

HERMITS OF GREECE.

RELIGIOUS RECLUSES WHO LIVED IN HOLES IN THE CLIFFS.

They Depended Wholly Upon Charity For Their Sustenance and Remained Always In Their Aerial Caves—The Monastery of St. Stephens.

One of the most curious scenes on the Thessalian frontier is to be found at Kalibaki, some 50 miles by rail above Trikala. The town lies on a plain which is backed by the extraordinary rocks of Meteora, rising precipitously to a great height and commanding the marked attention of travelers. In places the cliffs ascend like a wall to a height of 2,000 feet. They are rough, free from verdure and disfigured by innumerable holes and caves all over their face.

It is these caves and remains of monkish dwellings in them that give the rocks of Meteora the strange, almost prehistoric appearance that has made them famous.

There are several monasteries at Kalibaki. The largest is St. Stephen's. Unlike the other monasteries, this is reached by a drawbridge thrown across a yawning chasm. This is one of the largest of the monasteries of Meteora and has a guest chamber especially fitted up for visitors—that is to say, there are three iron beds in it, and it is only courteous to surmise that the wadded coverlet and single sheet that go to make up a Greek bed once were new.

The hegoumenos is most hospitable. He gives his visitors excellent monastic wine, a dinner of many weird courses and is himself very good company. As usual, there are two churches in this monastery, the smaller of the two possessing some very fair ikons set in beautifully carved frames, and one very old picture, dated 887.

The large church consists of a nave, antechapel, with the body of the church under the dome, which is decorated with the usual half length figure of Christ. Here are seen some of the inlaid ivory and mother of pearl stools and lecterns which at one time were the staple work of the Meteora monks.

All the manuscripts of any value have been removed to Athens. A long building at the right of the bridge contains the cells of the monks, which open into a dark covered corridor. In time of war these monasteries are used as places of refuge.

Not the least curious feature of these unique rocks of Meteora are the holes and caves which literally pepper the face of the cliffs in places.

In many cases these retreats of the hermits of St. Anthony are merely cages. At a distance they look, some of them, like big birdcages hung up against the face of the cliff. As dwellings they are all exceedingly primitive.

The Thessalian hermit did not ask much of life. A rocky floor to lie on, bars or railings to keep him from falling out of his hole, a shaky ladder down which he might now and then descend to earth and a basket and string to let down for supplies were all he needed in addition to his crucifix and other religious necessities.

These aerial caves were occupied in the fourteenth century. Thousands of hermits, judging from the remains of habitations, must at one time or another have sought refuge in these cliffs. Few of them can now be entered, for the ladders have for the most part fallen away.

Seemingly the way a hermit proceeded was to choose a hole that took his fancy. Up to this he ran a ladder. Then, driving poles into the rock before the cave, he built out a little platform. This he roofed in and surrounded with a wall made of sticks or dried grass. From one platform to another these anchorites ran up their ladders until the whole face of the rock was alive with these hermits of St. Anthony.

After the time honored fashion of religious recluses, the cliff dwelling hermits of St. Anthony depended wholly on charity for their sustenance. Far up in their airy caves they spent their days and nights in prayer and contemplation. When hungry or thirsty, they let down their baskets to the ground, and when these were filled they pulled them up again.

The devout people of Kalibaki believed that these hermits were a special charge upon them and kept them well supplied with bread and water. Every morning men, women and children could be seen tramping to the cliffs to fill the baskets that were let down by the strings from above. And so the hermits were able to live their quiet, lazy lives without a single worldly care.—New York World.

An Opinion of Conkling.

The Rev. H. S. Haweis expresses this uncomplimentary opinion of the late Roscoe Conkling in his book of travels, lately published: "At Bigelow House in New York I dined with Conkling, the crack lawyer, talker and, I should say, characteristic windbag of the period. * * * Conkling seemed to me an insufferably vulgar, loud, clever person—astutely conceited and self centered. * * * Conkling talked through you and over you and all around you and quoted poetry whether you wanted to hear it or not and answered his own riddles and asked questions which he never meant you to answer, being of the nature of Cicero's rhetorical inquiries in the Verrius and Cataline orations. I can recollect nothing that Conkling said—only the abiding flavor of his arrogance and conceit."

Dribbel.

A drink called dribbel is popular in the north of England. The cotton hands of Manchester and the factory workers get through nearly 10,000,000 pints of this stuff every year. It is made from hops, hemlock root, parsley and clove and is one of the most dangerous liquors ever brewed. The northern counties pay about \$75,000 a year for the output of dribbel.

A \$20,000,000 FRAUD.

That Is What the Bridal Package In the Government Treasury Is Declared to Be.

"I hate to shatter a pet delusion by giving the facts in the case," said a former clerk in the treasury department at Washington, "but fraud ought to be exposed regardless of consequences, and the greatest fraud I know of is the famous 'bridal package' of the treasury vaults.

"I say famous, but it isn't famous in a general sense. It is famous only among bridal couples. I don't know how it is, but every bridal couple that goes to Washington on their wedding tour—and it seems to me that about nine-tenths of the bridal couples of the country go to Washington—know all about that package, and the bride can't rest until she goes through the regular routine connected with it. No visit to Washington by a stranger is complete without an inspection of the treasury vaults, but if his or her visit is a non-bridal one the fraud of the package isn't played.

"I don't know who it was in the department that first imposed it on a bridal pair, but it went, and it grows in popularity every year. When the couple enter the vault, the man in charge, after a few preliminary and perfunctory remarks, reaches up on a shelf, takes down a package of notes, and tells the bride to take it in her hand, if she hasn't asked for it the very first thing. He then tells her that the package contains \$20,000,000 in treasury notes, all in denomination of \$10,000 each. The bride is delighted, of course, and when she goes back home she talks for weeks about having held \$20,000,000 in her hand all at one time. The bridegroom can't resist enjoying that same pleasure, and he fondles the package awhile, and the pair go away blissful over the experience, while the treasury vault man tosses the package back on the shelf and chuckles.

"Now this is all simply a gigantic fraud on the young people. The treasury at Washington does not hold that amount of money. The bulk of the government money is at the subtreasury in this city. That 'bridal package' is a gay deceiver. It does contain notes to the amount of \$20,000,000, of the denomination of \$10,000 each, but they're not money, because they're not signed. So instead of having held in their hands \$20,000,000 the happy couple have fondled simply a package that represented no more value than the price of the paper and the printing on it. It may be cruel to shatter this pretty delusion, but my conscience forbids me to carry the burden of its concealment any longer; hence these facts."—New York Sun.

A Workman and His Work.

The wife of a friend of mine is the possessor of a thin gold watch chain. It is something after the pattern of a cable. Each link is finely finished, and the workmanship is that of an artist. In examining it closely one would even think that the person who made it was in love with his work. It is a mechanical masterpiece. My friend made it a gift to his wife about 15 years ago, and it is not only highly prized by her on that account, but also because of its design and finish. A week or two ago one of the links broke.

"I will get that fixed for you all right," said my friend. "I know just the man to take it to. He is not a jeweler, but a machinist by trade, and I would rather give a job like this to him than to a jeweler. He has a mechanical genius which runs to work of this kind."

My friend took the chain to the genius. He has a small, mean looking shop in an ancient, dilapidated building in an unlikely street down town. He examined the chain carefully and appeared to become reflective over it. Then his face lit up with a smile as he said: "I remember this chain very well. I made it 15 years ago."—Brooklyn Eagle.

The Peating of the Cayuse.

Fossil collections gathered in old lake beds of eastern Oregon demonstrate that the broad plains between the Rocky and Cascade mountains were the original habitat of the prehistoric horse, a fleet little animal no larger than a fox which in the long ago scampered over the lonely land. After the lapse of ages the modern horse is now to degenerate upon the stamping ground of his ancestors. The cayuse has become so valueless by the invasion of the electric car and the bicycle and the disappearance of the stagecoach and the wagon train that the halter has been taken from his neck and he has been turned loose to struggle with nature for his own subsistence. Over this section many thousand head of wild horses now roam as untrammelled as in prehistoric days, and during the past winter these perished in large numbers.

It is a case of the survival of the fittest. The cayuse, like the red man, may read his doom in the setting sun, but the well bred horse can still look civilization in the face and demand shelter and oats in abundance.—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Two Definitions of Poetry.

An Alabama editor, being asked to give a definition of "poetry," replied: "Poetry is nothing more than words thrown together with a jingle at the end of each line like the music of a tin can at the end of a dog's tail."

Not to be outdone by the above, a Georgia editor adds this opinion: "Poetry is the foolishness thing in the world, but it has return stamps on one end that help an editor to get his mail off."—Atlanta Constitution.

Addition to a Well Known Proverb.

I remember to have been told by a late brother officer, who was a well read man, that this proverb was of Portuguese origin and that it ran, "Hell is paved with good intentions and roofed with lost opportunities."—Notes and Queries.

Chaldean Weapons.

The analysis of Berthelot not only shows that the Chaldean weapons, ornaments and tools of 5,000 or 6,000 years ago were of pure copper, but that iron, silver and gold were known. The copper age preceded that of bronze, which appeared later in both Egypt and Chaldaea. It is further noted, moreover, that the form of hatchets with handles, the process of manufacture and even the practical uses were the same for the pure copper hatchets of Chaldaea and the prehistoric hatchets of Europe.

Worked Both Ways.

"It must have cost you a great deal to provide all these comforts for your employees," said the friend who had been looking through the reading rooms and gymnasium attached to the factory. "It does cost a little," admitted the manager, "but, you see, we pay 'em such low wages that the factory is really a better place than home. That makes 'em contented to stay."—Exchange.

How to Be Handsome.

It is a mistake to suppose that the only way to be good looking is to be born so. Good health has more to do with good looks than anything else. Such diseases as constipation, dyspepsia, liver complaints, rheumatism, nervous disorders, &c., not only shorten life, but spoil tempers and "looks." Bacon's Colery King for the nerves cures these troubles. H. Alex. Stoke sells it and will give you a sample package free. Large size 25c. and 50c.

A Comm on Danger.

If you have ever had a cold which you permitted to "wear away" it may interest you to know that it was a dangerous proceeding. Every cold and cough which is neglected paves the way for consumption, bronchitis, asthma or catarrh. Otto's Cure, the famous German throat and lung remedy, will cure any cough or cold and save you from consumption. Call on H. Alex. Stoke and get a sample bottle free. Large size 25c. and 50c.

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EMBROIDERIES that were 8c. reduced to 5c.; 10c. and 12c. kind to 8c.
GENTS' DRESS SHIRTS that were 50c., 75c. and 85c., reduced to 37c.
STRAW HATS, 50c. kind at 33c.
A Few DRESS PATTERNS that were \$6.00, \$6.50 and \$7.00, to go in this sale at \$4.00.

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" " 65c. 49c.
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" " 50c. 39c.
SERGE, " 65c. 49c.
" " 60c. 45c.
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DRESS FLANNEL, " 90c. 57c.
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White Flannel at the same price.

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" " " 15c. 10c.
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Men's Fine Worsted Suits reduced from \$10.00 to 6.50.

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