

THE DRAMA OF A LIFE.

The Tyrol Peasants' Interpretation of the Passion Play.

I have seen at Ober Ammergau the peasants' Christ. But far more than that, it was the world's Christ surrounded by those who loved him. In this tiny Bavarian village among the snow-topped Alps, with nothing but the great story itself to inspire them, these peasants of the Tyrol have so wonderfully interpreted the passion of Christ that the railroads are taxed and the hospitality of the village is strained to the utmost to provide the simplest accommodations for the crowds who come to look and wonder. In the audience today was the King of Sweden and a great dignitary of Rome. Jeweled dowagers gazed through gold-bowed lorgnettes at them—but not till after the performance. Millionaires rented tiny rooms that they would not think of using at the village hotel in order to obtain tickets and then hastened away in their motor cars after the play. All these came to see the peasants' Christ. It was only the third performance, yet they were forced to repeat it in the rain the next day because so many more came than could be admitted to the theater.

To call it wonderful is to use a stale adjective. Your wondering question at first is this: "Why have they learned such art?" For the presentation is letter perfect; artistic music, elocution, setting, color, balance. Nothing overdrawn, nothing strained, nothing incongruous, dramatically perfect. And you ask again, "Where did they learn this?" But soon you surrender to the spell and let them play upon your feelings as they will, forgetting to ask about their art, while they interpret life to you—yes, The Life.

For that is what they do. It is useless to ask the secret of their art; there is no secret. Their art is their life. For months after the cast has been chosen by the vote of the villagers, the character lives in the part to which he has been assigned. And for years before they have been chosen, the principal characters have been hoping and aspiring to parts most noble. There is only one real actor in the whole cast, and that is Judas. He plays his part—the rest live theirs. Judas plays so well that you are left with no feeling of bitterness toward the traitor. Nothing but pity. Perhaps this is well. If it could be said that Milton made Satan so attractive that he became the hero of Paradise Lost, then truly Johann Zwiink makes Judas too fascinating.

The play is the work of a genius and it is interpreted by a community of geniuses, musical, dramatic, religious. We speak of the people of the community producing the play—it would be nearer the truth to say that the play has produced the community. It has bound together through centuries a group of people and made them artists—bound them by the strongest of all ties, that of religion.

Ober Ammergau is only a little village of some 500 people; its present theatre, built for the last performance, seats but 4,200 people; its stage proper, back of the platform which is open to the sky, is but 25 by 60 feet, and yet the whole civilized world will pour continual crowds to this remote mountain village as long as the Alpine summer allows the play to be presented out of doors.

The village itself is worth studying as an example of Christian socialism without the name. The people live for each other, the profit of one is for the good of all. People, houses and streets are all scrupulously clean. There is no grandeur. The homes are very simple. There is no graft. While fair prices are charged, there is no extortion. The players do not receive large sums for their acting. The highest price paid for one whole year's performances to those in the first class, which includes Anton Lang, who takes the part of Christus, is \$350, less than some vaudeville stars receive for one night. The town receives one-third of the profits of the play and expends it for the public good. They have excellent schools, where music and art are thoroughly taught. There are some wonderful voices in the community, such as would command attention on the opera stage, but they do not leave the town to become singers or artists. There is a holy calling and they have held to it with wonderful fidelity. Nearly all the villagers have some part in the play. The artist who paints the scenery is employed a whole year at the task. Some 700 people appear on the stage at each presentation as players or figures in the tableaux. Every family must help to take care of the strangers who flock into the little town to witness the play.

Of the play itself it is difficult to speak. It disarms all criticism. Good Father Daisenberger, who took the crude play of the middle ages, had the genius to turn it into a classic for all time. He has so handled the familiar material of the gospels, interspersing tableaux from the Old Testament, that we have the story of Christ's passion made the central fact of all history. Stead was right when he said after witnessing this play, "This is the story that transformed the world."

The play lasts from 8 in the morning till 6, with two hours' intermission for dinner. It has its greater and lesser climaxes. The first shows Christ's humanity, when he bids farewell to his mother. The second

and greater crisis is, of course, the crucifixion. When the first is presented the audience almost to a unit yields to the spell and falls to weeping. In the long-drawn agony of the second people hardly breathe, so tense is the feeling, and at the stroke of the spear I actually heard men gasp for breath. The sound of the rending veil of the temple, the crashing rocks and the footfalls of the breathless messenger to the High Priest comes as a real relief.

For 19 minutes, so somebody said, Lang had hung upon the cross. His part is done to perfection. But so do all the players do their parts. As Christus, Lang does not so much cause you to see the character as to feel it. Mary, the Virgin Mother, is also beautifully portrayed and Mary Magdalene is very strongly set forth. The disciples are particularly well sustained by older men, although John, the solicitous, is but a youth of 19. One player whose name was not on the program furnished us with a great deal of pleasure. I am sure she was the youngest of all the participants, a baby not more than four years old in the very front rank of one of the tableaux where 400 people were on the stage, 150 of them being children. The child sat like a statue, except that the cold wind that sprang up at the moment caused her to curl up and incur her dainty toes, as if she had just been lifted out of her bath. We loved that child every one of us as she clasped her mother's neck and I think a good many people remembered how many miles of sea and land separated them from some such child.

Imagine these people going down from their high and holy calling to the simplest of tasks! A friend holding a letter of introduction to Judas found him an hour after the performance milking the family cow, while his daughter, who had just thrilled the great audience with the last words of the play, "Hallelujah! He is risen," the matchless Magdalene, was wearing a gingham apron to wait on the American sightseers who were quartered on the home.

It is said that a real danger looms over this beautiful institution. The tourist agencies are planning, before the next presentation, to erect great hotels and to commercialize the whole performance. They will destroy the very life and spirit of the play. It is devoutly to be hoped that this is not their intention, but the players fear it. Better that Thomas Cook should not send tourists to the Tyrol than that this artistic, idealistic community should be submerged by vulgarism. I know that some of the people of the village see the danger now and fear that they are helpless to avert it and I want to join with them in uttering protest.

W. P. G.

Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Commission.

The Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial commission, with the approval of the governor, has fixed Tuesday, Sept. 27, 1910, noon, as the time for the dedication of the state monument at Gettysburg.

For the occasion soldiers of Pennsylvania regiments or other organizations which participated in the battle of Gettysburg can have free transportation to and from Gettysburg (and the public at rate of one and one-half cents per mile each way) from the railroad station in Pennsylvania nearest to the homes of each, tickets to be good going from Sept. 24 to Sept. 27 and good returning to reach original starting point not later than Sept. 29.

To arrange for railroad tickets for soldiers entitled to free transportation, and to provide seats for them at the dedication, each such soldier is requested to send to the commission at once his full name and postoffice address, together with the name of the regiment and company in which he served, addressed to the Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial commission, P. O. Box 533, Philadelphia, Pa.

(Signed) H. S. HUIDEKOPER, President.

CONGRESSMAN NORRIS OF NEBRASKA.

"Let it be said here and now," writes Jay E. House in Human Life for July, "by one who has studied reformers at close range, and at all the different angles for many years, that this man Norris—this short-grass statesman who drew the plans that upset a congressional dynasty—is a new kind.

"To one who has watched them all, from Sockless Jerry Simpson to LaFollette, pass in review, he presents no familiar aspect. Every reformer save and except Norris who has ridden the passing fury long enough to focus public attention upon himself has marked the spot where he alighted by some mental quirk or personal idiosyncrasy. Norris is a normal man, an average citizen, hitched by fate to the wheels of government and doing his best to pull his share of the load.

"To all outward appearances his sense of location, in so far as it relates to the grandstand, is deficient. In his outward manifestations he is just an ordinary man trying to do an ordinary man's work without unnecessary conversation or the exhibition of either passion or prejudice. So far as his personal appearance goes, if he were charged with selling hardware, or being cashier of a small bank, the jury would convict on the first ballot."

Human Life Publishing Co., Boston.

A WATER DUEL.

Near the border which divides Siberia from Russia lived Count Arkadyevich, a country gentleman. His daughter, Marya Alexandrovna, an attractive girl of eighteen, was sought in marriage by many of the sons of the neighboring landed proprietors, but seemed to prefer Ivan Mikhaloff, a lusty but lazy young fellow who had never been known to take an interest in but one thing—the town fire department, which he had organized and drilled.

A battalion of troops came to the town commanded by Major Nikolai Levin, a middle aged man whose private fortune was large. From childhood he had been accustomed to having his own way. He had studied and practiced the use of every known weapon, and when any man stood in his way he would insult him, challenge him and, if necessary, kill him. All kinds of weapons had been tried against Levin, from a Turkish scimitar to a mountain howitzer, and he had handled every one with perfect skill. He had no softer eyes on Marya than he felt violently in love with her. Marya, though she accepted his attentions, could not be completely won over from her athletic suitor Ivan. Levin at last concluded that with Ivan in the way he could never win the girl, so he made up his mind to kill him. He soon found a pretext for considering himself insulted by the young man and sent him a challenge.

Marya heard of the intended assassination and was much troubled. In her extremity she sent for a former schoolmate, Kostia Sanin, in whose ingenuity she placed great confidence, and asked him to help her.

"Well, I will offer him my services, and if he accepts them I will see what I can do for him," said Sanin.

A few hours later Major Levin received a visit from Sanin. "I am to arrange this affair between you and my friend Mikhaloff," he said, "and, since he is the challenged party, choose for him the weapons, the time and the place of meeting."

"That is your right. It is immaterial to me with what weapon I fight, and I beg you will choose that with which the young man is most skillful."

"You show a magnificent spirit, major, and I shall meet your wishes. The only weapon with which Ivan Mikhaloff has any skill whatever is the nozzle of a hose. I therefore choose this weapon."

"If you think you can turn the affair into a jest you are mistaken."

"I propose no jest. The terms are that you and your adversary are to go into an unheated room, wearing no clothing whatever, each furnished with a hose, and play upon each other till you are satisfied."

"Nothing of the kind. You know that the temperature here at this season is never above zero, and the water is icy cold. Neither of you will be able to endure the torture more than half an hour without dying a terrible death, and in any event there is great probability of pneumonia setting in after the combat."

Sanin then named the time and place and took his departure.

The major submitted the case to the officers of his battalion, who, after long deliberation, decided that he must accept the terms. At the appointed time he and his antagonist stood stark naked in a large room, each armed with a half inch nozzle. At a given signal the water was turned on by the seconds and the contest begun. Ivan had always lived in that northern region, while the major had been born in the south. Ivan was hardy, while the major was delicate and sensitive from having led a luxurious life. At the first stroke of the icy water he was shaken by a terrific chill, while the sturdy Ivan, who had bathed in water as cold that very morning, braced himself against the shock and stood upright and firm as a rock. One of the seconds stood with a watch in his hand, while the other kept a hand on the water cock.

At the end of two minutes time was called and the water turned off. The principals were permitted to move about for two minutes to recoup and break the ice forming on their bodies, when they were required to take their positions and the water was turned on.

At the end of the next round Levin was shivering terribly, his skin was livid, and his lips were blue, while his opponent had readily restored circulation. At the end of the next round the major was informed by those of his officers who were present that he might give up the unequal contest without sacrificing his honor, and he declared that he was satisfied. He was taken into a warm room, dosed with hot liquor, rubbed and put between blankets. Nevertheless he was stricken with pneumonia, from which he nearly died. Ivan polished himself with a crash towel, put on his clothes and took a brisk walk.

Kostia Sanin went to Marya and gave her an account of what had occurred. "You are now free to marry either of those men you choose. I presume from your interest in Ivan that your choice will fall on him."

"No; it will not fall on Ivan."

"Then it is the major."

"No, nor the major."

"Well, then, I should like to know what all this trouble has been about."

"To change the subject, how shall I reward you for helping us out of this difficulty?"

"Well, you might let me kiss your hand."

"What do you say to my lips?"

A light broke in upon Kostia. He went to Marya, took her in his arms and kissed her, but when he had kissed her once there was no stopping.

STORIES OF THE DIAMOND.

Ty Cobb Tells Why He Is So Successful on the Field.

SLUMPS DON'T BOTHER HIM.

Champion Batter of the Country Says When He Falls Off in Hitting He Never Worries, but Practices Hard Until He Regains Form.

No. XV.
By TY COBB.
(Copyright, 1910, by American Press Association.)

To what do I owe my success as a ball player? There are two answers to this question. The first is that I am heart and soul in the game and, second, because I am always trying to improve on my playing. I am always practicing, and, you know, practice makes perfect. Take, for instance, when I have a batting slump. I don't worry about it. I just get out in the mornings at the ball park and practice hitting against all kinds of twirling. I like to stand up to the plate and whale away at every old kind of pitching. Some of the boys are easy to hit, while others are not. It all helps me to recover my batting eye.

Southpaw pitchers gave me considerable trouble at one time, but that was before I entered the big league. They never even bother me nowadays. Just watch me at the plate and you'll learn the reason in a minute. Against a right handed twirler I crowd the rubber and step into a curve before it breaks. Against a southpaw I drop back as far as possible and wait for the curve to break. Getting down to figures, I should say that I stand four feet closer to a right handed pitcher than I do to a left hander.

My greatest delight is to tickle the pill with runners on the bases. You may not believe me, but nevertheless it's true, I find it easier to hit the ball



TY COBB, DETROIT AMERICANS' GREAT OUTFIELDER AND BATTER.

with the sacks occupied. The pitcher is worried, the infielders are guessing, and when you do hit the ball the flying base runners rattle and disconcert the men who are trying to handle the ball.

When men are on bases I generally lay for the first ball the twirler hands over. It's dollars to doughnuts that if he can lay that first one straight over the pan he'll do it, and I soak quite a few of them. The majority of batters will pass up the first ball, no matter if it cuts the plate in half. But you'll never get Tyros overlooking any of that kind. Nine times out of ten I go to the plate prepared to hit the first ball if the pitcher lays it over.

I never take a long swing at the sphere any more. I like to do it, but you can't get anything in the major leagues swinging the willow. If you do the spiltball pitchers would make a dunce of you in short order, to say nothing of the slabbists who have mastered a good change of pace. They'll shoot one over that looks like a pet, then feed you a slow one that comes floating up as big as a balloon. But you are set for the fast one and nearly break you back reaching for the slow ball.

In the old days the great batters were Pete Browning, Ed Delehanty, Dan Brubaker and Pop Anson, who swung on to a ball with the force of a hammer. Were any of them in the big leagues today the modern twirlers would make 'em look like jokes.

You cannot grab a wagon tongue down at the handle, reach back and swing halfway around for a curve pitcher. He'd make you look foolish, and you wouldn't have enough batting average at the end of the month to get your name in the percentage column.

The star batters of today grab their batting sticks a foot or more from the handle and, instead of swinging, aim to meet the ball flush. Nothing suits me better than to take a good crack at the leather, but I can't afford to get out of my stride, so I stick to the sure system of just meeting the ball with a halfway grip on my warclub.

CAME OUT ON THE OTHER SIDE.

Declaration That Put a Sudden End to Traveler's Yarns.

One of the occupants of a railway carriage was a gentleman who beguiled the time by telling some rather "tall yarns" of his experience abroad. A solemn looking individual, with a camera and a tripod, sat in a corner seat and listened without a shadow of a smile. The traveler, having concluded an impressive story, says London Punch, began again: "I never see a camera but it reminds me of a sad occurrence that befell a friend of mine while we were traveling in Italy. He was an enthusiastic amateur photographer, and when we climbed Vesuvius nothing would satisfy him but a near view of the crater. He wanted to go to the very edge. The guides told him of the danger. It was the last seen of my poor friend! Sad, wasn't it, sir?" he added, turning to the solemn man. The latter shook his head. "Do you doubt my word?" said the traveler. "No," returned the solemn man. "I don't doubt your word, but I fancy your memory is failing." "Eh? How so?" "Because," said the solemn man, slowly and gravely, "because I am the man! And yet you don't remember me! I came out again on the other side of the globe—but I got my view!" There was dead silence for a few minutes afterward, and the traveler got off at the next station.

Dormice Immune to Snake Bites.

Three animals have long been known to be immune to the bites of snakes—the pig, the porcupine and the mongoose. According to M. G. Billard, a naturalist of Clermont-Ferrand, France, the common or garden dormouse must be added to this list. This little animal does not hesitate to fight a viper and kill the reptile. Of course, he would be helpless if attacked by a big rattlesnake, for this would swallow him at one gulp. M. Billard injected four milligrams of dried viper poison into a dormouse with absolutely no effect. Half an hour after the injection the dormouse was nibbling an apple as if nothing had happened. The dormouse weighs only two ounces, and the amount of venom he received was enough to kill eleven pounds of such animals as rabbits and guinea pigs.

Battleship Victoria.
In the manoeuvring of the Mediterranean fleet off Tripoli, March 22, 1893, the battleship Victoria was sunk in a collision with the battleship Camperdown. Three hundred and thirty-eight officers and men were drowned, including Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon. The findings of a court-martial blamed Admiral Tryon.

Roll of HONOR

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A.M.	A.M.	P.M.	P.M.	STATIONS	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
8:30	10:00	4:30	6:00	Albany	2:00	10:50	10:50	8:30	10:30
9:00	10:30	5:00	6:30	Binghamton	2:30	11:20	11:20	9:00	11:00
9:30	11:00	5:30	7:00	Philadelphia	3:00	11:50	11:50	9:30	11:30
10:00	11:30	6:00	7:30	Wilkes-Barre	3:30	12:20	12:20	10:00	12:00
10:30	12:00	6:30	8:00	Scranton	4:00	12:50	12:50	10:30	12:30
11:00	12:30	7:00	8:30	Carbondale	4:30	1:20	1:20	11:00	1:00
11:30	1:00	7:30	9:00	Limekiln Avenue	5:00	1:50	1:50	11:30	1:30
12:00	1:30	8:00	9:30	Farview	5:30	2:20	2:20	12:00	2:00
12:30	2:00	8:30	10:00	Canaan	6:00	2:50	2:50	12:30	2:30
1:00	2:30	9:00	10:30	Lake Lodge	6:30	3:20	3:20	1:00	3:00
1:30	3:00	9:30	11:00	Waymart	7:00	3:50	3:50	1:30	3:30
2:00	3:30	10:00	11:30	Keene	7:30	4:20	4:20	2:00	4:00
2:30	4:00	10:30	12:00	Steene	8:00	4:50	4:50	2:30	4:30
3:00	4:30	11:00	12:30	Prompton	8:30	5:20	5:20	3:00	5:00
3:30	5:00	11:30	1:00	Fortuna	9:00	5:50	5:50	3:30	5:30
4:00	5:30	12:00	1:30	Seelyville	9:30	6:20	6:20	4:00	6:00
4:30	6:00	12:30	2:00	Honesdale	10:00	6:50	6:50	4:30	6:30

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