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one, without waiting for the consent of foreign Nations.
3. We demand the volume of circulating medium be steadily increased to an amount sufficient to meet the demands of the business and population and to restore the just level of prices of labor and production.
4. We denounce the present Administration for increasing the public interest-bearing debt made by the present Administration as unnecessary and without authority of law, and demand that no more bonds be issued except by specific act of Congress.
5. We demand such legislation as will prevent the demoralization of the national money of the United States by private contract.
6. We demand that the Government, in payment of its obligations, shall use its option as to the kind of lawful money in which they are to be paid, and we denounce the present and preceding Administrations for surrendering this option to the holders of Government obligations.
7. We demand a graduated income tax, to the end that aggregated wealth shall bear its just proportion of taxation, and we regard the recent decision of the Supreme Court relative to the Income Tax law as a misinterpretation of the Constitution and an invasion of the rightful powers of Congress over the subject of taxation.
8. We demand that postal savings banks be established by the Government for the safe deposit of the savings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

Transportation.

1. Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the Government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people and on a non-partisan basis, to the end that all may be accorded the same treatment in transportation, and that the tyranny and political power now exercised by the great railroad corporations be abolished in the impairment, if not the destruction, of the political rights and personal liberties of the citizen, may be destroyed. Such ownership is to be accomplished gradually in a manner consistent with sound public policy.
2. The interest of the United States in the public highways built with public money, and the proceeds of extensive grants of land to the Pacific railroads, should never be alienated, mortgaged, or sold, but guarded and protected for the general welfare as provided by the laws organizing such railroads. The foreclosure of existing liens of the United States on these railroads at once follow default in the payment thereof of the debtor companies; and at the foreclosure sales of said roads the Government shall purchase the same if it becomes necessary to protect its interests therein, or if they can be purchased at a reasonable price, and the Government shall operate said railroads as public highways for the benefit of the whole people, and not in the interest of the few, under suitable provisions for protection of life and property, giving to all transportation interests equal privileges and equal rates for fares and freights.
3. We denounce the present infamous schemes for refunding these debts, and demand that the laws now applicable thereto be executed and administered according to their intent and spirit.
4. The telegraph, being the post office system, being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the Government in the interest of the people.

Land.

1. True policy demands that the National and State legislation shall be such as will ultimately enable every prudent and industrious citizen to secure a home, and therefore the land should not be monopolized for speculative purposes. All lands now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs should by lawful means be reclaimed by the Government and held for actual settlement, or, if private land monopoly, as well as alien ownership, should be prohibited.
2. We condemn the land grant frauds by which the Pacific railroad companies have, through the connivance of the Interior Department, robbed multitudes of actual bona fide settlers of their homes and miners of their claims, and we demand legislation by Congress which will enforce the exception of mineral land from such grants after as well as before the patent.
3. We demand that bona fide settlers on all public lands be granted free homes as provided in the National Homestead law, and that no exception be made in the case of Indian reservations when opened for settlement, and that all lands not now patented come under this demand.

Direct Legislation.

We favor a system of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum, under proper constitutional safeguards.

General Propositions.

1. We demand the election of President, Vice-President and United States Senators by a direct vote of the people.
2. We tender to the patriotic people of Cuba our deepest sympathy in their heroic struggle for political freedom and independence, and we believe the time has come when the United States, the great Republic of the world, should recognize that Cuba is and of right ought to be a free and independent State.
3. We favor home rule in the Territories and the District of Columbia and the early admission of the Territories as States.
4. All public salaries should be made to correspond to the price of labor and its products.
5. In times of great industrial depression idle labor should be employed on public works as far as practicable.
6. The arbitrary course of the courts in assuming to imprison citizens for indirect contempt and ruling them by injunction should be prevented by proper legislation.
7. We favor just pensions for our disabled Union soldiers.
8. Believing that the elective franchise and an untrammelled ballot are essential to gov-

ernment of, for, and by the people, the People's party condemn the wholesale system of disfranchisement adopted in some of the States as unrepulsive and undemocratic, and we declare it to be the duty of the several State Legislatures to take such action as will secure a full, free and fair ballot and an honest count.

9. While the foregoing propositions constitute the platform upon which our party stands, and for the vindication of which its organization will be maintained, we recognize that the great and pressing issues of the pending campaign upon which the present election will turn is the financial question, and upon this great and specific issue between the parties we cordially invite the aid and co-operation of all organizations and citizens agreeing with us upon this vital question.

EMILE ZOLA.

Eminent Literary Man Who Is Charged with Plagiarism.

Emile Zola, the literary man lately charged with plagiarism, is said, by those who have read him, to be a realist of the realists. A Parisian born, he has spent most of the fifty-six years of his life in his own city, and made a great reputation in France by publishing books the sale of which was punished as a crime in other countries. He was educated at St. Louis College in Paris, and at 25 began to devote himself wholly to writing. His books number over a score. They cover many subjects, and their noted author has been able to be vile in all but one or two. M. Zola delights in odd situations. For instance, two years ago, he wrote a book in which the devotions of pious persons at Lourdes were treated in his usual style. Then he promptly went to Rome and presented himself for an interview



M. EMILE ZOLA.

with Pope Leo. It might have been because of the book "Lourdes," or it might have been because of others; but he refused to see him. For many years the author of "Claude" and "Nana" as "La Terre" has been eager to become one of the immortals because he knew he could not. The academicians could not get the smell of M. Zola's fame out of their nostrils, and presently closed their door to him. "Le Reve," his only pure work, eminent in Zola's oeuvre, was written to please the academy, but Louis Maria Jules Viaud was elected in 1891 and Zola still a mortal. If not a member of the Academy, the great realist is at least Knight of the Legion of Honor and has been president of the French Society of Men of Letters. His book "Roman" written with the hope that it would pass him into the Academy, is the one concerning which the charge of plagiarism is made and which is creating much talk.

WON A FINE PIANO.

Miss Ewing Captured the Prize in Vocal Contest at Mexico, Mo.

Seldom is it that a budding singer whose reputation as a singer confined almost wholly to her own society, and who has not been advertised by a Gram or a Locke, would the equivalent of \$1,000 for the performance of three songs before a single audience. That was the good fortune of Miss Annie Ewing, of Jefferson City, Mo., and her friends throughout the State are pouring congratulations upon her, not simply because she won a splendid prize, but for the reason that competent judges decided that she deserved it for possessing a superb voice, trained to a new Miss Ewing and five other vocalists.



MISS ANNIE EWING.

entered a contest at Hardin, Mo., Mexico, Mo., and the prize, a piano valued at \$1,000, was awarded to the person City candidate. Her first performance was "Oh, Patrie, Tu es avec" and she beautifully interpreted the singer's great composition, her rich, throaty voice being in perfect accord with the theme carried her away, and an audience of music-loving people, representing several States, paid her a great ovation. She also sang Wagner's "Serenade" and Jensen's "Deine Wang" an Meine Wang," equally good effect. Miss Ewing is a handsome blonde, with the complexion, auburn hair and blue eyes. She is a great social favorite, not only at her home in Jefferson City, but is popular at Hardin, and her decision in her favor meets with approval among a large circle of Ewing's admirers.