

WORSHIPERS AT THE ALTAR OF SKULLS



Every Monday the people of Italy visit the ancient cemetery of Fontanelle, to pay honor to the dead. This they do also on All Souls' day, and it is that festival which yields the most picturesque sight of the year. Many make a pilgrimage to the altar of skulls not only that they may pray for the dead, but that they may pray for luck in drawing lottery numbers. In reality, the cemetery is a disused stone quarry into which the victims of the great plague of 1656 were thrown. Since then the remains of these unfortunates have been removed to another grotto, and skeletons found in various convents, churches and elsewhere have replaced them.

LESSON FOR SOUVENIR FIEND.

Captain's Remarkable Action Designed "to Avoid Scandal."

"On the slow and cheap ships," said a purser, "the souvenir thief does no harm; but on a famous liner like the Ruritania, where records are broken and tip-top prices abound, the amount of stuff that disappears is shocking. Only things with the boat's name on go—champagne glasses, inkwells, curling tongs, buttonhooks and so forth. And what are we to do about it?"

"We had an American peeress aboard last voyage. The day we reached New York a stewardess came to me and said: 'Oh, Mr. Meet, I just seen Lady Blank's cabin trunk, and she's taken two of our finest silver inkwells.' 'Here was a quandary, eh? The captain was called in, and he settled the matter in the unsatisfactory way such things are usually settled. 'We must teach Lady Blank a lesson,' he growled. 'At the same time scandal must be avoided.' He thought a moment, then said to the stewardess: 'Take one of the inkwells and leave the other. That'll show her!'"

ASKED MUCH IN SHORT PRAYER.

Remarkable Invocation of Scotch Minister. Reported by Magazine.

"O Lord, we approach thee this mornin' in the attitude of prayer, and likewise of complaint. When we cam' tae the lan' o' Canada we expected tae find a lan' flowin' w' milk and honey, but instead o' that we found a lan' peopled w' ungodly Irish. O Lord, in thy great mercy, drive them tae the uttermost parts o' Canada; mak' them hewers o' wood and drawers o' water; gie them nae emoluments; gie them nae place o' abode; n'er mak' them magistrates or rulers among thy people."

"But if ye hae any favors to bestow, or any guid lan' tae gie awa', gie it tae thine ain, thy peccoliar people, the Scots. Mak' them members o' parliament; an' magistrates; an' rulers among thy people. An' as for the Irish, tak' them by the heels an' shak' them over the mouth o' hell, but dinna let them fa' in, and a' the glory shall be thine. Amen."—Success Magazine.

Geographical Distinctions.

Inhabitants of the Isle of Wight speak of "going to England" when they leave their own fragment of the kingdom. A patriotic Cornishman also "goes to England" when he crosses the Tamar. Similarly inhabitants of the Balkan peninsula talk of "going to Europe" when they leave their own corner of the continent—in curious contrast with the people of Great Britain, who regard themselves as both of and in "Europe," and it is only "the continent" that they visit. There is an old story of a Scottish minister who prayed for a blessing upon "the inhabitants of Great and Little Cumbrae (the islands in the Firth of Clyde) and the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland." Massachusetts people speak of going "down east" when they start for the Maine coast.

Preferred the Insomnia.

A story is told of the late bishop of London, Dr. Creighton, and Lord Rosebery. Lord Rosebery complained to the bishop of want of sleep, to which the bishop replied that he never suffered from insomnia. The earl observed that he wished he knew the remedy. The bishop's formula was very simple. If he felt drowsy he started to write a sermon and in a few moments he was wide awake. On the other hand if he wanted to sleep all he had to do was to start to read a sermon. Then sleep came in a few seconds. Lord Rosebery replied that it was his practice to choose the lesser evil, and he preferred want of sleep to reading sermons.

Going to Sleep.

What is this thing that knits up the raveled sleeve of care? Cabains, in his investigations on the mind, endeavored to fix the order in which the different parts of our organization go to sleep; namely—first, the legs and arms, then the muscles that support the head and back. The first sensation that slumbers is that of sight, followed in regular succession by the senses of taste, smell, hearing and feeling. The viscera (contents of the body cavities), he says, fall asleep one after the other, but with different degrees of soundness.—New York Press.

Bear Wanted to Play with Children.

While the children of John Herron were playing in front of their home, at Duryea, Pa., a she-bear and her cub appeared on the scene. The baby bear ran up and wanted to play with the children. "Kitten-like," but the mother bear called it back, while the youngsters ran into the house. As Mr. Herron was not at home and no one who could shoot was around the visitors remained unmolested. After sniffing about the yard for a while and eating a few apples and potato peelings at the back door, the bears rambled away.

Breakfasting with Whistler.

There was a foreign painter who used to breakfast at Chelsea, and when Mr. Carr asked him if he had been there lately he replied: "Oh, no; not now so much. He ask me a leetle while ago to breakfast, and I go. My cab fare, two shillings, 'arf a crown. I arrive, very nice. Goldfish in bowl, very pretty. But breakfast—one egg, one toast—so more! Oh, no. My cab fare, two shillings, 'arf a crown. For me no more!"—London Telegraph.

WORRIED THE YOUNG MOTHER.

Lack of "Progress" Might Have Proved a Serious Thing.

"When people in our part of the country select a family physician they stick to him," says an Illinois physician. "If he goes away they won't call in some one else if they can possibly help it. They have faith in nobody but their own man, so long as he manages to be fairly successful. Last spring I went up to Chicago for a few days, much to the distress of a young mother in our town, who expects me to inspect her only baby every other day at least. The second day of my stay she telegraphed me to come home at once. Baby was sick—she told me the trouble—she didn't know what to do. It wasn't an urgent case, I knew, so I wired back a reassuring message, told her to give the baby a dose of some medicine she had at hand, and to fill out the ten words I put in 'Progress admirable.' I always like to use large words when I'm telegraphing—makes me feel that I'm getting the worth of my money, you know. When I got home two days later I went to see the baby. 'She's all right now,' the mother told me, but we were awfully worried. We had to rely on the medicine you left, though. The boy at the drug store didn't have a bit of prognosis in the place."

TIGERS FOND OF HUMAN FLESH.

Many Natives of India Yearly Made Prey of Jungle Monarch.

About 4,000 men were eaten by tigers in India between 1900 and 1904. A large proportion of these unfortunates perished during periods of famine, when the beasts are made bold by hunger and are driven to the plains in search of water. The deaths caused by tigers in India constitute 37 per cent of the whole number due to wild beasts. All tigers are not man eaters, but when a tiger has once tasted man's flesh he will not be content until he has had more of it. Where tigers and herds abound, however, man is rarely a victim of the tiger. An old man-eater is usually very clever and tricky and can avoid the most skillful hunters. It is affirmed that a single tiger in southern India has killed 800 men, and that one in the Himalayas has killed more 300.

Carlyle's Curious Study.

Thomas Carlyle, the noted English philosopher and historian, had a curious study. It comprised the entire third floor of his narrow brick house at Chelsea, a London suburb. The walls of the study were of double thickness, to prevent street noises from annoying the master while at his work, and a skylight afforded the light. Just how fresh air was furnished the room was not apparent to the visitor. There is nothing about the room to suggest comfort, only a close, thick-walled, skylighted, long apartment where the great dyspeptic worked and worked ceaselessly, and from where he hurried to the kitchen, in the basement of the house, as soon as his day's labor was done. In the kitchen he received his most intimate friends, and there they smoked their pipes together.

The Order of Fools.

April 1 is not the only Fools' day in the year. On November 12, 1381, the Order of Fools was instituted by Adolphus, count of Cleves. Members were not by any means idiots, however, for the word had a different meaning then. They were the prototype of our modern Order of Foresters or Odd Fellows during a similarly benevolent work. Their insignia consisted of a mantle upon the left shoulder of which was embroidered a jester, or fool, in cap and bells, yellow hose and silver vest. So these cheery, useful jokers had a bright, happy outlook upon life and met together to dispense the earnest of their healthful existence at stated intervals, the chief day of which was November 12.

What It Reminded Him Of.

When Gen. Schenck, whose greatest fame rests upon his having introduced the game of poker into England, first arrived in London as American minister to the court of St. James he took a little of his spare time to visit the sights of the British capital. Among other places he visited Mme. Tus-saud's wax works. "And what do you think of our great wax work exhibition?" asked a friend. "Well," replied the general, "it struck me as being very like the ordinary English evening party."

Beans and Bacon.

An old Scotchman surprised us all by remarking: "Your famous New England dish of pork and beans came directly from England, where for centuries it was the reigning favorite with all classes. The English called it 'beans and bacon.' In New York you have corned beef and beans—the same old beans. I never could understand why beans and bacon were never naturalized in the Land o' Cakes. I cannot charge myself with ever having seen such a dish in Scotland!"

Disposition Worth Striving For.

There is no more desirable trait for a companion in the journey of life than that of cheerfulness, the yokefellow of good temper. "A merry fellow doeth good." But cheerfulness is not merely hilarity and fun. It includes the ability to look on the bright side, to make the best of everything, to refuse to meet trouble half way, and to do one's best bravely and hopefully. Such a disposition is invaluable, and the worth of its owner is above rubies.

REPTILES ALL OF SHORT SIGHT.

Experiments Prove Their Range of Vision to Be Limited.

The corps of naturalists attached to the Zoological park at Washington has recently concluded some interesting experiments to test the vision of certain animals.

It appears that the sight of reptiles is generally very good, being probably their most acute sense, but not so acute as popularly supposed, possessing a limited range, indeed, as compared with most animals. Crocodiles cannot distinguish a man at a distance exceeding ten times their length. Fish see for only short distances. The vision of most serpents is poor, the boa constrictor, for example, being able to see no further than one-third of its own length. Some snakes see no further than one-eighth of their length. Frogs are better endowed with sight, for they can distinguish objects clearly at a distance of 20 times their own length.

The hearing of nearly all reptiles is even worse than their vision. Most of them are quite deaf, especially the boa constrictor. The phrase "deaf as an adder" represents the careful observation of our forefathers.—Harper's Weekly.

TRULY THE WHITE MAN'S GRAVE.

Sierra Leone Looks Attractive in Spite of Its Bad Name.

Sierra Leone—known to fame as "The White Man's Grave"—viewed from the dock of an incoming steamer presents an appearance distinctly attractive. As to climate, the sobriquet "White Man's Grave" is sufficiently instructive. Suffice it to say that the first daily regimental orders ran thus: "Funeral parade at 6:30 a. m. to-morrow," and it was seldom indeed that the parade was dismissed for lack of a victim to the pestiferous climatic conditions. Indeed, so arduous became the duties of sepulchre that whereas it was customary in the beginning for the entire regiment and band to attend, only the company of the deceased and the firing party did so later on. Sierra Leone is infested with snakes, large and small. The former are of the constrictor species, the latter are all extremely venomous. The most deadly of all, perhaps, is the yellow jack, a beautiful yellow and black reptile whose bite is reputed to prove fatal within a space of 20 minutes.

A Gold Farm.

"Thanksgiving football is one form of gold farm," said a metallurgist; "but gold grows, and when the secret of its cultivation is discovered, we shall have gold farms literally. Miners, having set timber braces in gold mines, often find on the timber growths of gold. Growths of gold have, too, been perceived on the rocks of gold-bearing rivers. Gold has been discovered growing on sluice boxes. 'What causes these growths of gold we don't know. We do know that one essential is the percolation of water, a feature without which gold growths are never found. When we discover the other features—and no doubt science will discover them some day—the gold farmer will perhaps be as common as the farmer of fruit or truck."

To Stop Bleeding at the Nose.

A man in traveling from New England to his home in New Jersey had a violent nosebleed on the train. Every aid was rendered, and the usual remedies such as ice on the neck, a key thrust down the back and all sorts of things, were ineffectually tried. So profuse was the hemorrhage that, when New York was reached he was too weak to go to a physician unaided. The application of tincture of eucalyptus promptly stopped the bleeding. This is an exceedingly valuable remedy, and should be indelibly stamped upon our memories. A small vial should be placed in every family medicine chest.

Unsatisfactory Education.

We ought to train our boys to be more methodical and more thorough-going in everything they have to do. Constantly we hear complaint from business men that boys from the grammar schools, and even from the higher schools, are very hazy about arithmetic. Now, if there is any subject requiring precision it is that which deals with figures. It boots little that a boy has gone through a high school course if he cannot make out the extensions of an ordinary bill of lading. Yet the latter difficulty presents itself to business men continually.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

The Ruling Passion.

The father of a family, all of whom were devotees of bridge and much given to talking the game and holding post-mortems over badly played hands, died rather suddenly. There was a difference of opinion as to whether he should be buried in the family plot or cremated. In the course of the discussion the mother said weepingly to her son: "John, what do you think?" "I leave it to you, mother."

Man Owns Wife's Dresses.

The question of who owns the dresses of a wife came up in the Brompton county court of Maryland recently and the judge decided that the husband is the owner. The man held that he had given the wife the money to buy the dresses in dispute and although they were not paid for it was decided that they belonged to him.

ALL IN THE GOLDEN FUTURE.

Beautiful Picture of What Life on the Farm is to Be Like.

The future farmer will subdivide his land, and defy drought as well as floods. He will become a scientific forester, and every farm will produce wood and lumber as well as wheat and apples. A single acre will produce what ten acres yield now. Women will work out doors as heartily as men. In fact, they will be the horticulturalists and the truck gardeners. There will be closer relation between the producer and the consumer ignoring a horde of middlemen who frequently waste more than is destroyed by ignorant help and insect foes combined. Under the alliance with the school the farm will be valued not only for its gross weight of products, but for its poems and its education. As our schools become places for applying as well as acquiring knowledge, our farm homes will become integral parts of the garden school and the school farm. The alliance between the home and the school will become very close. A valley full of farms is already the nearest to paradise that we have, but the future will tenfold its wealth and hundredfold its delights.—Independent.

AS EXPLAINED BY THE GUIDE.

Garrulous Old Woman Found Out What Caused Streak on Water.

The garrulous old woman in the stern of the boat had pestered the guide with her comments and questions ever since they had started. Her meek little husband, who was bunched road-like in the bow, flashed in silence. The old woman had seemingly exhausted every possible point in fish and animal life, woodcraft and personal history when she suddenly espied one of those curious paths of oily, unbroken water frequently seen on small lakes which are ruffled by a light breeze. "Oh, guide, guide," she exclaimed, "what makes that funny streak in the water—No, there—Right over there!" The guide was busy repairing the old gentleman's hook and merely mumbled "Um-hmm." "Guide," repeated the old woman in tones that were not to be denied, "look right over where I'm pointing and tell me what makes that funny streak in the water." The guide looked up from his baiting with a sigh. "That? Oh, that's where the road went across the lee last winter"—Everybody's Magazine.

Work and Life.

I was much impressed by what the head of a large and prosperous bourgeois French family said to an American friend. "During the day we are all busy with our various avocations. The evenings are devoted to more serious things—reading, music, conversation, society." This is surely the normal point of view of a civilized man living in a civilized society. In Italy, where social life, as in France, is taken somewhat more seriously than with us, it is usual for the women prominent in society to receive in the evening. One evening a week (sometimes two, in a few cases every evening) is set apart for receiving the friends and habitues of the house. In Rome, where society is more crystallized, where the social game is better played than in any community I know, one or two of the great houses are open to visitors on every evening of the week.—Maud Howe, in Harper's Bazar.

Causes of Blindness.

The dangers to which the modern eye is exposed fall into two great classes—disease and overuse from near work. Here another great consoling fact faces us, and that is that while overwork and consequent eye strain are by far the commonest troubles that befall the modern eye, discomfort and inefficiency are as far as they go in 99 cases out of 100. It is a fact that 99.9 per cent of all blindness is due to disease and not to overwork.

More significant yet, seven-tenths of the diseases which produce blindness are the acute infections, against which civilization wages an unceasing and victorious conflict.—Woman's Home Companion.

Question of Precedence.

Recently a dispute was raised as to whether a certain lawyer or a certain doctor was to have precedence at a function at which both were to play prominent parts. It was impolitic to allow either of these two men to be offended. While the discussion was under way as to which was to be seated next the speaker, an old politician in the room, said the discussion was one which he thought he could settle by giving them the words of an ancient Diogenes who had said upon an incident occasion: "Let the thief go before; let the executioner follow after." The politician said he thought that meant the lawyer should have first place and the doctor come next.

The Old English "Tumbler."

The old-fashioned English tumbler, which insisted on reverting to an erect position, no matter how frequently it was knocked over, possessed merits. This was the original form of drinking tumbler—hence the name. They were made of thin horn and weighted with a bulbous mass at the bottom. The idea of their use was a double one. The old drinking custom required that the ale should be drunk at a draught—for its presence in the tumbler would cause it to overbalance and spill its contents—and there was the advantage possessed by the tumbler of not rolling out of reach when knocked about during orgies.

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