

Clock That Struck Too Soon

A clock that gains or loses is generally regarded as a nuisance and of questionable value, but a noble family in Denmark has just gained £10,000 because a certain clock was one minute fast.

According to Danish law an increased scale of death duties—that is, taxes on fortunes left by rich people—came into force at midnight between December 19th and 20th in the year 1918.

About that time a Danish nobleman, Count Moitke, lay seriously ill in his estate at Lystrup, and a second or two after the great clock in the castle tower had struck twelve he passed away.

Naturally, when it came to collecting the death duties, the authorities had no doubt that they could charge on the higher scale, for the Count was still alive when the clock struck midnight. Obviously, they said, he had lived for a few seconds on December 20th.

But the heirs stoutly denied, declaring that the clock was one minute fast, and that, therefore, the Count had passed away on December 19th, so that his estate was liable only for the old and lighter tax.

For two years the dispute continued and it has just been settled by the judge at Copenhagen. Many lawyers

were engaged on both sides and the case was argued at great length; but, after hearing the evidence, the Court decided that the clock was fast, and that the Count died on December 19th. The fact, therefore, that the clock was one minute fast cost the heirs an extra \$50,000.

This is a reminder of another instance where a mistake in the striking of a clock proved of great advantage. In 1770 a man named John Hatfield died in London at the age of one hundred and two. He had been a soldier in the reign of William and Mary, and during his military career was tried and sentenced to death by court-martial for falling asleep while on duty on the terrace of Windsor Castle.

But the soldier firmly maintained that he had never slept, and in proof declared that he had heard the clock of St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, strike thirteen at night. Of course, he was disbelieved by the judges.

A number of people in London, however, came forward and swore that the clock had actually struck thirteen on the night in question, and the King pardoned the condemned soldier.

Another famous clock that has struck incorrectly is Big Ben. On the morning of March 23rd, 1861, it struck twenty at three o'clock, and continued erratic for some time.

How the Duchess of Wellington Learned of Waterloo.

Unrequited love always excites our sympathy. A striking instance of it is told in an unpretentious book of reminiscences by a little-known English woman, Miss C. L. H. Dempster. The story is all the more interesting because the unappreciative gentleman in the case is no less person than the Duke of Wellington.

Miss Stewart Mackenzie, writes Miss Dempster, was on terms of the most intimate friendship with Kitty Pakenham, the girl whom the Duke of Wellington married but did not love. At the time of which I speak all Europe was on the quiver, for Napoleon was already in Belgium, and the duke was in Brussels with eighty thousand men. Everyone felt that the campaign must be decisive. Rumors were rife, and the duchess was wretchedly anxious.

Miss Stewart Mackenzie happened to be engaged on that evening to dine with her cousins, the Proby's. At six o'clock in the evening she stepped into her chariot and left Bruton Street. She had not got three streets further before she fell in with a great crowd, shouting and apparently mad with joy. The mail coach came in sight. It was covered with flags and laurel branches and with people, who cried, "A great victory!"

Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie pulled the checkering and told the coachman to drive back to Bruton Street. Running upstairs, she found the duchess eating a melancholy cutlet in the back drawing-room.

"I congratulate you, my dearest Katherine! Your hero is safe, and he has won a glorious victory."

"Oh, tell me! How do you know?"

"Half London knows by this time. I have seen the Portsmouth Mail. It is covered with flags and laurels, and the people are out of their minds with joy."

But how can you tell that the duke is safe?"

"My dear woman, let me tell you that I saw the Trafalgar Mail come in to London. There was shouting enough then; but the laurels were all shrouded with crepe! Victory was ours at Trafalgar, but Nelson was dead! To-night there is not an inch of crepe to be seen anywhere; your hero of a hundred battles, who has defeated Napoleon, is alive!"

The duchess sat down and wept. She cried tears of excitement in which there was an element of pain.

"My dearest Mary," she said, "I know too well how it will be. He will not write to me, though he ought to know that I could not survive his death or his disaster."

Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie said as many kind and reassuring things as she could think of and then went to dine at Lord Proby's. In bed that night she promised herself to be even with the duchess's husband and to apply a salve to that ever-rankling wound in the heart of the unluckiest wife. The next morning she wrote to the duke a letter full of congratulations on the victory of Waterloo. She expressed anxiety about the fate of a young friend, Capt. ——. Was he killed? Was he wounded? Was he safe? She would be so grateful if the duke would in one line set her mind at ease. "But write it rather to the duchess and to Bruton Street, for I go to Brighton to-morrow, and my movements are rather uncertain. In this way your report, (whether good or bad) cannot fail to reach me."

Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie kept her secret and went to Brighton or a pretty long visit. When she returned, the duchess met her. "Congratulations, my dearest Mary; my hero is all that is kind. You said that he would write. He has written! and I am such a happy woman. By the way, there is a message for you in the letter. He bids me tell you that your — never had a scratch and never was better in his life." That was how the good news came to Bruton Street.

Snapshots of the Heart.

Recent discoveries have shown that the X-rays can pass through steel and iron, and many engineering firms are using the X-rays to photograph flaws in the castings of important parts of machinery.

This new work has been made possible by the wonderful X-ray invented by an English scientist, Dr. Coolidge, which gives out immensely powerful rays that can pass through four inches of steel plate.

Now another wonderful invention has been described to the Röntgen Society of England. It is a new photographic plate twenty times as sensitive to the X-rays as the plates ordinarily used, and is likely to revolutionize X-ray work, as it will make it possible to take snapshot photographs of the heart, the lungs, or, indeed, any part of the body, and even cinematograph "radiographs" showing the heart beating, or the lungs at work breathing.

Only a few years ago it took half an hour to photograph the thicker parts of the human body with the X-rays; with the new invention a small fraction of a second will suffice.

Where Cats Score.

Strictly speaking, cats cannot see in complete darkness, any more than human beings can. But owing to a peculiar contraction of their eyes they can make much better use of whatever light there is and find a way through a room which appears to be very dark.

The pupils of a cat's eyes are capable of being enlarged or distended to a great extent, thus letting in every particle of light. Moreover, this enlargement of the pupil takes place almost instantly, and there is little apparent hesitancy on the part of a cat entering a dark room after being in the bright light.

The same principle holds good, to a lesser extent, in the case of the human eye, for after we "become accustomed to the dark"—or after the pupils of our eyes become sufficiently distended to allow the rays to enter—we are able to see much more distinctly than formerly. This, however, takes an appreciable time, while it occurs automatically in the eye of a cat.

Our blankets are named after a Flemish weaver called Thomas Blanck, who lived in Bristol in 1840.

London has adopted Verdun, as well as several villages in the Meuse Valley.

HELGOLAND ISLE RISES TO PROTEST

AGAINST THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES.

Natives Who Are German Subjects Petition British Government for Protection.

When in 1890 Lord Salisbury, the British Foreign Minister, announced in Parliament that his government had first turned over the islet of Helgoland to Germany, in consideration of the latter's cession of Uganda and other East African territory to Britain, Sir Henry Stanley, the great African explorer, declared in newspaper interview that the English had acquired a new sort of clothes, indeed a whole wardrobe, in exchange for a trouser button.

The remark was greeted with an outburst of merriment in England and an outburst of wrath in Germany. The prevalent notion in both countries was that England had by far the better of the bargain. Lord Salisbury was congratulated by his friends and doubtless congratulated himself on his business acumen, and Count Caprivi, the German Imperial Chancellor, was called all sorts of names by irate Prussian patriots for giving away territory worth millions for a wave-bitten rock in the North Sea.

England Wins After All.

Twenty-five years passed, and in the summer of 1915 all Germany was wildly celebrating the silver jubilee of the Helgoland bargain, while in England the memory of Lord Salisbury was cursed for what Englishmen called the worst mistake in British history. For the haven crag in the North Sea was in the quarter century that passed in between turned into one of the strongest fortresses of the world, the base of German naval operations in the North Sea and the principal obstacle in the way of the British fleet to attack on the German coast.

And to-day? To-day it seems again that after all the English had the better of the deal. For Helgoland, no longer the German lies prostrate at the feet of her victorious enemy, and the colossal effort and expenditure that the Germans have invested in the "Gibraltar of the North Sea" are lost forever. For all the \$50,000,000 spent by the imperial government on the Helgoland fortifications not a single shot was fired by the Helgoland cannon in the entire course of the war, and the Helgolander, German as he is, is proud to be a subject of the British Empire.

Injured by the Treaty.

But there is another aspect to the Helgoland question. By an oversight—possibly of the framers of the peace-treaty a grave injustice is being done to the inhabitants of the island, perhaps the smallest nation in the world—at least so they style themselves. The fact is that the Treaty of Versailles, which eliminated German control over non-German peoples, deprives the Helgolanders of certain privileges which they had enjoyed under the old order and which virtually amounted to a kind of autonomy. The Prussian government now takes the stand that the Treaty of Versailles abrogates all previous international agreements, and as a consequence Helgoland has been shorn of the last vestiges of its special status.

Thus the curious situation has arisen that the natives of Helgoland who are German subjects have petitioned the British government for protection and expressed preference for British sovereignty.

The Helgolanders speak a distinct dialect of Frisian, not easily understood by inhabitants of other islands. From 1674 to 1807 they were living under Danish sovereignty. Then England seized the islet and held it until 1890, the time of the Salisbury deal.

On July 1 of that year the agreement was signed between the two governments, and on August 10 Kaiser Wilhelm landed on the island and took formal possession.

The inhabitants of the island, who were not consulted about the transaction—self-determination was not yet invented—never liked the transfer. Under English rule the island was a quiet watering place frequented chiefly by prosperous North German families. The English never fortified the place beyond equipping it with an obsolete battery of naval guns. With Prussian rule all that changed. The island was practically put under military control. To be sure, the Germans have done a good deal in the way of improvements. Thus they have built an excellent artificial harbor for merchant and fisher craft.

Probably Saved the Island.

Most important of all, they have probably saved the life of the island itself. Originally several hundred miles long, by the beginning of the last century Helgoland's length was reduced to something short of a mile—the rest was eaten away by the sea. Nothing was ever done to stop the destructive work of the waves until the Germans came and reinforced the

Working the Earth to Death

If you told any one of the men now unemployed through shortage of raw materials that he is suffering owing to the unscientific exploitation of Nature, he would probably laugh you to scorn.

Yet such is the fact. We have been working the world to death, and we are now beginning to pay the penalty.

In the eager, reckless quest of skins and other products, man has cleared wide areas of certain animals. Gone is my lord the elephant from many of his former haunts, and the American bison has been so mercilessly hunted that it is extinct on its native plains, the largest herd in the world surviving in a park on our own north-west coast.

With equal prodigality is the world's supply of timber being worked. In one year a single newspaper uses up a whole forest, the steady product of forty years.

From the bowels of the earth the riches of ages are squandered in a day. We consume them as if they were limitless, whereas the time is near when they will be exhausted.

A striking instance is mineral oil. It seems only the day before yesterday that it was loudly proclaimed as a substitute for coal, and yet every known source of supply is being "blasted out" with measurable rapidity. Some of the fields will be dry thirty years hence, and probably many of us will live to see the day when all will have ceased to yield.

So, again, with coal, the chief source of Britain's power. It is mined and used in gross defiance of scientific methods rather than to a desire to conserve Nature's riches, a field is no longer exploited as it was in the old days, when the easiest and cheapest means to work were torn out ruthlessly and the others left to remain practically inaccessible for ever.

In the same wasteful manner are other minerals being won. The best is taken and the rest left. By 1940 all the high-grade ores in the world will be nearly exhausted, and smelters will have to begin to make shift with those of inferior quality.

The soil has likewise suffered through get-rich-quick methods. After the wonderful fertility virgin land had been exhausted, the world was scourged for fertilizers. In common with other countries, we drew without stint or limit on the huge deposits of guano, nitrates, etc., till at last their exhaustion was in sight.

Then—and this was only a few years ago—it seemed as if the overworking of the world would result in the starvation of the entire human race. Sir William Crookes, indeed, predicted that this would be the fearful consequence of the using up of the stores of nitrogen.

Fortunately, however, that peril is now averted, as ample supplies of nitrogen can, owing to recent discoveries, be extracted from the air by chemical means. Britain started a factory for the purpose during the war, and this and its successors will form an insurance against the starvation of British soil.

Still, if we count on chance for the supply of essential commodities, we shall live in a fool's paradise. It is certain that mankind will have to suffer to some extent for overworking the world.

Fortunes from Flukes.

A watchmaker's apprentice was one day holding some spectacle glasses between his thumb and finger when he was startled by the suddenly enlarged appearance of a neighboring church spire. This accidental discovery led to the invention of the telescope.

The art of etching upon glass was discovered by a Nuremberg glass-cutter. By accident a few drops of aqua fortis fell upon his spectacles. He noticed that the glass became corroded and softened where the acid had touched it. Acting on this hint he drew figures upon the glass with varnish, applied the corroding fluid, and then cut away the glass around the drawing. When the varnish was removed the figures appeared raised up on a dark ground.

A process of whitening sugar was discovered in a curious way. A hen that had gone through a clay puddle went with her muddy feet into a sugar house. He left her tracks on a pile of sugar. It was noticed that wherever her tracks were the sugar was whitened. Experiments were instituted, and the result was that wet clay came to be used for refining sugar.

The origin of blue-tinted paper came about by a mere slip of the hand. The wife of William East, an English paper-maker, accidentally let a blue bag fall into one of the vats of pulp. The workmen were astonished when they saw the peculiar color of the paper while Mr. East was highly incensed at what he considered a grave financial loss. After storing the damaged paper for years, Mr. East sent it to his agent in London with instructions to sell it for what it would bring.

The paper was accepted as a novelty and disposed of at quite an advance over the market price.

The Honey-moon Habit.

The custom of referring to the time immediately after one's wedding as a honeymoon descended from the ancient tribes of Central Europe. Newly-married couples drank and served to their friends a wine made from honey gathered during the first thirty days (or lunar month) after the performance of the wedding ceremony.

After persisting for several hundred years, this custom, finally died out, but its significance remained, particularly as the serving of the honeyed wine was succeeded by the practice of married couples leaving their home for a varying length of time. For this reason the trip which follows the marriage ceremony is now known as a honeymoon, though it has nothing to do with wine, and generally lasts less than a month.

A Pencil Clock of Paris.

Paris is a city of curious clocks. Perhaps the most original one ever as the sign-board of a pencil manufacturer, who aimed, as the map on the clock shows, at conquering new markets. This clock keeps good time, says the Wide World Magazine, despite its square face and the necessarily rectangular arrangement of the hours, which are formed by pencils arranged as Roman numerals. You can see this clock on one of the main boulevards, high above the heads of foot passengers. It has been constructed on a very big scale so as to be clearly visible from the street.

A Railway Quarrel.

"Conductor!" shouted a passenger on the back-country train "That was my station, sir! Why didn't you stop?"

"We don't stop there any longer," said the conductor. "You see the engineer is mad with the station agent!"

The Polar regions are the only sections of the globe free from rats.

FIND NEW TRIBE OF SMALLEST PYGMIES

IN TROPICAL FOREST OF BELGIAN CONGO.

Only Four Feet High, But Fearlessly Fight Lions—Learn to be Mechanics.

Discovery in the tropical forest of the Belgian Congo a new tribe of pygmies only four feet in height and the smallest yet seen by any explorer is reported by Dr. Leonard John Vanderbergh, Roman Catholic missionary and anthropologist, just returned to New York after eleven months in the African wilderness.

For fifteen years attempts have been made by white men in Africa to find this pygmy people in the Kilo region of the Eastern Congo, but the pygmies were so afraid of the whites that they withdrew even further into the forests and existed only in the reports of the neighboring tribes, who had given them the name of Mambuti.

After a two-week search Dr. Vanderbergh came upon them. They are about ten inches shorter than the smallest pygmies hitherto reported—those found by Sir Harry Johnston on the shores of Lake Tanganyika.

Hunt Elephants and Lions.

They are monogamous and do not take a second wife even after their first wife dies. They won't steal or lie and are unique in Africa in that regard, and they will eat no meat of a goat or sheep or cattle, because it isn't hunted, reserving their taste for elephants, lions, and the like, which they will attack either from the ground or from the trees. They are very close to the ape in appearance, and lead wanderings in the tropical forests with their low-hanging branches have given them a permanently stooping posture.

Dr. Vanderbergh found out further regarding the pygmies that they are not a unique race, but represent merely the last step in a gradation of tribes in point of height, averaging from six feet down to four, and having their homes in succession from Lake Albert Nyanza to the Congo.

Other tribes that he studied were the Mami, the bravest people in the world, and the Wakiguyu, who have the horrible practice of exposing their sick to the hyenas instead of allowing them to die in their own huts. This system was the result of superstition that whoever should touch a dead man would himself die within five days thereafter. Dr. Vanderbergh reported that while he was there the British authorities put an end to the barbarous custom.

At one time the expedition saw a band of 200 Mami on the warpath, and Dr. Vanderbergh noted that 120 of them had on the lion skin cap that they are only allowed to wear after they have themselves killed a lion. This is the nation that he called the bravest in the world. They have a system of conscription under which every man serves twelve years in the standing army and cannot marry until after his term of service. The result is such a very low birth rate that they are disappearing. One of their characteristic traits is that if a member of the tribe runs away from any animal whatsoever he is immediately expelled.

Develop Mechanical Skill.

Among the blacks in general the explorer found a remarkable development in civilization since his last trip in 1905. The Kivirondo, for instance, who used to come into the stations of the Uganda Railway stark naked, are now the most able mechanics and chauffeurs in the colony and even set as head sawyers in the sawmills. They are full of the idea of liberty and of the new women, for the ladies of the Kivirondo are now refusing to stay at home and are setting out in crowds "to see the world."

Dr. Vanderbergh took with him camera men of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, and 50,000 feet of film were made. He was assisted in his scientific research by George Burbank Shattuck, Ph. D., formerly of Vassar and Johns Hopkins. Together they made a study and brought back complete records of nine tribes; the Mamijika, Wakamaba, Wakikuyu, Mami, Wakivirondo, Baganda, Basopo and Mambuti.

No Pension.

The eminent British surgeon, Sir James Cantlie, tells the story of a woman who complained to her doctor: "I'm a poor welder and I've no pension."

"What! no pension?" was the reply. "How scandalous! Why did they refuse to grant you a pension?"

"'E died before 'e joined up, sir."

Those who think that flying is not much more risky than traveling on a railway train will be interested in the figures of the English Air Ministry for a period of eight months in 1915. The conclusion of the investigators is that had the same rate of accident, journey for journey, been maintained in railway travel 28,000 engineers would have been killed and 280,000 injured, and that 105,000 passengers would have been killed and more than a million injured. According to their figures the risk of the aeroplane passenger is 800 times as great as that of the railway passenger.

PERFUMERY FOR MILADY CANADA

COMES FROM ALGIERS, CHINA AND INDIA.

Isles and Lands Along the Mediterranean Also Grow Sweet-Scented Flowers.

When you pay the apothecary a sum that seems like a dollar a whiff for something that delights your senses, or if you are especially fastidious, have him compound the scent that "suits" your personality, did you ever stop to wonder where his precious ingredients came from? The sunny isles and lands along the Mediterranean probably grew some of the flowers, others perhaps, were plucked by dark Moorish hands in Algeria, and mayhap an animal in the brooding hills of western China gave its life to furnish one constituent of the perfume.

The vegetable kingdom is necessarily the most fertile source of perfume. From its flowers, such as the rose and jessamine, and from its seeds, woods and barks, such as the spice and sandalwood, even the most fastidious connoisseur would be able to select either some simple odor or a complex bouquet. Nor are they for perfumes alone, but for soaps, creams, pomades, and in making favorings and extracts.

Rosemary, thyme, sweet basil and marjoram are found in great profusion in Mediterranean countries, and here the chemist can distill the whole plant and not bother about picking the flowers. Shakespeare, the unfailing naturalist that he was, made no error when he chose for Ophelia the flowers she scattered.

The Lavender of England.

The old-fashioned lavender flowers, in which our grandmothers used to pack the household linen and their rich old laces, grew best in France and England. A temperamental flower it might be called, too, for unless the climate, soil and altitude suit it refuses to breathe forth its usual fragrance. Fine grades of the plants are grown in the Drome region, France, at an altitude of 2,500 feet, while the flowers generally considered to have the most agreeable fragrance come from the Miteham district of England, where the conditions of soil and altitude are decidedly different from those in France.

The rose geranium, which has such an exquisite odor, is also grown and distilled in France, but Spain, Algiers and the Island of Reunion engage in the industry. Unlike the ardent, however, the perfume of the rose geranium comes from its leaves and not from the flowers.

But the country that well might be known by its scent is Bulgaria, for its rose crop is second only to its tobacco. More than 12,500 acres of land in the provinces of Philippopolis and Stara Zagora are given over to the growth of roses from the petals of which attar of roses is distilled. In the wonderful gardens at Kasanlik, Karlovo, Kilsouara and Stara Zagora the best of the flowers are grown. The fields are arranged much after the fashion of the vineyards of France and Italy, and the halfpenn, dew-laden buds, which have very few petals, are snipped off by diligent girls, boys and women in the early morning of May and June.

About 4,000 pounds of roses are produced on an acre of land, but it takes about 800 pounds of petals to produce an ounce of oil for an attar, which before the war cost about \$250 a pound.

Roses are grown in other parts of the Balkans as well as in Asiatic Turkey, where they were introduced by Ahmed Vefik, the noted Turkish statesman and man of letters, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and in India, Persia, the Turan province in 1877, and in France. The industry lately has been introduced into Germany.