

The Delta and the Danube.

The Danube delta begins forty-five miles below Galatz, where the river divides into two branches, the left-hand one, the Kilia arm, taking a general north-easterly course, with many turns and subdivisions, past the Russian town of Ismail and Kilia, and a short distance beyond the fishing village of Wilkoff, flows into the Black Sea through seven narrow channels. The right-hand branch, actually the main stream, divides again ten miles below the first fork, the Sulina arm running in a general easterly direction to the port of Sulina, on the Black Sea, and the St. George's arm winding slightly on to the southeast under the extreme eastern spur of the great range of Dobruja hills. Each side of the triangular equilateral triangle bounded by the Kilia and St. George's arms and the sea-coast measures about fifty miles in the straight line, and the larger part of the tract thus enclosed is marsh and swamp land, covered with a dense growth of tall reeds interspersed with numerous lakes, and cut up into countless islands by narrow lagoons. In the whole of this great delta there are only a few square miles of ground higher than the general level of the marsh, and these are two broad ranges of sand dunes running northeast and southwest several miles inland, marking the line of the ancient sea-level, the waves and wind raised this barrier long before the memory of man. These sandy elevations are now covered with a forest of oak trees, and support a sparse population. With this exception the delta is uncultivated, and the few natives who inhabit the great marsh are almost all engaged in fishing. They build themselves rude huts out of the tall reeds, make their beds and even their roofs out of the same material, and during the summer months see their nets in every lake and lagoon, preserving their catch in salt or carrying it at convenient times to the distant markets. This great marsh is at all times most impressive, and in summer, when the reeds have grown to their full height and are in blossom, the landscape, although monotonous in the extreme, often has great elements of beauty. Narrow waterways, seldom more than a fathom broad, intersect the marsh in all directions, and only the natives familiar with the intricate windings of these natural canals can find their way from one point to another of this labyrinth. Some of these waterways are known to have been made use of in the period of Roman occupancy, and the raos of fishermen who now make use of them have preserved their type, their dress, their boats, and their implements practically unchanged since the time when Ovid was exiled to the shores of the Euxine. Myriads of broad fowl breed in the solitude of the wide marsh, and many kinds of fish abound in its quiet waters. In the autumn, when the frost has killed the reeds, great tracts of the delta are often swept over by fires, consuming all the vegetation above the level of the mud, but clearing the way for a new and vigorous growth in the spring. Only during the winter months is the marsh passable for vehicles, or even pedestrians, and when the whole region is frozen hard the mails and the few passengers who are obliged to travel are carried on sledges freighted from one station to another over the level surface of land and water. Russia took possession of this region after the capture of Ismail, in the early part of the century, and in order to help commerce at home, put various restrictions on the Danube trade, which almost annihilated it for a time. The adoption of free trade by England naturally stimulated the commerce in the Danube, and great pressure was brought to bear to induce Russia to remove the hampering restrictions on the navigation of the river. International disputes arising from this cause finally culminated in the Crimean war, and it was not without reason, therefore, that the treaties of peace contained articles intended to place the navigation of the river in control of the countries most interested in the corn supply. "From the Black Forest to the Black Sea," by F. D. Miller, in Harper's Magazine for August.

Turkish Couriers.

The ancient Turkish couriers always ran with bare feet, which grew so hard and destitute of feeling that they are said to have had themselves shod, like horses, with light iron shoes. To render the resemblance more complete, they carried in their mouths bats of silver, pierced with holes, and clamped these as a horseshoe on their feet. Further, their belts and garters were furnished with little bells, which tinkled wherever they went. Besides their pay, they received two full suits of clothes every year. Their costumes consisted of an Albanian cap and a pair of damask, or striped satin, and a belt of silk enriched with gold, in which they carried their poniard. Later they began to wear coverings upon their feet—long stockings, as well as a rude kind of shoe. Upon their heads they wore high bonnets covered with silver, from which waved enormous plumes of ostrich feathers. In one hand each man carried his hatbox, and in the other a bag full of comfits, with which they kept their mouths moist while running. In this costume they accompanied their noble master, and conveyed his messages as far as they pleased to send them. As soon as they had received their orders away they went, leaping and cowering among the crowd with the agility of a deer, crying: "Sault, sault!" ("Take care, take care!") On their rushed night and day and with a touching swiftness, taking no repose until they had delivered the message intrusted to them.—Harper's Young People.

A Pleasant Herb Drink.

The best cure we know of for constipation and headache is the pleasant herb drink called Ruse's Family Medicine. It is said to be Oregon grape root, combined with simple herbs, and is made for use by pouring boiling water onto the dried roots and herbs. It is remarkably efficacious in all blood disorders and is now the sovereign remedy with ladies for clearing up the complexion. Druggists sell the packages at 50c and \$1.

A Literary Find.

Mr. Bok has succeeded in unearthing a quantity of unpublished material by Henry Ward Beecher, which will shortly be published as a series of articles in "The Ladies' Home Journal." The material is especially valuable since it deals with a range of topics both varied and timely, and will advance, for the first time in print, the great preacher's views on a number of such interesting questions as marriage, home government, woman in public and private life, politics, etc., etc. Mr. Bok has secured the co-operation of Mrs. Beecher and Professor Elliotwood, Mr. Beecher's private reporter, in the editing of the material.

Stronger every day. Gentlemen, I have been ill for a long time with lame back and weak kidneys, and at times could not get up without help. I tried B.B.B. and with two bottles an almost well. I find my back is stronger every day. Yours truly, Mrs. L. Thompson, Oakville, Ont.

Literary Notices.

The August Arena contains the second instalment of Mr. Reed's Brief for the Plaintiff in the interesting discussion of Bacon vs. Shakspeare. Whatever may be said of the abstract merits of the case, no one can fail to be impressed with the ingenious and powerful array of evidence thus adduced in behalf of Lord Bacon as the author of the plays. Perhaps the most startling as well as the most interesting disclosures, however, are yet to come. In the September number Mr. Reed will answer objections, not only those that have been brought forward in previous public discussions of the subject, but others advanced in his own private correspondence with scholars and literary men on both sides of the Atlantic. Other leading papers in the August Arena are by United States Senator James H. Kyle, Hon. George Fred Williams, M. C., Hon. Wm. T. E. Ellis, M. C., Gail Hamilton, Mary A. Livermore, Louise Chandler Moulton, Helen H. Gardner, Frances E. Willard, Mrs. (Gen.) Lew Wallace, Frances E. Russell and the editor of the Arena. In addition to these papers, there is a brilliant symposium on Women's Clubs in America, to which eleven leading American women contribute.

HARPER'S MAGAZINE. Harper's Magazine for August is a delightful midsummer number. It opens with the first of a series of articles on "Literary Paris," by Theodore Child. The third paper of James Russell Lowell's series on the Old English Dramatists relates to John Webster. Constance Fenimore Woolson contributes a delightful description of a visit to "Corfu and the Ionian Sea."

THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL. Henry Ward Beecher's premonitions, his last day on earth and his death are the subject of Mrs. Beecher's concluding paper on "Mr. Beecher's Last Days," in the August Ladies' Home Journal. The wife of New York's famous lawyer, Mr. William Maxwell Evans, is the subject of a delightful sketch, with portrait, by Lillian Wright, and Kate Upson Clark gives a pleasant addition to the series of "Literary Women in their Homes," by an attractive description and portrait of Miss Mary Wilkins, whose clever stories of New England life have made her so great a favorite. The Ladies' Home Journal is published by The Curtis Publishing Company, of Philadelphia, for ten cents a number and \$1 per year.

A Close Call. After suffering for three weeks from cholera infantum, so that I was not expected to live, and at the time, would even have been glad had death called me, so great was my suffering, a friend recommended Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry, which acted like magic on my system. But for this medicine I would not be alive now. John W. Bradshaw, 393 St. Paul St. Montreal, P. Q.

Bliss.—Did you know papa well before you married him? Mother (sadly)—No, dear, I didn't.

Suddenly Frustrated. Gentlemen,—I was suddenly prostrated while at work by a severe attack of cholera, but he seemed unable to help. An evacuation about every forty minutes was fast wearing me out, when we sent for a bottle of Wild Strawberry, which saved my life. Mrs. J. N. Van Natter, Mount Brydges, Ont.

RUBINSTEIN ON MUSIC.

A GREAT MUSICIAN WITH MANY AND CLEARLY PUT IDEAS.

—Past and Present Reviewed, Compared and Criticized—The Most Sublime Figure in Bach.

It is very rare that a musician of Rubinstein's calibre records his views of his fellow-artists. Rubinstein has done this with breadth, thoroughness, and learning, in a "Conversation Upon Music." He begins with the somewhat startling opinion that Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, and Gluck are the monumental figures of the art. There are others who may be famous, but not so famous as these. Mozart, for example, in his operas touches the loftiest heights, yet opera is only a subordinate branch of music. Opera is poor, because the human voice cannot compete with the orchestra. As Chopin and Gluck belong to the first five, no one has expressed more successfully than they a composer's individual emotions or the age in which they live. Rubinstein entertains the notion that music can properly be descriptive. He is not also an advocate of "programme music," nevertheless different ideas are treated in a manner different enough to indicate their nature. The "Moonlight Sonata" is as clear a representation of its title as can well be imagined. The same is true of the "Heroic Symphony," at least in the second movement is concerned, which perhaps alone is heroic. In Bach and Handel music received the "perfect stamp of maturity." Bach is incomparably higher, but Handel worked in a field, the opera, which Bach never attempted. The "Well-Tempered Clavier" is a priceless product. If all Bach's cantatas and masses or even the Passion Music were lost and the Clavier Chord saved, it would still be well. He is perhaps the most unmeasured of composers, with more soul in a cantata of Bach than in any operatic aria or church music ever written. He expresses every imaginable emotion in his fugues. In fact, a time will come when it will be said of Bach's music, as of Homer, that "this was not written by one but by many."

Haydn is a great man and remarkable in his art, but withal "an amiable, smiling, careless, contented old gentleman." Mozart is the "sun of music." He has illuminated all its forms with splendor. His technique is immense, his melody divine, his invention hardly surpassed. Compared to him, Gluck was a stone. Yet mankind feels that it may become "dry and parched in the eternal Haydn-Mozart sunshine." Action is lacking. Then comes Beethoven. He is the real Colossus. "Fidelio" is the greatest opera existing, though opera was not his forte. Moreover, his greatest works were written after he became deaf. Schubert was the richest in natural melody, and marvelous in creation. And again, his music repeats that of Bach, Beethoven, and Schubert are the most exalted trio. As Mehl, Gretry, Cherubini, Spontini, Rossini, and their like were composers of vocal music only, and hence not standard bearers of the art, the successor to the giants must be regarded as Weber, though if he spoke from his own sympathy only Rubinstein would name Mendelssohn instead. Rubinstein appreciates greatly Italian opera which is as it largely on account of the pure beauty of the Italian voice. It is this that turned the native composers almost wholly to the production of arias, and leaves their operas "insignificant and inartistic."

Three countries have "schools," France, Germany, and Italy. The distinctive type of French music is comic opera, and it is most charming. The operette or the opera bouffe, in which the charming became frivolous, the witty silly, and the merry vulgar, was begun by Offenbach, a man of decided talent; but it seems to be losing ground, to the advantage of the former style. Meyerbeer has some very great qualities. He is dramatic and able to make use of virtuosity. Next to him in France is Halévy, and with the exception of the Italians, grand opera has passed entirely into the possession of Frenchmen.

Chopin, the bard, the rhapsodist, the mind, the soul of the piano, expresses all possible emotion. He draws out Rubinstein's admiration, more volitionally perhaps than any other. He belongs to the third epoch of art. Strauss began music, the organ and third epoch being the first, and Bach and Handel stand supreme in it. The second, the instrumental epoch, containing the development of the piano and the orchestra culminated in Beethoven. The third epoch, the "lyric-romantic," beginning through Weber, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Chopin, has the first and the last of its most distinguished representatives.

"Glucks is perhaps the most successful in expressing national feeling. Hungary, Bohemia, Sweden, Norway, England, in fact all countries in addition to the three great ones of France, Italy and Germany, have written music of a more or less national color; but Gluck, the Russian, in that respect surpasses all. There is much that is interesting regarding piano players. Thalberg, Liszt, and Henselt have given this inferior instrument an entirely new character. They have freed it from the scale and passage style, and adapted it to the canto with arpeggio accompaniment. The effect of the virtuoso upon art may be very great. When Beethoven struck a certain note twenty-eight times, in the beginning of a certain allegro, pianoforte makers were immediately called to the post to make a more sensitive tone. Paganini, although he wrote nothing of great merit, was an immense stimulant to the violin. Thalberg roused piano playing in the same manner. But the virtuosi have gone out, in the sense that they no longer invent and advance. The modern players are devoted to the perfection of the present standard of technique. Tausig was the last virtuoso of the piano, as Wieniawski was of the fiddle, Davidoff of the cello, and Viardot-Garbia of song.

Then comes the astounding opinion that with Schumann and Chopin there was a "end of music." Berlioz, Wagner, and Liszt, the three later figures of greatest eminence, have produced another sort of thing. Berlioz, for example, the most interesting of the three, is a grandly original combination of dashing in color, amazing, but neither beautiful, great, deep, nor high. Transpose his works from the orchestra to the piano, and with the coloring of the instrumentation lost there is nothing left. The great thoughts are not there. Wagner is in the same line. He appears so many-sided that it is hard to express a general opinion of him, yet for scarcely any of his ideas has Rubinstein any particular sympathy or respect. He doesn't like his use of supernatural beings for heroes—their affairs are not stirring. The Leit motifs become rather comical in their abuse. Arias cannot be dispensed with with psychological correctness, nor can ensembles. His orchestra are too much of a good thing. He is full of little theatrical

tricks, in himself he is personally objectionable. Whatever his politics are, moreover, they are not opera, in conception or execution. Liszt, the third, is the "demon of music," fantastic, bewitching, soaring high and low, but false, insincere, theatrical, and "evil in principle." His first period, that of the virtuoso, was his best. His second, that of composition, was one of sorry days. For the men who come after these Rubinstein has no particular attention. They are not commanding, and perhaps something may come later, but he evidently has his doubts.

A sign of the downfall of the art was the increased women on the field of instrumental execution and composition. As executants women can never get beyond the imitative. They have not the depth and power of thought or breadth of feeling which leads to creation. Although the emotion of love is so potent in them, it finds no echo for them in music. No woman has ever composed a love duet or a cradle song. Throughout the entire little volume runs a vein of philosophical digression full of original interest, and covering a great variety of relevant topics.—New York Sun.

The Old Tenor. Did you say the singing was only fair? Sir, if it changes your opinion, I will be glad to change from him on the stage up there Straight to an angel's symphony— Well, it might stagger my poor old brain, But I think, on the whole, I back should come To hear these young, sweet notes a gain, And see you form the air's cumbersome.

The why of it all I tell, my friend, A certain man was near his end, Lying racked in a fever glow, And a fine young star, in his flush of fame, Slept to his bedside, took his hand, And tried to waken life's spent flame Temporarily. The Well-Tempered Clavier By singing songs of the lovely land.

God, how he sang! till the sick man turned His face from the wall, and took deep breath, And saw his eyes with new light yearned, That life ran sweeter far than death.

If one might harken to strains like this:— And he swore he would live in death's despite, Then sleep dropt down on him like a kiss, And he awoke with his blood all cool and bright.

Perhaps you can fancy who was the man, And who the singer there on the stage, And why I listen and sob, and can But love his faults and his hints of age. Some folks will say, when they pay their dues, The perfect singer is their choice, Where youth and age are both in view, But like a man behind the voice!—Richard Burton.

Curiosities About Coins. Certain passages of the Iliad of Homer would lead to the inference that coins of brass were struck as early as 1184 years B.C. Tradition affirms that the Chinese had bronze coins as early as 1120 B.C. Herodotus, "the Father of History," ascribes the "invention" of coins to the Lydians, about nine centuries B.C., and there is no satisfactory evidence that coins were known prior to that date.

The original process of coining was very simple. A globular piece of metal, having a defined weight, was placed on a scale, weighed with some national or religious symbol, and struck with a hammer until it had received the impression. One of the most ancient Asiatic coins was the Persian Daric, a gold coin struck during the reign of Darius, nearly five centuries B.C. The first coin in Rome was about the year 600 B.C. The metal used was brass, and the unit of value was one pound in weight. The coin was called an "as," was brick-shaped and stamped with the figure of a sheep or an ox.

Silver was first coined at Rome in the year 273 B.C. The first Roman gold coin was issued only about 74 years B.C. The Saxons coined the first British pieces about the year 279 A.D.

The first colonial coins issued in this country were struck in Massachusetts in 1652. The metal used was brass, and 12 pence pieces.—St. Louis Republic.

Walt Whitman's Philosophy. In a recent interview with the New York World, Walt Whitman, the venerable poet who is calmly waiting for the end, said: "I am not a poet, I am a man. I have tried to round out my 'Leaves of Grass.' I have no literary ambition left now. I pass the days as best I know how. Tell all the newspaper fellows in New York that, although I do not know them personally, I send them my best wishes. I used to be of the craft years ago, you know."

"You want to know in a word, then, the sum total of my life philosophy as I have tried to live it and as I tried to put it in my books. I will tell you. It is only the closest student who would understand it in my fellows understand me. The sum total of my view of life has always been to humbly accept and thank God for whatever inspiration towards good may come in, to laugh loose of our, and as far as may be, to cut loose from and put the bad behind always and always."

And with these brave words from one who spoke in the accents of peace, good will and charity towards all the world, I left the venerable poet to his dreams.

Buddha is a Catholic Saint. It is a singular fact, of peculiar interest at this time, when so much attention is being attracted to Buddhism and its ethics by the lectures of the distinguished interpreter of the Eastern faith, Sr. Edwin Arnold, that Buddha is canonized as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church and is honored as such on the 27th of November. Dean Stanley stated once that Buddha was canonized as St. Joseph, and the statement caused much discussion in England. Prof. Max Muller related the story in the Contemporary Review for July, 1870. A certain monk, St. John of Damascus, he says, was credited with a religious romance called "Life of Barlaam and Joseph." It has been most distinctly proved that the story was derived from the story of Buddha. The moral tone of the book made it very popular in the Middle Ages, it was translated into several European languages, and eventually the hero of the story was canonized. The facts are vouched for by many clerical preceptors in the discussion.—New York Sun.

To Celebrate the Marcellines. Another effort is being made by the inhabitants of Choisy-le-Roi, outside Paris, to observe with much solemnity and ceremonial what is vaguely called the "Centenary of the Marcellines." The Choisy-le-Rois (5 possess the dust at Rouget de Lisle—the composer of the hymn—who was buried there in 1836.

Tees of Animals. No animal has more than five toes, dogs or claws to each foot or limb. The horse is one-toed, the ox two-toed, the rhinoceros is three-toed, the hippopotamus is four-toed, and the elephant and hundreds of other animals are five-toed.

IMPORTANT ELECTRICAL DISCOVERY.

The Phonograph Telegraph Working Successfully in England.

To be told that a telegraph wire which is justly transmitting a long message can at the same time be made to convey half a dozen other messages in opposite directions sounds like a fairy tale; but that the thing can be done, and is daily being done, is attested upon the most respectable scientific authority. The discovery which renders these astonishing results possible is due to C. Langdon-Davies, who, has for some time been engaged in rendering practically workable, and in adapting it alike to telephonic and telegraphic use. It is difficult to convey to the lay mind an accurate comprehension of a process so exceedingly technical; but it may be briefly said that Mr. Langdon-Davies in the phonograph, utilizes not the electric current, but the noises caused by induction. The signals are transmitted by a series of induced electric impulses, and the success of the system is found in the ability of the inductive force to pass through insulations which electric currents cannot penetrate. A wire may be blown down and in contact with the earth, yet, so long as it is not broken, it will carry a phonographic message. By means of the phonograph messages can be transmitted with extraordinary rapidity, and there is practically no limit to the number of telegrams that can be sent simultaneously upon the same wire. And, as we have hinted, Mr. Langdon-Davies' system is as useful telephonically as it is telegraphically. A wire which is conveying electric signals can at the same time be used for telephonic conversation, without either the message or the conversation suffering in the least. For some considerable time past experiments in both directions have been proceeding, with most gratifying results, which are vouchsafed for by such high authorities as Prof. Sylvanus Thompson, Conrad Cook, and Latimer Clark. Three of the principal railway companies have already adopted the phonograph; and it must be obvious, even to the unscientific mind, that telephonic telegraphy and telephony, in so vastly increasing the capacity and the speed of every wire, has before it a very great future. The phonograph, indeed, increases almost to infinity the number of words that can be transmitted in a given time. It is obvious, therefore, that it offers great possibilities in the way of cheapening the cost of telegrams. So long as the number of words that could be carried by a wire in an hour was rigidly limited it was hopeless to look for any substantial reduction in the cost of telegraphing, but the phonograph offers an increase in capacity and the speed of every wire to which it may be fitted.—St. James Gazette.

Scientific Drops. A trolley line is now operating between Marseilles and St. Louis, France, and one was opened in Bremen recently.

A London firm finds a windmill the most economical means of securing the motive power necessary to run a dynamo.

Recent experiments in France on the velocity of propagation of electric waves give a mean velocity which is almost exactly that of light.

In speaking of the solidification of a body by water, Professor Dewar says that water can be made to become solid by the evaporation of a quarter of its weight.

Through a pneumatic tube 700 miles in length letters are whirled between Paris and Berlin in thirty-five minutes—at the speed of twenty-five miles a minute.

Investigations of rain drops lead to the conclusion that some of the large drops must be more or less hollow, as they fall when striking to wet the whole surface enclosed within the drop.

As compared with gas illumination the advantages of electricity on health is the result of two things: In the first place, the electric light does not draw out the oxygen, and in the second place it gives off no noxious gases.

A telegraph and cable company has recently been chartered for the purpose of laying and maintaining telegraph and submarine cables from points on the coast of Virginia to New York and to the islands of San Domingo and Cuba.

The different manufacturers of incandescent lamps are greatly interested in the decision which will soon be given in the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, which it is expected will conclusively settle the question as to who is the inventor of the incandescent lamp.

It is reported from England that a form of ball-bearing has been applied to the spindle of textile machinery, and by its use the high velocity spindles have become possible. The 8,000 revolutions per minute is the speed usually obtained, and it is claimed that speeds as high as 16,000 can be reached.

On the subject of the swaying of fifty chimneys it is declared to be absurd to hold that a chimney, say ten feet high, would be likely to fall into a happy state of oscillation one after another—the oscillations take the lead and disperse, and one instead a half is thought to be about the extreme amount of swaying that takes place, and the oscillations are not in phase.

Some authorities insist that the great toe ought to project farther beyond the second toe than the second toe projects beyond the third toe, and that the two should be of equal length. It is well known that in antique statues the second toe is usually the longer of the two, whilst the first is longer in living men.

It is said by scientists to be a fact that all persons are not equally susceptible to electricity, but that they fall into a happy state of insensibility one after another—the oscillations take the lead and disperse, and one instead a half is thought to be about the extreme amount of swaying that takes place, and the oscillations are not in phase.

The introduction of electric traction is responsible for a depression in many small trades, because the replacing of 30,000 horses employed on the various lines a few months ago. Blacksmiths, harness-makers, hay dealers and brush manufacturers living in the vicinity of some of the big systems are the principal complainants. One prominent New Jersey horse brush manufacturer reports a decrease of 20 per cent. in his business owing solely to this cause.

The new method of series parallel control for street car motors, of which mention was made some time ago, has been recently tested by the West End road, of Boston, with very gratifying results. A 21,500-pound car equipped with the old style rheostat, was run nine round trips on a track measuring about six miles, at an average speed of 5.84 miles per hour, while a 21,500-pound car equipped with the new controller, made eight round trips at an average rate of 5.4 miles per hour. The former consumed 10,700 watt hours, with an average electrical horsepower per round trip of 13.5, while the latter consumed by 7,566 watt hours, and required but an average of 9.5 electrical horsepower per round trip. The car with the series parallel method of control thus required only 70 per cent. of the power used by the car with the rheostat—a saving of 30 per cent.

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