

The Montenegrin High Court.

PRINCE NIKITA HEARING THE COMPLAINTS OF HIS SUBJECTS IN PATRIARCHAL FASHION.

There are a few customs and spectacles still lingering in this age to remind us that the world was not always prosaic, utilitarian, and unbelieving—a few survivals of the time when the superstition of the loyalty of all classes found uncriticised expression in magnificent ceremonies. They are dying fast. The simplest, but also the most interesting, of such quaint shows is a scene of the Supra for Court of Appeal in Montenegro. To the left of the palace gate stands a lime tree of very moderate size, surrounded by a bank of turf neatly edged with boulders. Hither, towards 8 in the morning, strolls the Prince, followed by his officers and guard. At a certain distance from it they halt and uncover, which his Highness stops briskly forward and seats himself at a square nook left hollow in the wall to accommodate his legs. If personages of distinction are present they receive an invitation to take place on either hand, and the court is open without more ceremony. Sometimes the whole space in front is crowded with peasantry in silent ranks, eager to behold their chief and hear his wisdom; but in this time of war, which makes such heavy demands on the labour of the few who stay at home, the audience is small. I have seen him hold a finer subject for the painter. At a distance of twenty yards or so, on the right front of his highness, stand the veterans of his body-guard: ranged in line, tall fellows mostly, grim of aspect, wearing crosses and decorations, heavily armed. The long fringe of their plaids sweep the ground, or one end of it is thrown across the shoulders in Serbian fashion. On the other side, at a like distance, stand a group of peasantry, cap in hand, waiting to explain such complicated grievances as neither the village elders' court, nor the district tribunal can arrange to their satisfaction. To the left rear of the prince aides d'camp and attendants of the Waywood's present take up station; they wear their caps, long "out of court," by legal fiction, though nearer to the sovereign than the rest. Everyone being paced, in two minutes proceedings begin. The first complaint, which his highness explained to me on one occasion, was that of a weazened veteran, very ragged and dirty, but wearing two silver mounted pistols and a yataghan. In a sing-song voice, without hesitating for an instant, he yetted on was made. He had answered the lawful summons of his chief, and repaired in arms to the camp at Sutormans, whence Gen. Bozo Petrovich had dismissed him as too old and war-worn for service. "I am not old, Gospodar," he lamented, "for I am strong. And if I have bullets in my body is that a reason that I should be insulted? I pray you Gospodar, to write to Bozo Petrovich and order him to let me fight." The anxiety of the poor man was painful to watch as he turned his cap ceaselessly, awaiting reply, which was not given in my presence.

Of another suitor his highness told me that in some fight he lost his comrades, and was attacked, all alone, by five Turks. Four he killed and wounded the fifth, but he fell himself in the struggle. Snow lay on the ground, and the evening chill restored him to consciousness. When his eyes opened he saw the Turk painfully crawling to gather wood, and he proceeded to assist the infidel. When certain comrades arrived at dawn they found these two sharing their last ration across the fire, and the Montenegrin would not be removed until he had seen his late foe placed in a litter. Together they were carried to the hospital at Cetinje. A brawny little man of the body-guard was pointed out to me as the hero who brought in a dozen and a half of heads after one battle. The czar presented him with all the decorations possible—I saw them—and the Russian ladies subscribed a pretty souvenir in the form of a head-chopping knife, encrusted with precious stones, at the expense of \$1,200. This I did not see, for the owner leaves it with his parents, an example to the youth of that vicinity. In regard to this head-cutting, Gen. Bozo Petrovitch told me that he would not cry to stop it, in the hostilities already expected when I was in his camp. He declared it a modern practice, taught within this century by the invading armies of the porte. Nose-slicing is still more recent, for until late year prisoners was never made. In the last period of the war, however, when whole battalions surrendered, the practice was dropped of necessity, and we may even hope that it will never be revived. The prince

himself told me that he made 11,600 prisoners, whom he could not keep or want of means. The Turkish government had none to exchange, and for several good reasons; it would not ransom them; and he was obliged to send them back unconditionally. One officer was captured three times.

Music in Old English Churches.

In country churches the loft was, and even is, usually known as "the singing-gallery," the musical instruments being the organ, violin, violoncello, flute, &c. Mr. N. A. in his Rambles in Worcestershire, says that in Tenbury Church, in the year 1771, they were not only horns and clarionets, but also a drum, whose sound was heard in divine service for some forty years after that date. In some country churches the number of the psalm that was to be sung was chalked on a slate, and suspended from the front of the singing-gallery. It is said of the parish clerk of Isle Brower, Somersetshire, that in giving out the hymn, and suddenly finding that the slate was not hung up, his announcement took the following shape: "Let us sing to the praise and glory—I say, why don't 'ee hang out the slate?" During the singing the congregation in the nave turned their backs upon the clergyman, and looked toward the singing gallery, where the parish clerk and his fellow-performers were unconcerned. In a Yorkshire village church early in this century the instruments in the singing-gallery were the violin, violoncello, clarinet, serpent, and bassoon, and when the old clergyman wished for the "Old Hundred" to be sung, he called out to his clerk, "Strack up a bit. Jock! strack up a bit!" Of this same Yorkshire pair it is related that on the occasion of the first missionary meeting, when the congregation were waiting in the church-yard, the old Vicar said to his clerk, "Jock, ye must let 'em into th' church; the deputation a'n't com!" but, on the arrival of the two clergymen who formed the deputation, the clerk called out to the people, "Ye maunt gang home, t' deputation's com!" The old Vicar introduced the two clergymen in addresses that were models of brevity: "T' first deputation will speak!" "T' second deputation will speak!" after which the clerk lighted some candles in the singing gallery, and gave out for an appropriate hymn, "Vital spark of heavenly flame!" The parish clerks who give out the hymns and lead the congregational singing are probably at the present day only to be found in a few remote places, and in parishes where there is a second church, at some miles' distance from the mother church, with its one Sunday service. Here, very likely, the man is still to be found who unites in his own person both clerk and choir. A friend of mine had such a clerk, and the hymns were those of Tate and Brady. First of all the clerk sounded the note on a pitch-pipe, and after this musical prelude he wound up his nose, as it were, and, with a strong nasal snarl, pitched the key-note and began the psalm. A great favourite with him was what he called "The Happy Man," the psalm beginning with the line, "Happy the man whose tender care"—which word he pronounced "car"—and the last line of the verse, "The Lord shall give him rest," was repeated twice and shouted with great fervor. The rustic audience were charmed with his execution of this psalm, and were greatly pleased when a Boanerges out of their own ranks can thus display the power of his lungs.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Harry; "look at that girl! What colour! She's the picture of health." Said Dick, who has learned to discriminate between nature and art: "A picture of health! A painting, you mean."

Young lady—"Very changeable weather, M. A. Wiggins, isn't it?" Mrs. Wiggins—"Yes, miss, it be. Fast 'o', yer see; then co'd, then 'ot ag'in; but it's a blessing, 'cos if the weather was n't a little variable there wou'd 'a' be no variety in some folk's conversation."

A DANBURY man has a Boston lady visiting him. Sunday evening, on coming out of church with her, he extended his arm, and, with a delicate deference to her prejudices, said: "Will you accept my upper limb?" With a grateful look from her glassy eyes she accepted.

A YOUNG lady artist married a young gentleman artist. The uncle of the bride made a call upon them and found them sitting in opposite corners of their joint studio, in the sulks, the husband saying that his wife's waist was out of proportion, and the

Curious Idol Worship in China.

THE PECULIAR CEREMONIAL BY WHICH EVIL SPIRITS ARE CAST OUT.

HANGCHOW, CHINA.—A curious display of idol worship is being nightly enacted not far from this city. It is not easy to determine to what sect it belongs, for, though held in a Taoist temple, no priest of either that or any other takes part in the ceremony. It is entirely carried out by the people themselves, and being in the seventh moon, when the names of the departed receive so much attention from their living relations, it may be correct to consider it a part of ancestral worship. At the beginning of the moon proclamations were posted all over the city announcing the commencement of this strange ceremony, and calling on the people to come up and pay their taxes or duties to Yuh-whang Shung-ti, "lord of the world and savior of men," as they do to their earthly Emperor. Each night, from the 1st to the 15th of the seventh moon, this parody on royalty is carried out, and delegates from various districts bring strings of paper money, which is weighed with the greatest care as if it were real silver, entered into the account books of an official, and at the proper time in the ceremony is sent up to the spirits, through fire. An idea of the quantity of paper money consumed may be formed from the price received for the ashes, which realizes a total for this half month at 10 cash an oz. or not less than \$30.

The real business of the occasion commences after dusk: The procession, which goes out of the village in order to return escorting the spirit of the Emperor, begins to form. Each man carries a lantern, with the name of his district or society painted on it. The main temple and all the lesser ones are brilliantly lighted up with rows of lanterns of red cloth, and some place large reflectors behind candles, the effect of which is very pleasing. Theatrical dresses of the most gorgeous colour, and heavy with gold lace, pass along in groups; boys dressed in red cloth and gold tinsel hats, men bearing swords, and battle axes, and bands of musicians go to make up this unique procession. The centre of all is the Emperor's chair, carried by twelve bearers, containing his tablet; a man on each side, carrying large white feather fans, shield it from the public gaze, but waving to and fro as if fanning a living person.

After a long interval, the big chair gave forth a booming sound, and the great id Yuh-whang Shung-ti, wearing a magnificent dress, appeared and was placed on a raised platform under a rich canopy. At the immediate left he sat on the ground, and, for a while, silence reigned supreme; presently the master of ceremonies took his place, and the bearers of cards of these gods who, by their rank, are allowed to pay their respects to his Majesty (as officials are with the real Emperor) began to arrive. A few feet from the throne they knelt and respectfully presented their card, which was received by an official, who announced, in a loud voice, the name and rank of the sender, the court musicians playing on their instruments on the arrival of each fresh card, of which, that night, there were forty-eight.

A few devout worshippers were allowed to prostrate themselves in the royal presence, and toward midnight his Majesty proceeded to judge the evil spirits.

The Chinese consider all mad persons possessed by a demon, and their friends, in the hope that this will be cast out by the ordeal through which they have to pass at this court, gladly send them there, each patient paying \$55. These unfortunate are locked up in the hall before mentioned as they arrive—sufficient in itself to almost upset the balance of a sound mind. An official approaches and reverently asks for the keys. The request is granted, and runners ordered to bring one of the evil spirits to be judged. They rush off with a yell to obey this order, and presently they are to be seen at the far end hurrying along one of these unfortunate people. In the midst of frightful yells, the flames of the immense pile of paper money making the whole court as bright as day, this poor wretch is brought into his Majesty's presence. He was a tall, powerful man, his face pale through passive; but if his acts gave any clue to the state of his mind he was the only sensible person there, for he refused to kneel! The excitement became intense. The runners throw themselves upon him with their energy to force him to kneel, but he was strong enough to resist them all, and after a fruitless struggle he was hustled out of this brilliant scene, and again thrust into the dark infernal region. Another was brought forth with

the same demoniacal yells. He quietly knelt, and was at length pronounced guilty, and sentenced to be beaten on the ankles with the light bamboo. A straw figure was brought forth to represent him, and he was obliged to look on while it received the punishment.

Spanish Murders and Brigandage.

(Saturday Review.)

In Spain there is not much actual murder, but there is a rampant brigandage, which only stops short of murder provided it can rob without it. Even in Madrid itself, in one of the busiest and most frequented streets, a member of the Senate was, only two years ago, kept a prisoner in his own bedroom and threatened with death until he paid the ransom demanded of him. Bands of robbers, as is only too well known, haunt the mountain districts even in the neighbourhood of the capital. The brigands are said to have friends in very high places. They exercise a terror which prevents quiet people from daring to give evidence against them, they walk out of prison if they are put into it; and when they hold land they pay to the Government just the amount of taxes that they think convenient. Justice again is slow in most countries, but in Spain it scarcely moves at all. Every process is secret, and everything is carried on in writing. The pile of paper heaped up in reference to the murder of Gen. Prim ten years ago mounts up and up; but it is not even yet thought high enough, and a trial seems as far off as ever. The Government is as unable as any one else to secure a speedy conviction, and if it really wants to get rid of notorious criminals, it shoots them on the pretext that they are trying to escape. In minor matters there is the same inevitable delay, and in 1879 the official Gazette announced that a witness was wanted in reference to a railway accident that had occurred in 1864. Every Administration, too, invents new rules, and wants things to be done in its own style, and whatever proceedings have been pushed forward at a stage, compliance with some new regulation is exacted, and the matter is, and always remains, just where it was. As a last resource forgery is called in, on the chance that it may expedite the course of business when nothing else will. Next to robbery with violence, forgery appears to be the favorite failing of the nation. Even brigands forge, so that they may show themselves as good and civilized as their neighbors. Not long ago in one of the principal ports of the Mediterranean a cargo was got through the Custom-house duty free by means of a whole set of documents forged in the Custom-house itself. And so notorious and so general is the practice, that when it appeared that forgeries of coupons of the State debt had been made actually in the office where the debt is supposed to be controlled, the Minister of Finance mildly replied to questioners in the Chamber, that in a country where coin, bank-notes, and every kind of private document were habitually imitated, no one could wonder that the same ingenuity should be employed in forging state coupons.

NECESSITY is the mother of invention, and a newly-married Philadelphia man is experimenting with an electrical apparatus by which a party on an upper floor can light the fire in the kitchen without coming down stairs or getting out of bed.

A FUSKY old widow, by the name of Butler, who had been married several times, usually with disastrous results to her husbands, having obtained a divorce from her last husband, who was a Republican, immediately married a new husband, who was a rising young man and a Democrat. The friends of the widow congratulated her upon the acquisition of a new husband. The widow blushed violently, and, chewing the seam of her apron, replied: "Why, it is not a new husband at all. He is the same one I used to have before the war."

It is absolutely necessary to look carefully after the education of your boys. They are apt to get wrong notions into their heads, and an eye watched to make use of them to their detriment. A Sunday school teacher was examining her class on the parable of the wheat and tares. "And what is a tare?" she asked impressively. "I know," said a little fellow, who had watched his parent's course to some purpose, "it is a high old time, that's what it is." When asked by the astonished teacher to explain himself he said, "Last week father was gone three days, and I know just where he went and what he did, and the mother told me that the governor was off on an old-fashioned bear."